

### Christ's Sacrifice is the Fulfillment of God's Eternal Will

#### Hebrews 10:1-10

Hebrews 10:1-10 - *For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. <sup>2</sup> For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. <sup>3</sup> But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. <sup>4</sup> For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.*

<sup>5</sup> *Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:*

*"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,  
But a body You have prepared for Me.*

<sup>6</sup> *In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin  
You had no pleasure.*

<sup>7</sup> *Then I said, 'Behold, I have come—  
In the volume of the book it is written of Me—  
To do Your will, O God.'"*

<sup>8</sup> *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), <sup>9</sup> then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. <sup>10</sup> By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

#### Background Notes

A couple of days ago I was sitting in my office at Emmaus Bible College, preparing this message. One of my former students stopped by to tell me that she had just gotten engaged. She's a solid Christian, and the guy she's engaged to is a solid believer as well. She was so happy as she showed me her engagement ring. As we talked, I started to share with her some of these great truths from the book of Hebrews that I was studying. Well, I could tell that she appreciated my efforts - but I think she was more interested in talking about the exciting events that the Lord was working out in her life!

And a lot of us probably feel like that when we study the book of Hebrews. We appreciate the great truths about the superiority of Christ, and that we have a great High Priest, but we tend to get more excited when the Lord answers our prayers about a financial need, or a job, or even a great vacation. It's not easy to make teaching from the book of Hebrews exciting - even though the content should make us very excited.

Hebrews 10 contains more great truth about our Lord Jesus. In previous chapters we learned that our resurrected and ascended Lord serves in a better Sanctuary than the earthly Tabernacle. He instituted a better Covenant than the first

covenant of the Law. He has a better High Priestly ministry than that of Aaron. Now, in Hebrews 10, the author went on to describe how His one great Sacrifice is better and superior to all the sacrifices ever offered.

Hebrews 10:5-7 quotes from Psalm 40. There are a number of quotations from the Old Testament in Hebrews, but three are special. In fact, we could say that these three big prophetic passages from the Old Testament form the **foundation of the epistle** to the Hebrews. What are these three prophetic passages?

1. Psalm 110 - in reference to the new and better Priesthood
2. Jeremiah 31 - in reference to the new and better Covenant
3. Psalm 40 - in reference to the new and better Sacrifice.

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. The many sacrifices under the Law of Moses was not the fulfillment of the will of God.

1 Kings 8 is the account of Solomon's dedication of the Temple. First of all, the Ark of the Covenant was brought up to the Temple Mount, to be placed in the new Temple. *"Also King Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled with him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be counted or numbered for multitude"*(1Kings 8:5). Think of it – as the Ark of the Covenant was brought up to the Temple, so many sacrifices were offered on just this one occasion that they couldn't be counted!

And then the Temple was dedicated with the offering of many more sacrifices. 1 Kings 8:62-63: *"And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered to the Lord, twenty-two thousand bulls and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep."* Have you ever seen that many sheep and oxen? Think of the blood that was shed on that one occasion.

Question: How many sins did these thousands of sacrifices take away? Answer: Not a single one. Look at Hebrews 10:4: *"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins."* The thousands upon thousands of sacrifices in the Old Testament never removed one sin.

So why did God institute these sacrifices? The answer is in Hebrews 10:1, *"For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come."* The Old Testament sacrifices were not the fulfillment of the will of God - they were a "shadow" of the good things to come in Christ.

As future events cast their shadow before them, so all of those Old Testament sacrifices pointed forward to the one great Sacrifice who was to come: the Lamb of God. This was the will of God. In some way, all the Old Testament sacrifices foreshadow and prefigure the one great Sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

The sacrifices under the Law were not the fulfillment of the will of God. If they were, they would have brought relief to the sinner's conscience, and thus they would have ceased to be offered. *"For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins" (v2).* But the sacrifices did not cease. If the sacrifices under the Law had been the ultimate will of God, they would have removed sin, and they would have brought relief to the sinner's conscience. But that was not possible!

Thus the many sacrifices under the Law of Moses were not the fulfillment of the will of God. But that's not the end of the story.

## 2. The one sacrifice of the Lamb of God was always the intended will of God.

Verses 6-7: *"In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come - in the volume of the book it is written of Me - to do Your will, O God.'"*

Who was speaking in this quote from Psalm 40? The Son of God was speaking, because Psalm 40 is a Messianic psalm. Here, then, is the intended will of God. *"Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire...He takes away the first that He may establish the second" (v8-9).*

It's quite clear, then, that the many sacrifices of the Old Testament were never intended to be the complete fulfillment of God's will. The intended will of God was for the eternal Son to leave Heaven's glories, to take on humanity, and to become the once-for-all-time perfect Sacrifice for sins - and thus replace the Old Testament system of sacrifices.

Now notice verse 5 - and remember, this was the eternal Son of God speaking to the Father: *"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 is a wonderful text for the truth of the incarnation! As Man, the Lord Jesus was born as a baby and uttered baby sounds, but as the eternal Son of God, there was communion and communication within the Godhead - even as our Lord was born and laid in a manger.*

The main point here is that the eternal Son became Man in order to die as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world. His body was uniquely prepared within Mary, His virgin mother. The eternal Son was not just a "form of a body" or the "shell of a body" for God to inhabit. The incarnate Son of God did not have just the "appearance" or the "illusion" of a body, as some heresies teach. No, the body prepared for the Son of God was an actual human body. He was fully human and fully divine at the same time. ***Jesus Christ was - and is - 100% God and 100% Man – forever!***

The body that was prepared for the Son of God is His body forever. In that body, our Lord Jesus went to the cross and died as the Lamb of God for our sins. That body is glorified now, and He lives forever in that glorified body!

Verse 10: *"By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."* "By that will we have been sanctified." By God's will, we have been set apart to worship with a conscience that is free from the guilt of sin, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all.

**This** was the will of God! The one sacrifice of the Lamb of God was always the intended will of God.

## **Practical Application**

**“Saved by credit” may be a helpful concept to remember.**

Most of us have credit cards. One of the reasons why we use credit cards is so that we can delay the payment - right? We can enjoy the benefit of the purchased item now, and pay for it later.

Believe it or not, this credit card concept may be helpful in understanding “salvation in the Old Testament” compared with “salvation in the New Testament.” These are not two different ways of salvation – no! No one, Old Testament or New Testament, has ever been saved apart from the work of Christ at Calvary.

But how could Old Testament believers be saved by Christ’s death on the cross as their Substitute, if Christ had not yet come? It’s because Old Testament believers were “saved by credit.” The “payment” for that salvation was promised, and was to come later in time.

The Old Testament believers believed God and what God had revealed to them, and that faith was accounted to them - credited to them - for righteousness. Genesis 15:6, *“Abraham believed God and it was accounted to Him for righteousness.”*

The basis of salvation for Old Testament believers was the same as the basis of salvation for New Testament believers: the work of Christ on the cross. And the essential means of getting saved was the same - by God’s grace, through faith. God, of course, is not bound by time. He knew that the payment for the sins of the Old Testament believers would be made at the cross when the Lord Jesus died at a future time.

Thus the New Covenant and the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ did not change the basis for salvation or the means of salvation in any way. The sacrificial death of Jesus Christ is the basis for salvation for **all believers** throughout human history.

So “saved by credit” may be a helpful concept to remember!