While the Old Covenant had an earthly sanctuary and a human priesthood, the sanctuary of the New Covenant is heaven itself, and the Great Priest who ministers there is no other than the Son of God.
Sir Robert Anderson

Prayer Study 520

HEBREWS 10

First Love Ministries, Inc. of Perry, GA USA

One Sacrifice of Christ Is Sufficient

10 *For since the Law has only a shadow [just a pale representation] of the good things to come—not the very image of those things—it can never, by offering the same sacrifices continually year after year, make perfect those who approach [its altars].* ***2*** *For if it were otherwise, would not these sacrifices have stopped being offered? For the worshipers, having once [for all time] been cleansed, would no longer have a consciousness of sin.* ***3*** *But [as it is] these [continual] sacrifices bring a fresh reminder of sins [to be atoned for] year after year,* ***4*** *for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.* ***5*** *Therefore, when Christ enters into the world, He says,"Sacrifice and offering You have not desired,*
But [instead] You have prepared a body for Me [to offer];
6 *In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have taken no delight.*

7 *“Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come*
To do Your will, O God—[To fulfill] what is written of Me in the scroll of the book.’”
8 *After saying [in the citation] above, “You have neither desired, nor have You taken delight in sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin” (which are offered according to the Law)* ***9*** *then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will.” [And so] He does away with the first [covenant as a means of atoning for sin based on animal sacrifices] so that He may inaugurate and establish the second [covenant by means of obedience].* ***10*** *And in accordance with this will [of God] we [who believe in the message of salvation] have been sanctified [that is, set apart as holy for God and His purposes] through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed) once for all.*

The Mosaic law was a picture that God gave so that the Israelites could be taught. It was not the real thing, but pointed to the real thing, the worship of Jesus and His blood, which really is the only thing that can bring us into righteousness. We cannot keep the law and trying to keep the law does not bring us into a close, intimate relationship with God. So how were people in the Old Testament saved if the law could not save? They were saved by faith in the coming Messiah.

The writer goes on to say that, if something was

done over and over again, it must not be very effective. The repetition of these sacrifices was proof that they were not purifying human souls and not giving uninterrupted access to God.

So why do the sacrifices in the first place? These sacrifices reminded the people that they were sinners in need of a savior and that their sin was a barrier between them and God.

Then, to emphasize his point, the writer quotes Psalm 40:6-9. This passage further emphasizes that God does not want animal sacrifices but obedience to His will. The great prophet Samuel put it this way: *"Has the Lord great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obedience to the voice of the Lord? Surely, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams"* (1st Samuel 15:22). Disobedience sets up a barrier that no animal sacrifice can fix. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice because He walked in total obedience to the Father perfectly doing the Father's will.

The Finality of Christ

11 *Every priest stands [at his altar of service] ministering daily, offering the same sacrifices over and over, which are never able to strip away sins [that envelop and cover us];* ***12*** *whereas Christ, having offered the one sacrifice [the all-sufficient sacrifice of Himself] for sins for all time, sat down [signifying the completion of atonement for sin] at the right*

hand of God [the position of honor], ***13*** *waiting from that time onward until his enemies are made a footstool for His feet.* ***14*** *For by the one offering He has perfected forever and completely cleansed those who are being sanctified [bringing each believer to spiritual completion and maturity].* ***15*** *And the Holy Spirit also adds His testimony to us [in confirmation of this]; for after having said,*
16 *"This is the covenant that I will make with them*
After those days, says the Lord:
I will imprint My laws upon their heart,
And on their mind I will inscribe them [producing an inward change],"
He then says,
17 *"And their sins and their lawless acts*
I will remember no more [no longer holding their sins against them]."
18 *Now where there is [absolute] forgiveness and complete cancellation of the penalty of these things, there is no longer any offering [to be made to atone] for sin.*

The sacrifice of Jesus was made once and for all. The animal sacrifices were made over and over and even then had no real effectiveness. Even after the animal sacrifices and food and drink offerings, people were still conscious of their sins and

alienated from God.

The priests stood, as servants, to offer the sacrifice. Jesus sits, as royalty, at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

We see His enemies. He sees a footstool. One day all of His enemies will be made His footstool.

There will be a new covenant, the Everlasting Covenant. In this covenant, as I understand it, God will do such an inner work in our hearts that we will be cleansed from all unrighteousness and He will remember our sin no more (Jeremiah 31:34). Thus, the barrier of sin will be taken away forever, and there will be no need for any further sacrifice.

A New and Living Way

19 *Therefore, believers, since we have confidence and full freedom to enter the Holy Place [the place where God dwells] by [means of] the blood of Jesus,* ***20*** *by this new and living way which He initiated and opened for us through the veil [as in the Holy of Holies], that is, through His flesh,* ***21*** *and since we have a great and wonderful Priest [Who rules] over the house of God,* ***22*** *let us approach [God] with a true and sincere heart in unqualified assurance of faith, having had our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.* ***23*** *Let us*

seize and hold tightly the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is reliable and trustworthy and faithful [to His word]; ***24*** *and let us consider [thoughtfully] how we may encourage one another to love and to do good deeds,* ***25*** *not forsaking our meeting together [as believers for worship and instruction], as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more [faithfully] as you see the day [of Christ's return] approaching.*

Because of the sacrifice on the Cross of Jesus and because of the sign of the rent veil of the temple, we, not just the High Priest once a year, can enter into the Holy Place where God dwells. For most of us, this entrance is through prayer in a one-on-one interaction with God the Holy Spirit. We can enter because we have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus, because we have a sincere heart, have been washed by the Holy Spirit, and we hold tightly by faith what we believe or our confession of hope in Jesus.

In our own joy in meeting daily with the Lord, we must not forget that we are to encourage others in their walk with Christ to love others and do good deeds. We must continue to meet together both to worship the Lord and to study His word and to do so even more frequently as we see the Day of the Lord

approaching.

Christ or Judgment

26 *For if we go on willfully and deliberately sinning after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice [to atone] for our sins [that is, no further offering to anticipate],* ***27*** *but a kind of awful and terrifying expectation of [divine] judgment and the fury of a fire and burning wrath which will consume the adversaries [those who put themselves in opposition to God].* ***28*** *Anyone who has ignored and set aside the Law of Moses is put to death without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.* ***29*** *How much greater punishment do you think he will deserve who has rejected and trampled under foot the Son of God, and has considered unclean and common the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and has insulted the Spirit of grace [who imparts the unmerited favor and blessing of God]?* ***30*** *For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine [retribution and the deliverance of justice rest with Me], I will repay [the wrongdoer]." And again, "The Lord will judge His people."* ***31*** *It is a fearful and terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God [incurring His judgment and wrath].*

Barclay writes of this passage: “Every now and again, the writer to the Hebrews speaks with a sternness that is almost without parallel in the New Testament. Few writers have such a sense of the sheer horror of sin.” Barclay says that the reason for this is that the new faith was under attack and evil members of the Church would drive others away from receiving Jesus. Also, the writer believed that people who had been taught the truth of Christ were doubly accountable because the greater the knowledge of scripture, the greater the sin of violating it.

The writer sees sin as trampling Christ underfoot. In other words sin breaks Christ’s heart. Also, sin is the failure to realize the sacredness of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Finally, for this writer, sin is grieving the Holy Spirit when we disregard His warnings when we start to sin.

The Danger of Drifting

32 *But remember the earlier days, when, after being [spiritually] enlightened, you [patiently] endured a great conflict of sufferings,* ***33*** *sometimes by being made a spectacle, publicly exposed to insults and distress, and sometimes by becoming companions with those who were so treated.* ***34*** *For you showed*

sympathy and deep concern for those who were imprisoned, and you joyfully accepted the [unjust] seizure of your belongings and the confiscation of your property, conscious of the fact that you have a better possession and a lasting one [prepared for you in heaven]. ***35*** *Do not, therefore, fling away your [fearless] confidence, for it has a glorious and great reward.* ***36*** *For you have need of patient endurance [to bear up under difficult circumstances without compromising], so that when you have carried out the will of God, you may receive and enjoy to the full what is promised.*

37 *For yet in a very little while,*
He who is coming will come, and will not delay.

38 *But My righteous one [the one justified by faith] shall live by faith [respecting man's relationship to God and trusting Him];*
And if he draws back [shrinking in fear], My soul has no delight in him.

39 *But our way is not that of those who shrink back to destruction, but [we are] of those who believe [relying on God through faith in Jesus Christ, the Messiah] and by this confident faith preserve the soul.*

In this passage the writer to the Hebrews reminds these Jews of times past when they

had had to endure fierce opposition and persecution in their belief in Christ Jesus. He urges them not to drift away from the loyalty to the cause and person of Christ.

This writer also encourages the followers of Jesus with the words that He is coming back. He is coming back for a people walking in confident faith and not fear.

I believe that the two greatest problems in the Church at the End of the Age will be deception and fear. We have taught much on deception, and for those who want more information on that, I would recommend Derek Prince's *Beware of Last Days' Deception.*

I do want to close this lesson talking briefly about fear. There are many causes of fear, which we do not have time tonight to address, but I do want to give you some antidotes for fear:

a. **Reverential fear of and trust in God**- Matthew 10:28: *And fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* Psalm 112:7: *He will not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.*
b. **Walking in the *dunamis* power of God-** 2nd Timothy 1:7: *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power*

[dunamis] *and of love and of a sound mind.*

c. **Walking by faith-**1st John 5:4: *For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that overcomes the world-our faith.* We must learn to declare the Word of God by faith over the land and over our circumstances!
d. **Accepting the perfect love of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit-**John 4:18: *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts our fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.*

"The time is coming when an army of young warriors will hit the streets-fearless and bold beyond anything we have ever seen. Even death itself will hold no fear. They will cry to the Church, 'REPENT,' and to the comfortable, 'SELL, what you have and GIVE TO THE POOR.' They will be hated and despised by religious authorities. They will openly decry the TV preachers and eschew the watered-down pap that passes for 'gospel' in our day. They will reject sin and love people-even the homeless and the very least. Utterly pure of heart, they will befriend the prostitutes and the gang bangers. They will look and sound just like Jesus. With great daring and ruthless aggression, this army will make war on the devil and the darkness. Their music will be hymns of battle. Their sound will ROAR over the crowd. Truly these shall be the 'Sons of Thunder.'"

ANDREW STROM