

Hebrews 10:1-18

“Where There Is Remission There Is Rest”

If we were to sum up the overall emphasis of the book of Hebrews up to this point in a single phrase we'd almost have to say, “The superiority of Christ.” The author has been taking painstaking measures to compare & contrast the O.C. & the law w/the N.C. & Christ. & In every category Christ outshines everything about the O.C. conclusively. **Christ is better than the angels, He's better than Moses, better than Joshua or any of the prophets, He's a High Priest of a better order than Aaron, He's obtained a more excellent ministry, He's the Mediator of a better covenant, which is based upon better promises.**

Most recently we've been observing & examining the fact that Jesus serves as High Priest in a better Sanctuary & how that the N.C., the new testament has been inaugurated, that is set in motion through the shedding of the blood of a better sacrifice. As to where the high priest under the law served in the tabernacle (which was but a copy of the heavenly) Christ serves in the reality, in the tabernacle, the temple of heaven itself. **& He didn't cleanse the Holy of Holies of Heaven w/the blood of calves & goats, He didn't set the N.C. in motion through the blood of bulls or any other animal sacrifice (as was the case regarding the O.C.). But rather Christ cleansed the Holy of Holies of heaven w/the blood of a greater sacrifice, the N.C. was set in motion through the shedding of the blood of a greater (in fact perfect) sacrifice, the blood of Christ Himself, the Lamb of God w/out spot, w/out blemish, who was slain to take away the sins of the world.**

& Because His sacrifice was perfect it provides perfect atonement, which means the payment only needed to be made once & it was sufficient for all. If all you ever pay is the interest on a debt you'll have to make payments over & over & over again, but if you pay off the principal, you only pay it once & you never pay another installment. **The animal sacrifices were paying on the interest at best & served as a constant reminder of my debt. Christ paid the principal, & now that the debt of sin has been paid, it never needs addressed again. (& We'll talk a little bit more about that later).** But w/that we come to Ch 10, & these 1st 18 Vs represent the conclusion of the doctrinal portion of the book of Hebrews, beginning in Vs 19 He starts getting practical (as we'll see next time). How that in light of all that we've learned about Christ, His competency, His proficiency & superiority, how are we to respond practically?

& Really the author here is trying to build what we might call, “Christ confidence” in his readers. (& I'm not going to rehearse again why their confidence was shaken; you can grab some earlier studies regarding that). The fact is that there are all kinds of things that can rattle our cage, or tempt us to draw back from our commitment to Christ. But the author here realizes that **confidence in Christ leads to commitment to Christ.** The more confident you are in Him, the more committed you will be to Him. That's why it's imperative that we seek *after* Him & be continually developing our relationship w/Him, because the more we know Him, the more we trust Him, & the more we trust Him (the more confident we are in Him) the more committed we'll be to Him. & That's the aim of this letter, to keep us committed to Christ.

Vs1-4

By the fact that Ch 10 starts w/the word, “For” that tells you that even though the Ch breaks here, the flow of thought from the author has not. He was talking about the sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ as opposed the insufficiency of animal sacrifice as it pertains to what we've been calling the “sin dilemma.”

& How that it was ok that the blood of animals be used in the cleansing of the earthly/temporary tabernacle, & be used in light of that which is temporal, but as it pertains to things that are eternal there's a need for a much greater sacrifice. Because w/regard to the need for the atonement of the *human* soul, the blood of an *animal* could *never* suffice; it's impossible for an animal to stand in the gap on behalf of a man. **There's just problems w/that on multiple levels, it's takes a man, to represent man. The problem is that all of mankind has sinned, & it's equally impossible for a sinner to make atonement for the sinful, how can a sinful man make things right for sinful humanity?** It can't be done, & of course that's where Christ comes in (& we'll get around to that more fully in a few Vs) but for now I want to stay focused on what the author is getting at here in Vs 1 which is the insufficiency of an animal sacrifice to make atonement (that is provide once for all forgiveness) for the human soul, for mankind.

& The point he's getting at here is that it was never intended to, God never intended the sacrificial system under the O.C. to be the be all end all of atonement. It was meant to show us our need for atonement; that the wages of sin is death, & that w/out the shedding of blood there can be no remission. However the animal sacrifices themselves were never meant to be the *means* of atonement for the sins of man, they were a precursor, a foreshadowing of the substance to be fulfilled in Christ.

He says, "For the law, having a *shadow* of the good things to come & not the very image of the things, *can never* w/these same repetitive sacrifices make those who approach perfect." **& This idea of the law (& the rituals & rites therein) being only a "shadow" of the substance or "symbolic" of the reality which would be fulfilled in Christ is something that we find communicated over & over again in the NT.** We read of it in Heb Ch 8, it was referred to at least 2 more times in Ch 9. In the book of Col Paul writes, "*So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*" Col 2:16-17 In other words the law communicated the outline, or the figure of that which would be fulfilled in Jesus. It was a shadow...

Now a shadow isn't a *bad* thing, the law was good, holy, & righteous. & A shadow can tell you a lot, as you may or may not know I enjoy playing a little paintball now & then. & When you're on the field you may not be able to tell right where someone is by just looking at the field, but often times their shadow is laying out past the bunker & so their shadow gives away their position. There are certain things you can learn through shadows, the only problem is they're not substance, you can't live in the shadow of a house, you need the substance. The shadow of a big Mac can't satisfy your hunger, the shadow of a key can't unlock a door, & listen the shadow of Calvary, the shadow of Christ can't take away sin. **The shadow can't do much for you, you need the substance. But here's the deal, the law was only a shadow of the good things to come (in Christ) the law itself is not, was not the substance therefore it can never through its repetitive rituals make one perfect, bring them to the desired end of righteousness & a right standing before God.**

& Yet I find that if you're anything like me, though it makes perfect sense it's a concept that seeps into us very slowly. Oh we may not try to be made right w/God through animal sacrifice &/or upholding the Mosaic law, but we have our own legal standards that we impose upon ourselves. **"& If I can read so many Ch's in my bible a day, or pray for so long, or make it to church so many times a month, don't smoke, do chew, definitely don't hang w/those who do, then I'll be alright w/God."** But listen, "do's & don'ts" or any amount of personal sacrifice will not, in fact can not make one perfect; make one right in the sight of God.

Only Christ can do that, & we can't improve upon what he's done by trying to add to it our own standards. We're either complete in Christ or we're not. Yet how often we hinge our walk w/God upon what we do, rather than upon what *He's* done. That's exactly what these people were doing & yet he says here that it can't be done, one can't be made right w/God on the basis of personal sacrifice, or sacrificing that goat as the case may be.

Vs2-3

Listen to what he's saying. He's saying that by the very nature of the fact that those sacrifices were repetitive they testified against themselves as to their sufficiency to deal w/& put away sin. Because if by sacrificing a bull my sin could be put away, then why would I have to sacrifice another bull at another time? But *because* I have to sacrifice over & over again (under the Levitical law) that only testifies & bears witness *against* the sufficiency of the sacrifice.

& When he says here that there would be no more consciousness of sin he's not saying that I would be oblivious to what sin is but rather that my sin has been dealt w/& is no longer keeping me from drawing near to God. I wouldn't be inhibited by the fact that my sin is keeping me from coming to God. **If I'm "conscious of my sin" it means I have an understanding that I'm guilty & have no right to be in the presence of God. If I'm not conscious of my sin it means that I have an understanding that my sin has been forgiven & I have a righteous standing in the presence of God. & That's something that an animal sacrifice could never do for me. It could never give me a sense of righteousness before God, it could never remove my sin, it could only remind me of my sin.** There was never remission of sin, only reminders of sin in the sacrificial system under the law. Because every time I brought my goat, or my lamb, or my bull to be sacrificed I would be reminded of the fact that I'm a sinner & my sins are in constant need of being covered & have never yet been cleansed. The last sacrifice didn't do the job or I wouldn't be here making this one.

Vs4

The best a sacrifice could do for you under the law was to cover your sin, but it could *never* cleanse you of your sin. Here where it says that it's not possible for the blood of bulls & goats to take away sins, that word that's been translated, "Take away" means, "to carry off." Every year on the Day of atonement there would be an annual ritual take place whereby the high priest would take 2 goats & present them before the Lord, & after casting lots for them 1 would be a sacrifice to the Lord & the other would be the scapegoat. & After he had sacrificed the 1 goat as a sin offering he would take the other goat, lay his hands on the head of the goat & confess the sins of the nation over it. & The idea there was that he was transferring the sins of the people upon that goat & then the goat was to be sent away to get lost in the wilderness. & The picture that was being painted in that ritual was both the shedding of blood for the remission of sins & the taking away of the sins of the people. But A, the blood of the one goat didn't in reality atone for the people's sins, & the sending away of the other goat didn't *take away* their sins. It was a picture, a portrait, it was a shadow, those goats did "typically" (in type) what Jesus would do in reality, personally. It was the blood of Christ that would bring remission of sins, it was Jesus who would take away sins, there was no sin put literally on the goat, but the bible teaches us that Jesus was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. & So they were never intended to be the remedy for sin, they were pointing to the fulfillment of that which they foreshadowed in Christ.

& Now that Christ has died for us we don't remember our sin anymore in light of His sacrifice, we remember our Savior.

Remember Jesus said that as often as we eat the bread, & drink the cup (regarding the communion table of the Lord) we're to do so in remembrance of...Him. It's no longer a consciousness of our sin, but of our Savior because He settled the sin dilemma.

Vs5-10

Look back at Vs 5 (read Vs 5-7) & Of course the reference here is to the will of God for J.C. to lay down *His* life as a sacrifice for the sin of the world. & What we have here is a quote from Ps 40:6-8, & if you turn to it & read it you'll probably note that it reads a bit different but that's because the author is quoting from the Septuagint (which is the Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures, the OT), however the meaning is the same either way. & In essences this is a prophetic conversation (if you will) that the Holy Spirit has let us in on between the Father & the Son whereby Jesus declared the insufficiency of the OC sacrifice & His willingness to be the perfect sacrifice for sin.

You see the message is clear, it wasn't the sacrifice of the body of bulls & goats that God took pleasure in, why? Because their sacrifice could never take away sin, how then could it be pleasing to God? What pleased God was the heart of the worshipper in bringing the sacrifice, the acknowledgment of his sin, his desire to be forgiven, his/her consent to the need they had for atonement through the shedding of blood. That they couldn't atone for their sin on their own, they needed God's mercy & trusted in Him by faith to make them righteous in His sight. That's what pleased God, not some animal being slain, God didn't derive any special joy from countless thousands of animals being killed. & There was a time when people began to become jaded, they were going through the motions of sacrifice, but their heart was no longer tender toward the Lord, tuned *in* to the Lord, seeking *after* the Lord, they were just doing the same stuff on a different day, it was religious ritual w/no intimate longing for God. & God said, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" Says the Lord. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats." Isa 1:11 It was never the ritual that God was after, it was the relationship. Micah said, "With what shall I come before the Lord, And bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, With calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, Ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?" Mic 6:6-8 It's not the routine, the ritual, the religion that God is into, it's not the sacrifice of bulls & goats that He takes pleasure in, those things could never take away sin.

"But a body You have prepared for Me." Now we're getting somewhere, there was a plan, a purpose for which Jesus came to this earth in the flesh, there was a reason that though fully God, He laid aside His glory becoming simultaneously as fully man as you are & I am. There was a body, "prepared" for Him, a body that He would sacrifice for your sin & for mine & that's what would please the Father. What did Isaiah tell us, "...it pleased the Lord to bruise Him;" Isa 53:10 Why? Because He would once, for all take away the sin that separates you & me from entering into & abiding in an intimate relationship w/God. & I just wish I could communicate this the way it needs to be because if I could we'd all just get down on our faces & worship Him for all He's done & all that He is. He became a man that we might become the Sons & daughters of God.

Listen, Christ fulfilled in His body, the purpose for which is was prepared. Now, God has prepared a body for me (I'm in it now), & He's prepared a body for you, (there you sit). The question that confronts me is, "Is my body fulfilling the purpose for which is was prepared?"

Is your body fulfilling the purpose for which it was prepared? God has a plan for you, are you walking in it, are you seeking after it, are you living for it? Am I subject to the will & ways of God regardless of what it might cost me?

You see, follow the flow here, catch the context, “It wasn’t sacrifice & offerings that You truly desired, You prepared a body for Me. It wasn’t in burnt offerings & sacrifices for sin that You took pleasure. The I said, ‘Behold I have come-- in the volume of the book it is written of Me—to do Your will, O God.’” Jesus said to the Jews one day as they sought to persecute Him, “*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.*” John 5:39-40 All of this talk of sacrifice, all the rituals of consecration, sanctification, all the prophecies, the poetry, it all points *to*, is wrapped up & fulfilled *in* Jesus. Jesus fulfills the law, the sacrificial system, the prophets, it’s all about Him. It was all the foreshadow that He fulfilled, He came to do God’s will. **The caption that states the express agenda of J.C., the heading over the book of His life is this, “I have come to do Your will O God.”** Why was Jesus born of a virgin? To fulfill the will of God, why was He born in Bethlehem? To fulfill the will of God, why did His family take flight to Egypt, to fulfill the will of God, why did He die on the cross, to fulfill the will of God. There He was right there in the Garden of Gethsemane, agonizing over what was taking place, sweating as it were great drops of blood the stress was so heavy upon Him. & What did He say? “*Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.*” Luke 22:42 Every aspect of every detail of His life was lived in subjection to His Father’s will. He said, “*For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*” John 6:38 He said, “*And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.*” John 8:29 **Translation, “I am always about My Father’s will. I have come to do His will.”** Question; why are you here? Why have you come? What’s agenda? Is it fulfill the will of the Father for your life, or do you have your own ideas & desires that you want to tend to?

Vs9

Christ came to do the will of the Father, & in saying that He’s saying that the OC wasn’t accomplishing that agenda. Because it was God’s will to provide a solution to our sin, to remove our sin from us that we might spend eternity w/Him, but we couldn’t do that through the sacrifice of an animal. & So in Christ’s accomplishing of the will of God He took away the 1st covenant (the offering of bulls & goats) that He might establish the 2nd. The offering of Himself once for all, & righteousness accredited to all who come *to* Him & believe *in* Him by faith on their behalf.

Vs10

By what will? By the will of God, it was God’s will to see you sanctified, that is, set apart to Him through the offering of the body of J.C. God’s not out to get you, looking for an opportunity to squash you, it was His will to save you. God’s not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. **I’m not sure where this idea began that God was an angry God who was just chomping at the bit to bring judgment but because Jesus intervened His temper has been more or less contented or backed off.** The cross was God’s idea, it was God who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. Sure God hates sin, sure He’ll judge the world in righteousness, sure you need to repent & give your heart to Christ. But God loves you, desires to save you, & will do so through the sacrifice of J.C. if you’ll just let Him.

& Over & over again we see this “once for all” concept being communicated because it’s very important to realize the finality of the sacrifice of Christ. There’s nothing more that needs done.

Because the work is done, a perfect sacrifice provided perfect atonement, it only needed to happen once, & it was sufficient for all of mankind throughout all of human history.

Vs11-13

We've talked about this before so we won't linger on it now, but Jesus is not busy about any sort of ongoing atoning work in heaven, it's done, He's adopted a posture of rest. Now that doesn't mean He's not doing anything, He went to prepare a place for you & me, He's interceding on our behalf. But the work of atonement is a done deal. The author here is wanting you to draw the contrast between the priests under the O.C. who would *stand* ministering daily, offering sacrifices repeatedly, Vs the once for all sacrifice that Jesus made after which He *sat* down at the right hand of God having finished the work. There *were no* seats, couches, benches or anything like that in the OT Tabernacle. **The priests never got a break regarding the sacrificial work, there was always work to be done, animals to be slain, sacrifices to be made, why? Because those sacrifices weren't sufficient to atone for sin, but w/Christ He doesn't need to offer Himself over & over again, why? Because His sacrifice was perfect, He atoned for sin completely, in totality.**

Vs14

What's the deal w/this phrase, "Has perfected forever those who are being sanctified."? We have here both the positional & ongoing practical work of Christ in our lives. Because you would think if we've been perfected, then we've been sanctified, how can you be perfect but still be being sanctified? **It's like this, there's no way to improve on the work of Christ in your life. In Christ you're perfect, that's your position, that's how God sees you, blameless, white like snow. Yet in this life there's an ongoing work of sanctification practically, daily, as I'm growing, learning *from* Him, walking *w/Him*. So positionally I'm perfect, practically I'm being sanctified.**

Vs15-17

This is how thorough the work of atonement is in Christ, God doesn't even acknowledge our sin, He doesn't call it to attention any more. It's gone, it's been "carried away" in Christ, He's our scapegoat who's taken away our sins. In Isaiah God said, "*I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.*" Isa 43:25 So thorough is God's work of forgiveness in Christ that He says, "I'm not even going to call to mind your sins anymore," **This is the call, come to Christ, forgiveness is just waiting for you, you can't clean up your act & then come to Christ, He's the One who cleanses you of sin, it's His work not yours. & He'll write His law, His word, His ways in your heart, He'll do an inward work of transformation. He's not all about conforming you outwardly to a set of do's & don'ts. He's about *transforming* you inwardly from the heart that you might know Him & walk *w/Him* & live your life for Him.**

One more thing I'd point out & then we're done. I want you to see here the *person* of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not a force, or some impersonal power that sort of floats out there like the wind. No, the Holy Spirit is a person, the Holy Spirit is God even as the Father is God, even as the Son is God. **Notice in Vs 15 the Holy Spirit "witnesses" He bears witness to us of sin, of righteousness, of judgment, if we're saved He bears witness to that in our hearts. He witnesses, He points people to Christ. #2 He speaks, we read, "The Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for *after He had said before*, & then we have a quote from Jeremiah, the Holy Spirit speaks, He' the author the word of God. It's all God breathed, inspired by the Holy Spirit. But check it out, in Vs 16 in regard to what the Holy Spirit said we read, "This is the covenant that I will make w/them after those days, *says the LORD.*"**

Well now which is it? Is it what the Holy Spirit said, or is it thus says the Lord? Yes, Because the Holy Spirit is God. Now we know that there's only 1 God, God the Father, God the Son, & God the Spirit. & Even though we go, well, $1+1+1=3$. It's equally true that $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$, so somehow & in some way we have 1 God represented in 3 persons.

But back to the main point here, so thorough is the work of J.C. on our behalf that God declares to those who are *in* Christ, "I will remember their sins no more."

Vs18

Or to understand that another way, "Where there is remission, there is rest." Not only rest in that Jesus isn't working to provide forgiveness for us, that work's finished. But rest in the sense that Jesus promised that if anyone was tired of the burdens of this life, if we were weary & heavy laden that we could come to Him & He will give us rest, rest for our souls because in Him we find remission, that is the forgiveness of our sin.

Prayer Points:

Lord we thank You for the rest that You provide for our souls, we come to You all weary & strung out & stressed out, & You give us peace, You give us rest, comfort, & compassion. We thank You for doing the work for us that we could never do for ourselves in providing forgiveness through the offering up of Your own body as a sacrifice for our sin. & Even as you fulfilled the Father's will in the body prepared for You, help us to fulfill Your will in the body prepared for us, have Your way we pray.

& If you've not come to Christ & you're tired & heavy laden of soul, why not find rest through the remission, the forgiveness of your sins today? Don't be deceived, don't get caught up in thinking you can do something that will make you right w/God. If we could Jesus wouldn't have come, but He came, & He satisfied the standard of God on your behalf. Now if you'll just surrender to Him, God will wipe away all your sin & remember them no more. Just open your heart, let Christ come in, & give you true rest.