

LIFE Bible Study: Hebrews 10:1-18

For Discussion: When making a purchase, how desirable is it to receive a lesser item than what was anticipated? What frustrations or difficulties accompany encountering this situation? How might your expectations affect your attitude toward the item you actually receive?

Read Hebrews 10:1-18

For review: In Hebrews 9:15-28, the author focused on the importance of the shedding of blood for the new covenant. Not only was death necessary for Christ to inaugurate the covenant, without it one of the central blessings that was promised would not have been possible because “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.” By His one sacrifice, Christ secured both salvation and a share in the eternal inheritance that awaits every member of the covenant. This blessing and deliverance that His followers await will be established to their fullest when He returns. The author then concludes this section with a selected summary of his main arguments along with further elaboration on the significance of Christ’s “once for all” sacrifice.

In verses 5-7, the author attributes to Christ the words of King David from Psalm 40:6-8. Which sacrifices are named in the quote?¹ If God did not desire the sacrifices and offerings of the law, what does He desire (1 Sam. 15:22; Hos. 6:6)?² Why did He not take pleasure in the sacrifices that He prescribed in His own law (Isa. 1:10-17; 66:3-4)?³

¹[Burnt offerings](#) (v.6) – Animal sacrifices for renewing people’s relationships with God, not in response to a specific sin but as an acknowledgement of their sinfulness and God’s holiness (Lev. 1:1-17).

¹[Sin offerings](#) (v.6) – Animal sacrifices for reconciling sinners to God when they broke His commands unintentionally or in ignorance (Lev. 4:1-35).

²God’s desire is that His will be done (v.7-9) => Not sterile obedience but faithful hearts and lives flowing out of a love for Him (Deut. 11:13-14, Mic. 6:6-8).

-Jesus came as One who both knew God’s will and could carry it out perfectly (John 4:34, 6:38).

-He fulfilled God’s will during His entire earthly life, not just when He offered Himself on the cross. His sinless life qualified Him to be the sacrifice for sin that could do what none of the animal sacrifices could.

³The condition of needing a sacrifice for sin (i.e., not having followed God’s will) means that people had already valued something or someone else above God – Those sacrifices were necessitated by disobedience.

³Even though offering the prescribed sacrifices for sin can be an act of obedience, they did nothing about the sin itself (v.4, 11). People’s sinfulness and alienation from God remained regardless of how many of those sacrifices were offered or how often.

³It is possible to separate the giving of an offering from a life of devotion.

-Bare performance of a ritual without faithfulness to God is of no value. It is even more of an affront when those sacrifices are offered to God as an appeasement while living a life of open rebellion.

Of all the ways that Christ and His ministry are superior to the old covenant system, the author focuses on how His sacrifice was greater and more sufficient than the sacrificial animals required by the law. How is Christ’s sacrifice superior to those of the earthly priests?¹ Why is it important that Christ’s sacrifice is superior in these areas?²

¹ Superiority	² Significance
<p>The number of sacrifices (v.10-11) Jesus offered a single sacrifice (Christ sacrificed once) while the earthly priests had to repeatedly offer the same sacrifices (Heb. 9:25). Whether it was the daily sacrifices of the priests (v.11) or the annual sacrifices of the high priest (v.1), the requirements in the law were perpetual and contained no condition for their completion. Even the annual sacrifice on the Day of Atonement had to be accompanied by an additional sacrifice just for the high priest who offered it (Heb. 5:3).</p>	<p>By a single sacrifice, Jesus met God’s righteous requirements and permanently did away with all sacrifices for sin (v.18). The repetitive nature of the old sacrifices served as a recurring reminder for the people of their sins (v.3) and confronted them with the reality that God saw and remembered their sins as well. In contrast, because of Christ’s sacrifice God declared that He would remember His people’s sins no more (v.17).</p>
<p>The recipients of the sacrifice (v.10, Heb. 9:26) Jesus’ sacrifice applies to people of every nation from every point in history (Christ sacrificed for all). The sacrifices of the earthly priests only applied to those in the nation of Israel and only for the people of their day (Heb. 9:7). Individuals from other nations had to join Israel to worship God.</p>	<p>By His sacrifice, Jesus has saved all of His people from every age (past, present, and future). There is no need to have lived during His day to receive the benefits of His ministry. He is also God’s high priest to all peoples from every nation, the reach of His ministry is not limited by geographical or ethnic borders.</p>

<p>The posture of the priests (v.11-12) Jesus was able to sit after He offered His sacrifice while the priests had to perpetually stand to perform their service. As long as there were more sacrifices to offer, they had to be at the ready and were not able to sit.</p>	<p>The seating of Jesus shows that His work of offering sacrifices is finished, which could only be the case if what He gave was accepted by God and there was no further need for any other offerings to be made (v.18). Jesus did not simply sit in God's presence, He sat at God's right hand (v.12), a position of rule and authority.</p>
<p>The effectiveness of the sacrifice (v.4, 14) Jesus' sacrifice saves people for all time and from all their sins. The sacrifices of the earthly high priests only applied to the preceding year and only for unintentional sins (Heb. 9:7). The animal sacrifices symbolized payment for sin but were not the payment themselves because they are, by nature, unable to affect sins (v.4). In line with the logic of verse 2, their very continuation is itself proof of their ineffectiveness (v.1, 11).</p>	<p>By His sacrifice, Jesus fully and finally cleanses His followers, addressing both the guilt and the root cause of their sin (v.10, 14). This full sanctification is a lasting effect that extends forward, giving believers security that no sacrifice for sin will ever be needed again.</p>

In concluding this section, the author again quotes Jeremiah 31:33-34 (first quoted in Heb. 8:10-12), attributing the words to the Holy Spirit (v.15-17). This marks a change in focus from covenant sacrifices to the promises of the new covenant. What is the relationship between Christ's sacrifice and the promises that have been highlighted?

- In drawing a connection between them, the author is communicating that the new covenant promises are a result/ accomplishment of Christ's sacrifice.
- The two promises of 1) God no longer remembering our sins and 2) having God's laws in us correspond to a change in how we stand before God (His putting aside the record of our sins) and a change in who we are (God placing His laws in our hearts and minds).
- God's people having His laws in them should lead them to spontaneous obedience.
- This combination of forgiveness and transformation ensures that the righteousness that God accomplishes in His people will be maintained indefinitely.

The teaching of the author is consistent with and supported by the testimony of Christ in Psalm 40:6-8 (v.5-7) and the Holy Spirit in Jeremiah 31:33-34 (v.16-17). This degree of corroboration meets the legal standard for reliability/trustworthiness found elsewhere in God's word (v.28, Deut. 19:15) and shows God's presence and His consistency as He worked in and through history to accomplish His will.

The response that God desires and delights in from us is a living out of His will. He has made it clear that His will for us is our sanctification through Christ (v.10, 1 Thes. 4:3a, John 17:17-19), which is a goal we can pursue even today. What does this look like (Rom. 12:1-2; Psalm 51:16-17)?¹ What resources (E.g., books, articles, sermons, podcasts, music, people/relationships) has God made available to you to facilitate and encourage your spiritual growth and sanctification?²

Sanctification – A setting apart of something or someone for God. In people, this typically takes the form of spiritual maturity and growth Christlikeness.

¹Sanctification is something that is both started and finished by God, but He calls us to pursue it with an active reliance on Him even as He is the one who provides the results.

¹Obedying God is how Jesus related to the Father. As fellow members of God's household with Him (i.e., His brothers – Heb. 2:11-12, 17), we ought to relate to the Father in the same way.

-This involves a conscious giving of ourselves to following Him and being filled with Scripture.

¹God is not against sacrifices, even after Christ removed the need to sacrifice for sin.

-There was close fellowship with God and acceptable offerings in Eden before sin and death entered the world and there will be close fellowship with God and acceptable offerings after sin and death are no more when Christ returns.

²God's word is the means He will ultimately use to perfect our obedience, but it has power now to enable us to live faithfully.

Reflection and application

None of the previous sacrifices, individually or cumulatively, could make right the sins that had been committed. Over the centuries, the weight of the blood that had been spilled according to the law could only testify to the mounting guilt that humanity had accumulated. When Christ came, He demonstrated wholehearted obedience in His life, even to the point of death. His once for all sacrifice was both final and universal. Through His offering of Himself, He secured for all His followers the blessings of forgiveness and God's word within them so that they are enabled to fully do God's will and never again need another sacrifice for sin. Because He surrendered His life to death when He sacrificed His body, the sacrifice of our bodies that we are called to make can remain living (Rom. 12:1). Nonetheless, in our surrender to God we, like Christ, are also to give up our lives in their entirety to Him for His purposes and glory. Ask God to lead you to practical steps you can take to grow in your love for Him and to offer the sacrifices that He both desires and deserves.