

MAIN POINT: The shadows contained in the Law were always intended to point to the substance of Jesus Christ and him crucified, the only sacrifice that truly takes away sins.

FROM SHADOWS (Hebrews 10:1-4)

- The Insufficient Sacrifices (vv. 1-4)
 - The Law, and the sacrifices the Law prescribed, were but shadows (cf. Col. 2:16-17) of the good things to come (v. 1a). As such, they could never perfect the one who was offering the sacrifices (v. 1b).
 - The reality of ongoing sacrifices and the conscious awareness of the *need* for ongoing sacrifices demonstrate the insufficiency of the sacrifices offered under the Old Covenant (vv. 2-3; cf. Lev. 16).
 - The blood of bulls and goats commanded in the Law, though testifying that death was the penalty for sin, could never take away sins. Such blood always pointed beyond itself to a greater and more perfect sacrifice (cf. Heb. 9:11-14; 10:19-22).

Hebrews 10:5-10 reminds us that Jesus did not come as a priest offering animals but as the Great High Priest who would give his own body as a substitutionary sacrifice.

TO SUBSTANCE (Hebrews 10:11-14)

- The All-Sufficient Savior (vv. 11-14).
 - Priests under the Old Covenant always stood (cf. Deut. 10:8) to offer sacrifices—day and night, night and day (cf. Exod. 29:38-46; Num. 28:1-8)—which could never take away sins (v. 11; cf. Heb. 10:4).
 - Christ, however, offered himself once for all in his death (cf. John 19:30; Rev. 12:10-11), conquered death in his resurrection (cf. Heb. 2:14-15), and ascended into heaven where he sat down, awaiting the defeat of his enemies and his return in power (vv. 12-13; Ps. 110:1).
 - Our Great High Priest of the New Covenant, so much better than priests that served before under the Old Covenant, has made perfect those whom he continues to make holy (v. 14).

Hebrews 10:15-18 links the work of Jesus, the Great High Priest, with true and full forgiveness of sins under the New Covenant.

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Suggested Reading:

The Atonement: An Introduction by Jeremy Treat

Next Week's Preaching Text: 2 Timothy 2:14-19

Sermon Questions for Hebrews 10:1-4, 11-14

Please read Hebrews 10:1-4, 11-14

1. What about the Law was shadowy? What were the good things to come that the Law, shadowy though it was, pointed to?
2. Inherent within the sacrificial system was a self-evidencing ineffectiveness. How does Hebrews 10:2-3, 11 testify to such ineffectiveness?
3. Why could the blood of bulls and goats never take away sins? What was its purpose, then?
4. What is the contrast being drawn out between priests under the Old Covenant and Jesus, the Great High Priest of the New Covenant, in Hebrews 10:11-13?
5. Take some time to consider and discuss the wonder of the work of Christ, whose sacrifice of atonement perfected his people for all time and secured their sanctification.