

## **Hebrews 10**

### **Jesus Offered a Superior Sacrifice**

- **Key Verses: Hebrews 10:11-12 - “And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God...”**
- **We are blessed in Hebrews 10 to have revealed to us the reality of the “better” and “superior” sacrifice of Jesus and the manifold blessings we receive as we trust in Him.**
- **It is in this chapter (10:4), Paul unveils the reality that the “blood of bulls and goats” could not take away even one sin. The mere mention of the “continuing” nature of the sacrifices, “year after year” by the priests is proof that no sins were cleansed; for surely if there were cleansing, then “they would have ceased to be offered”.**
- **God be thanked that Jesus (10:12) offered “one sacrifice for sins forever,” then He “sat down at the right hand of God.” This is the big difference between the sacrifices of the Old Covenant and the one sacrifice of the New. Their priests stand (Heb. 10:11), emphasizing that their work is never really completed. Christ, however “sat down” after His sacrifice which proves that His one sacrifice was sufficient.**

**Questions for study and discussion:** (The verses in parenthesis will help you with a starting point for your study)

#### **1. What was a “shadow of good things to come”? (1)**

- **The Law of Moses contained shadows or types of things that were to come in the New Covenant. They represented or prefigured things to come but were not the things themselves.**

- *Col. 2:16, 17 - The Law of Moses contained shadows of things to come.*

*Illustration: House plans are a shadow of a house but not the house itself. They give an idea of what the house will look like but not really what it actually is.*

- *Aaron, Moses, Joshua, David, etc. were all types of Christ.*
- *All of the sacrifices under the law were a type of the sacrifice of Christ.*
- *The tabernacle was a type of both the church and heaven.*

## **2. What could the continued sacrifices NEVER accomplish? (1)**

- *can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect - The sacrifices offered under the old system did not provide absolute forgiveness for those under that system.*
- *Verse 2: for then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins - Repeated sacrifices would not have been necessary if absolute forgiveness had been obtained. A paid debt does not need repeated payments. The repeated sacrifices offered under the old system made them conscious of sins, but did not free them from it. This helps to show that there was a deficiency in the old covenant. The very fact that the sacrifices of the Old Covenant were offered year by year continually proves that the sins were still there and had not been taken away. Illustration: Medicine that cures does not have to be continually taken, and if it does it shows that the disease is still there.*

## **3. What was “in those sacrifices”? (3) Why? (4)**

*Verse 3: But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year - In those sacrifices offered there was reminder that sins remained and that there was no absolute remission.*

- *They were reminded that the sins existed and the continued offering of sacrifices proved that they had not been actually removed.*
- *Cor. 11:23-25 - Observe the contrast: they had to remember their sins, but we remember Christ. What a difference!!!*

#### **4. According to Hebrews 10:5-9, what is it that God desired all along?**

- **Verse 5: Therefore when He came into the world, He said Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me**
  - *This was quotation from Psalm 40:6-8. God was not satisfied with the blood of animals as a sacrifice for sin. They could not meet the demands of justice.*
  - *However, if Christ came to the earth, lived sinless, and then died for sin, the demands of justice would be met. Hence, there was a body prepared for Him to come live in.*
- **The statement "when he came into the world" affirms the pre-earthly existence of the "Word." (Jn. 1:1-3).**
  - *Animals, angels, nor mere men could pay the price for sin. Only the sinless Son of God could atone for the sins of the whole world. No angel could His place have taken, Highest of High though He. The one on the cross forsaken was one of the God-Head Three.*
  - *John 17:5 - He was with the Father before He came to the earth.*
  - *Heb. 2:14-17 - He was made partaker of "flesh and blood."*
  - *John 1:14 - He was "made flesh."*
  - *Lk. 1:30-35 - He was born of a virgin.*
- **Verse 6: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure**
  - *They could not take away sin and, thus, God was not pleased or satisfied with them as an offering for sin.*
- **Verse 7: Then I said, Behold, I have come—in the volume of the book it is written of Me—to do Your will, O God**
  - *Since God was not pleased with those sacrifices, Christ came to offer a sacrifice that would please Him. This was according to God's will. The "volume of the book" probably refers to the Old Testament especially the first five books. Those books predicted, both directly and indirectly, that Christ would die as the sacrifice for sin.*
  - *Gen. 3:15 - The statement to the devil that He would bruise the seed of the woman is generally considered a prophecy concerning the sacrifice of Christ.*

- *Gen. 22:18; 49:10; Deut. 18:15-18 - These passages all predict that Christ was coming into the world to do God's will and bless all nations by doing it.*
- *Ex, 12 - The Passover lamb was a type of the sacrifice of Christ.*
- *1 Corinthians 5:7 - Christ is our Passover. Just as the blood of the Passover lamb caused God to pass over the houses where the blood was applied, just so the blood of Christ causes God to pass over the sins of those who trust in Him.*
- *John 6:38 - Jesus came down from heaven to do the will of the Father.*
- ***Verse 8: Previously saying, Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them (which are offered according to the law)***
  - *This is simply a restatement of facts he had already revealed concerning the inability of animal sacrifices to take away sin or meet the demands of God's justice. However, in this verse, the writer adds that they were offered "according to the law."*
  - *He is here stressing the fact that the Old law demanded the offering of animal sacrifices.*
- ***Verse 9: then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second***
  - *In verse 8, he has shown that God was not pleased with the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament, and yet, they were offered by the authority of the Law of Moses. He now points out that Christ came to do God's will which was offer a sacrifice that would please Him. But in order to do that, He had to take away the old law that demanded animal sacrifices, so that He could establish the new law that would allow Him to be the sacrifice for sin.*
  - *Heb. 8:7 - The "first" refers to the first covenant which was the Law of Moses. (See also Heb. 8:13).*
  - *Heb. 8:7 - The "second" refers to the second or new covenant of Christ. (See also Heb. 8:8-13)*
  - *The verse simply means that Christ took away the first or old covenant that demanded animal sacrifices for sin in order that He*

*might establish the second or new covenant which would allow Him to be the sacrifice for sin.*

- *Heb. 7:18-19 - The old law was set aside or abolished.*
- *Heb. 7:12 - The law, sacrifices, and priesthood of the Old Covenant stood or fell together.*

## **5. How has it been made possible for man to be “sanctified”? (10)**

- **Verse 10: *by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*** – *It is by Christ doing God’s will that believers are justified. This verse explains how we are sanctified or set apart and made holy. It is "through the offering of the body of Christ once for all." A body was prepared for Christ (10:5), but in order to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin, the old law that demanded animal sacrifices had to be taken away (10:9). And this is exactly what happened. We are now made holy by the offering of the body of Christ once for all. This makes it possible for us to be sanctified through the "will" of Christ.*
  - *Heb. 10:10 - We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.*
  - *1 Pet. 2:24 - He bore our sins in His own body on the tree.*
  - *Jn. 17:17 - We are sanctified through the truth.*
  - *1 Cor. 6:11 - We are sanctified by the Holy Spirit.*
  - *1 Cor. 1:2 - We are sanctified "in Christ."*
  - *Gal. 3:26-27 - The Spirit teaches us to be baptized into Christ and thereby we are set apart and made holy. All of this is possible through our faith in the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.*

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *Jesus had to take away the first (or old) law in order to establish the second (or new) law, or else God would have had two laws in effect at the same time. One law would have said to offer animal sacrifices (Heb. 10:8). The other would have said we are sanctified through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:10). One law would have said the priests must be of the tribe of Levi and family of Aaron (Ex. 28:1). The other would have said all the people of God are priests (1 Peter 2:5, 9). Thus, it is perfectly clear that Jesus had to take away the Old Covenant in order to establish the New.*

## **6. What contrast is made between the daily offerings of the priests and the offering of Christ? (11-12)**

- **Verse 11: And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins**
  - *The priests offered daily sacrifices in the morning and evening, in addition to various other sacrifices. They offered the same sacrifices over and over which could never atone for sins.*
  - *They offered many sacrifices which were powerless to take away sins and this is mentioned to contrast their many sacrifices with the one sacrifice of Christ.*
  - *Ex. 29:38-46 - This is the law regarding the daily sacrifices.*
  - *Numbers 28:3-4 – These verses also deal with those offerings.*
- **Verse 12: But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God**
  - *In verse 11, the writer had stated that the priests under the old law offered sacrifices repeatedly and even daily. But Christ offered one sacrifice and He offered that one sacrifice forever never to be repeated.*
  - *Heb. 2:14-17 - He had already shown that Jesus became a man.*
  - *Heb. 2:9 – He had already shown that He tasted death for every man.*
- **sat down at the right hand of God - This is the big difference between the sacrifices of the Old Covenant and the one sacrifice of the New. Their priests stand (Heb. 10:11), emphasizing that their work is never really completed. Christ, however “sat down” after His sacrifice which proves that His one sacrifice was sufficient.**
  - *The Jews might say, "Just look at our priests, they offer sacrifices every morning and evening. And come see our High Priest as he walks in the temple on the Day of Atonement to offer the animals as a sacrifice for our sins." To this the Christian could reply, "Our High Priest has made one sacrifice for sins forever and, since it doesn't need repeating, He has sat down."*
  - *The fact that Christ has "sat down" does not mean that He's not doing anything. He upholds all things (Heb. 1:3) and He makes intercession for us (Heb. 7:25) as well as numerous other things. But*

*as far as the subject under consideration is concerned--which is the sacrifice for sins--He has completed it and sat down.*

### **7. What did Christ accomplish through this "one offering"? (14)**

- **Verse 14: For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified** - By one sacrifice He has obtained absolute forgiveness for those who are sanctified in Christ. "Perfected" does not refer to being "perfect" as far as holy living is concerned, but "perfect" as far as absolute forgiveness is concerned. The word must be understood according to the context and here he is discussing sacrifices for sins.
  - *Heb. 7:11 - There was no perfection under the Levitical system.*
  - *Heb. 7:19 - The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did.*
  - *Col. 1:27 – We are made perfect in Christ.*

### **8. Where remission of sins is present, what is no longer needed? (18) Explain.**

- **Verse 18: Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin**
  - *If a sacrifice provides absolute forgiveness of sins, then there is no need for any other sacrifice. If the Jews asked, "Where are your sacrifices to offer for sins?"*
  - *The Christian could answer, "The sacrifice that provides absolute forgiveness has been offered once for all time. Therefore, we need no other."*

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *This ends the section of the book dealing with the superior sacrifice of Christ. The remainder deals with exhorting and encouraging them in light of the truths that have been presented.*

### **9. How did Christ make it possible for us to enter the Holiest? What does this mean? (19-22)**

- **Verse 19: Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus**
  - *The "holiest" here must refer to heaven which is the anti-type of the Most Holy Place under the Old Covenant. Because we have*

*absolute forgiveness, we have confidence and assurance of heaven by the blood of Jesus. Boldness means fearlessness in the face of danger as well as assurance and confidence.*

- **Verse 20: *by a new and living way which He consecrated for us***
  - *We have assurance of entering into heaven by a new manner or method which is Christ and His sacrifice. It is not only a new way, but also a living way in contrast with the dead animals of the old system.*
  - *John 14:6 - Jesus is the way to the Father.*
  - *Isa. 35:8 - This "way of holiness" was prophesied by Isaiah.*
  - *Acts 9:2, 9, 23 - Christianity is called "the way."*
  - *Consecrated means dedicated.*
  
- ***through the veil, that is, His flesh***
  - *Just as the High Priest went into the Most Holy Place through the large curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, so we get to heaven through the death of Christ.*
  - *The idea is that both by the veil of the temple and the body of Jesus there is a way of access to God. He did not say nor mean there was a resemblance between the veil and Christ in every way.*
  - *When the High Priest went from the Holy Place into the Most Holy Place, he had to go through the veil to get there, but our way to heaven is through the slain body (flesh) of Jesus.*
  
- **Verse 21: *and having a High Priest over the house of God - He had already discussed the fact that Jesus is our High Priest.***
  - *Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 7:26 - Jesus is our great High Priest.*
  - *1 Tim. 3:15 - The house of God is the church.*
  
- **Verse 22: *let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith -***  
*Since we have such a High Priest, we should draw near to God with a pure and sincere heart and with full confidence in our High Priest.*
  - *having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience - The word "sprinkled" must be a symbol for cleansed. We are to have our hearts cleansed from an evil conscience.*

- **1 John 1:7 - We are cleansed by the blood of Jesus.**
- **1 Peter 1:2 - Peter refers to the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus.**
- **Heb. 12:24 - Later the writer of Hebrews will refer to the blood of sprinkling.**
- **Lev. 16:14-15 - The background for referring to our cleansing as the "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus" has its foundation in the Old Testament. Just as the high priest sprinkled the blood of animals on the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place and thus cleansed the people in a sense, so the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus cleanses us.**
- **Heb. 9:14 - It is the blood of Jesus that purges our conscience.**
- **our bodies washed with pure water**
  - **This can only refer to baptism since that is the only way "water" is connected with our salvation. The fact that our "bodies" are washed seems to show that baptism is an immersion.**
  - **1 Peter 3:21 - Peter connects the water of baptism with our having a good conscience.**
  - **Eph. 5:26; Acts 22:16 - These verses also show that there is a "washing of water" that is connected with our salvation.**

## **10. What is the writer encouraging Christians to do in verse 23-25? Why?**

- **Verse 23: Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering - These Hebrew Christians were suffering persecution and were being tempted to go back to Judaism. Thus, they needed encouragement to help keep them overcome doubting and discouragement. They had professed faith in Christ and the gospel, and the writer says, "Hold fast that profession."**
  - **Heb. 3:13 - They were in danger of departing from God.**
  - **Heb. 12:4 - They were suffering persecution.**
  - **Heb. 4:14 - They had already been encouraged to hold fast their profession.**
  - **Rev. 2:25; 3:3, 11 - Churches need to "hold fast."**
- **for He who promised is faithful - This was the main reason they needed to hold fast. God is faithful to do what He has promised. This is a truth that all Christians need to keep in mind at all times.**

- *1 Cor. 10:13 -- God is faithful not to allow us to be tempted above what we are able to bear.*
- *1 John 1:9 - He is faithful to forgive us our sins.*
- *Rev. 1:5-6 - Jesus is called the faithful witness.*
  
- **Verse 24: *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works* - They needed to encourage one another by stirring each other up to love and good works.**
  - *Notice that the verse does not say that we are to "provoke one another," but rather we are to provoke one another to certain actions--love and good works. The only provoking that some brethren do is to anger.*
  - *Provoke means to excite to some action or feeling.*
  
- **Verse 25: *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together* - Christians are commanded to assemble together for edification and to worship God. However, because of the persecution and temptation brought on by the Jews, some had already stopped or quit assembling with the saints for worship and encouragement.**
  - *Forsake means to give up, renounce, to leave, abandon.*
  - *Acts 20:7 – Christians at Troas came together on the first day of the week.*
  - *1 Cor. 11:20 - The Corinthians met together.*
  - *1 Cor. 11:33 - They came together to eat the Lord's Supper.*
  - *1 Cor. 14:23 - They came together for instructions and teaching.*
  - *It is not necessarily wrong to miss an assembly for worship but it is wrong to intentionally forsake it altogether.*
  - *Forsaking the assembly was a sign that they had forsaken Christ.*
  
- ***as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another* - Instead of forsaking the assembly, they needed to exhort one another and so much the more as they saw the day approaching. From this statement and what follows, it is obvious that some had already abandoned Christ and this was clear because they had stopped meeting with the saints.**

## **11. What is willful sin? What is the penalty? (26)**

- **Verse 26: For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth** - The reference here is to those who forsake (leave off, abandon) assembling with the saints. The reference is to continual habitual practice of sin as a way of life in rebellion against God. It does not refer to isolated acts of sin or even sinning on purpose which we all do, but it refers to the continual habitual practice of deliberate sin which in this case is forsaking the assembly which proves that they had abandoned Christ.
  - **1 John 3:9** - "Sin" here, as the context clearly shows, refers to the continual practice of sin as a way of life--a mind that is set on sin like Satan.
  - **Rom. 3:23** – All sin and fall short of what God expects including faithful Christians.
  - **1 Jn. 1:8** – If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves.
  - **1 Jn. 1:9** – If we acknowledge (admit) our sin He is faithful to forgive us.
  - **1 Jn. 1:7** – Part of walking in the light is admitting that we need the blood of Jesus to continually cleanse us from sins that we constant commit.
- **there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins** - There will never be another sacrifice offered for sins. If these Jewish believers rejected the sacrifice of Christ by sinning willfully and rejecting Him, then they rejected the only sacrifice that can take away sin. There is no other.
  - **Heb. 10:12** - Jesus made "one sacrifice for sins forever" and there will never be another.
  - **Heb. 10:18** – The writer had just stated, "there is no more offering for sin."

## **12. To whom does vengeance belong? What is a fearful thing? (30-31)**

- **Verse 30: For we know Him who said, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord, and again, The LORD will judge His people** – The writer reminds them that they knew that God is a God of truth, justice, power, holiness, and one who carries out His promises. The statement "vengeance is Mine, I will repay" is quoted to remind them that God will certainly, in due time, repay those who oppose and resist Him.

- *Deut. 32:35 – Their foot shall slide is due time but vengeance belongs to God.*
- *Deut. 32:36 - "The Lord shall judge His people" is quoted to show that God will not allow even the sins of His own children to pass.*
- *Rom. 12:19 - Paul used this same statement here.*
- ***Verse 31: It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God - For the person under consideration in these verses, who is one who continually sins willfully as a way of life, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God. Why? Because He is a God of vengeance to those who continually refuse and reject Him.***
  - *Heb. 12:29 - God is a consuming fire to His enemies.*
  - *Rom. 11:22 - God is both good and severe. Good to those who trust Him, but severe to those who refuse.*
  - *Psalm 23:4 – It is not a fearful thing for a Christian to die. In fact, he will fear no evil.*

## ***“Digging Deeper for Better Things”***

**RESEARCH QUESTION:** What do you **THINK** would be a “*worse punishment*” than stoning, as indicated within the context of Hebrews 10:28-29?

- **Verse 29: Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? - Here Paul asks of how much more severe punishment would one be worthy who: (1) Treads underfoot the Son of God; (2) counts the blood of Christ an unholy or common thing; and (3) insulted the Holy Spirit. The answer is obvious: The one who does such things deserves far more severe punishment than death by stoning. And it is also implied that those who do such will receive it.**
  - **This verse shows the seriousness of sinning willfully which in this context is forsaking or abandoning the assembly.**
  - **The words "worse punishment" proves that the punishment in hell is far worse than death by stoning.**
    - **Matt. 25:46 - It is eternal punishment.**
    - **Rom. 2:8-9 - It is tribulation and anguish.**

- Heb. 10:27 - It is fiery indignation.
- Lk. 12:47-48 - This verse indicates that there will be degrees of punishment for the wicked.
- 2 Peter 2:20-22 - Peter teaches that it is worse for the Christian who goes back into sin than for non-Christians.
- The words "was sanctified" prove that a person who at one time was sanctified can be in danger of being lost.
- There are many passages that teach that a child of God can so sin as to be eternally lost in hell. (Ezek. 18:24-28; John 15:1-6; Matt. 25:14-30; 2 Pet. 1:10; 1 Cor. 10:12; Gal. 5:4; Rev. 3:5).

**THOUGHT QUESTION:** What is the difference between “willful sin” and sins of weakness or ignorance we may commit as Christians? Use Scripture to support your answer.

### ***A Message of “Better Things” from Hebrews 10***

- Christians are commanded to assemble together for edification and to worship God. It is not necessarily wrong to miss an assembly for worship, but it is wrong to intentionally forsake it altogether. And learning the difference between these two things is important.
- However, because of the persecution and temptation brought on by the Jews, some had already stopped or quit assembling with the saints for worship and encouragement.
  - Forsake means to give up, renounce, to leave, abandon.
  - Acts 20:7 – Christians at Troas came together on the first day of the week.
  - 1 Cor. 11:20 - The Corinthians met together.
  - 1 Cor. 11:33 - They came together to eat the Lord's Supper.
  - 1 Cor. 14:23 - They came together for instructions and teaching.
  - “*Forsaking the assembly*” was a sign that they had forsaken Christ.