

In the first eighteen verses of this chapter the author draws to a close his discussion concerning the priesthood and the sacrifice of Christ. These eighteen verses stress the superiority of the sacrifice of Christ. Verses 1-4 teaches that while the sacrifices of the old covenant were inadequate, the sacrifice of Christ is superior and does the job

*(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.* The law was a **shadow of the good things to come**. We noted back in Chapter 8 (v5) how a shadow bears a faint resemblance to the real thing and is inferior. But this shadow is a shadow of good things to come; talking about the blessings of the new covenant - salvation, spiritual blessings in Christ and the hope of heaven. It's the **very image** is the new covenant with its perfect system of justification by faith. The sacrifices of the old covenant were repeated again and again could not take away sin and give a person the right relationship with God. This point is made repeating because the Hebrew audience kept wanting to go back and bring that old imperfect system into Christianity. Verse 2 reminds us that if the sacrifices under the old covenant could have taken away sin, they would not have had to repeat them over and over again. But it couldn't nor could it clean ones conscious. The fact that they had to be offered again and again showed they were not effective.

All that the old system could do was only bring their sins to remembrance (v3). The Day of Atonement was on the tenth day of the seventh month (which would be October today as their year started in April). Under the new covenant their sins and iniquities would be remembered no more (Jeremiah 31:34).

*[(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]*

*[(3) But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.]*

Now to a key passage. *(4) For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.* Forgiveness is costly. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin regardless of the number sacrificed. There was no power in their blood to cleanse a person from sin. So why would one want to go back to that system.

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Verses 5-10 teach that animal sacrifices could not fulfill God's will. Perfect obedience to God is the only thing which fulfills the will of God. Only Jesus lived a perfect life (4:15).

*[(5) Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:]*

When Jesus came as a sacrifice, he came as a prepared body because the sacrifices of dumb animals were ineffective in taking away sin. note the expression **for a body didst thou prepare for me**. The meaning from the Hebrew is God has made the ears of man so that he can hear and obey God. The thought of the body is that God gave Jesus a body which included ears so he could hear and obey the Father. It was necessary that Jesus live in the flesh to conquer sin, die upon the cross and become high priest for the Christian Age. (v6) God had no pleasure in sacrifices given by the worshipper who did not obey him. This is true today. If Christians are not faithfully living the Christian life, God will not accept their worship. This is way Jesus talked about "vain worship."

*[(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.* Jesus came to do the perfect will of God. This was the intent of his life, "not my will, but thine be done." Jesus obeyed God's law perfectly just as the Old Testament said he would. He fulfilled all of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah by doing the will of God. Jump down to vs 9 and note the same thought.

*(9) Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.* With his death upon the cross, he took away the first covenant so that the second covenant could be established. The first covenant is the old covenant (the Old Testament). The second covenant is the new covenant (the New Testament). Christians are not under the old covenant, the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses was nailed to the cross. Christians are under a much better covenant, the new covenant. Christians go to the New Testament to find out what God wants them to do today. It is here that we find the spiritual blessing of Christ.

*(10) By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* What the old covenant and animal sacrifices could not do, Jesus did when he died upon the cross for the sins of the world (1 Corinthians 15:3). His death was not the death of a dumb reluctant animal. His death was the death of one who had obeyed God's law perfectly and who willingly died for the sins of mankind (Roman 5:9). His

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sacrifice was accepted by God as the payment for the penalty of sin. As a result of the death of Jesus on the cross, man can now be **sanctified** and have the right relationship with God. The sacrifice of Jesus provided forgiveness of sins for all men under both the Old and the new covenant. His death upon the cross did what thousands of animal sacrifices could never do. He died once for all men.

*[(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;]*

Verses eleven and twelve form a contrast between the many sacrifices of the priests under the Law of Moses and the once for all offering of Jesus. There were many high priests under the old covenant and only one high priest under the new covenant, Jesus Christ. The priests under the old covenant always stood and were not allowed to sit down while performing their sacrifices and duties indicating their work was unfinished. They offered the same sacrifices over and over again showing they did not and could not take away sin. **but he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;** (12) The superiority of the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ is seen. He offered one sacrifice for all men who have ever lived. So complete was the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross that after he offered it, he **sat down on the right hand of God** indicating there was no more sacrifices to be offered. He sat down at the highest place of honor which is the right hand of God.

*(13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.*

The writer then goes back to a familiar text to the Hebrews – pas 110:1 and speaks of Jesus making his enemies his footstool. In his resurrection he overcame the power of his arch enemy Satan but ultimate victory is yet to come. The teaching in v13 is that after his one sacrifice for sin, Jesus sits and waits and for his enemies to be defeated. Victory is certain. Paul gives a bit more insight 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 when he asserts that the final defeat of the enemies will be at the Second Coming. The only difference is Paul emphasizes Jesus' Kingship while the writer of Hebrews emphasizes Jesus' office as high priest.

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The author sums up again the greatness of the sacrifice of Jesus. **(14) For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.** In contrast to the thousands of sacrifices made by the Levitical priests, Jesus made one sacrifice good for all time for those who are sanctified. Christians are sanctified by the blood of Christ. **Sanctified** means to be set apart. In this context sanctified means to be set apart into the right relationship with God to serve him as priests.

The author draws his argument to an end by going back to quote from Jeremiah 31:33-34. He quoted it in chapter 8 to show the old covenant was abolished. Now he quotes part of Jeremiah 31:33-34 to show that the forgiveness of sins was complete. He affirms that the Holy Spirit is the real author of Jeremiah affirming the inspiration of the Bible. ■ **(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.** Under the new covenant there would be complete forgiveness of sins. Paul likes to illustrate this with the word, justified. Justified means God forgives men of their sins and treats them as though they had never sinned (Romans 5:9).

**(18) Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.** God will forgive sins so completely that they will never be brought up again. Under the old covenant the sins of God's people were brought up every year for remembrance. The case has been proved. Since the sacrifice of Jesus was so complete to take away men's sin completely, there is no need for any more sacrifices. The sacrificial system to God ceased with the death of Jesus upon the cross.

Do you need remission of sins?

Invitation