

Hebrews 10A

- The author is finishing demolishing the fourth pillar of Jewish tradition and worship
 - This is the end of a long, 4 chapter exposition of truth from the OT
 - Given the author's pattern so far, we know what will follow after the exposition...
 - Exhortation, a warning in this chapter
 - Fourth pillar = Sacrifice
 - Sacrifice was as important to the Jewish system of worship as any other single entity
 - It's what gave meaning to their practices under the Law
 - And it had been magnified in their culture and in their teaching well beyond it's intended purpose
 - At its worst, it had become a means of making oneself righteous
 - So the writer now dives into that caldron of controversy, hoping to show the folly of depending on the Law's sacrifices for atonement

[Heb. 10:1](#) ¶ For the Law, since it has *only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near.

[Heb. 10:2](#) Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?

[Heb. 10:3](#) But in those *sacrifices* there is a reminder of sins year by year.

[Heb. 10:4](#) For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

- The opening verse restates the thesis of all four chapters
 - The Law is a shadow, not the real thing

- And in fact, the things to come were good but the Law was not in the sense of it's ultimate purpose
 - Therefore, the shadow cannot do what the real can
 - More specifically, the sacrifices performed under the Law cannot perfect those who practice such daily sacrifices
 - Perfect means to make complete
 - To make whole
 - To eliminate the deficit we have before God
 - So in other words, after a Jew had gone to the temple and offered an animal sacrifice
 - They left the temple with just as much debt before God as they entered with
 - That's why the author says they would have ceased offering those sacrifices if they had succeeded in cleansing them of sin
 - The very fact that the sacrifices were repetitious gave away their weakness
 - They weren't actually doing anything to solve the problem of sin
 - They were only a picture
 - For some Jews, hearing this revelation might be similar to a young child learning that there is, in fact, no such thing as Santa Claus
- "So then why then did God ask us to sacrifice year after year?"
 - Verse 3 gives the answer
 - In those sacrifices, there wasn't the absolution of sin but a reminder of sin
 - And in that reminder, we have again the real purpose of the Law
 - To emphasize our need
 - To emphasize man's debt before God

- But then in verse 4, the writer counters by saying the blood of animals as required in the Law couldn't satisfy that debt
 - So the Law emphasized a need that it couldn't satisfy
 - So in that way, it became a tutor to Christ
- Why don't animals suffice as sacrifices for men's sin?
 - Because their death is not a suitable substitute for the one in whose place they stand
 - They aren't a suitable substitute for a man
 - The debt owed by a man can only be paid by a man
 - So the blood of a man is the only acceptable atonement for our debt
 - Furthermore, the blood that covers our disobedience can only come from a man who has no disobedience of his own
 - Otherwise, if he were also disobedient, then his blood would be no better than our own
 - So the blood of bulls and goats is a different blood and one that carries no opportunity for obedience
 - The blood of animals is insufficient because it is amoral
 - The blood of sinful men is insufficient because it is immoral
 - The blood of Jesus was sufficient because it was entirely moral
- So, the writer then directs his readers to consider from where such a sacrifice came

[Heb. 10:5](#) Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says,
 "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED,
 BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME;

[Heb. 10:6](#) IN WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND *sacrifices* FOR SIN YOU
 HAVE TAKEN NO PLEASURE.

[Heb. 10:7](#) "THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME
 (IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME)
 TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.'"

- Therefore, or since the sacrifices under the Law won't work
 - God says as He comes into the world
 - Then he quotes from Ps 40
 - And actually, he quotes from the Septuagint, which actually labels this text psalm 39

[Psa. 39:6](#) Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not; but a body hast thou prepared me: whole-burnt-offering and sacrifice for sin thou didst not require.

[Psa. 39:7](#) Then I said, Behold, I come: in the volume of the book it is written concerning me,

[Psa. 39:8](#) I desired to do thy will, O my God, and thy law in the midst of mine heart.

- God has no desire for sacrifice and burnt offerings in the sense that they bring Him no satisfaction with regard to our sin debt before Him
 - It's like someone who owes a debt to their bank, and they show up every Monday morning at 9:00 sharp with an IOU for the debt
 - It's nice to see that the person still remembers they owe a debt
 - But it doesn't satisfy the debt nor the banker to continue delivering IOUs
 - These words are similar to the ones that Samuel spoke to Saul when he said

[1Sam. 15:22](#) Samuel said,

"Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices
As in obeying the voice of the LORD?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
And to heed than the fat of rams.

- The central problem here is one of obedience
 - The Law itself and all that it contained was necessary because of sin, which is nothing more than disobedience to God
 - The disobedience of Adam brought sin into the world
 - And it was passed along to every descendent of Adam

- What God truly desires is obedience, sinlessness
 - And the Law is powerless to produce obedience, sinlessness
 - So it requires sacrifices to remind us of the fact that we are continually disobedient
 - Yet the debt for our disobedience remains and must be paid
- So here again, the key is obedience
 - God requires obedience from everyone
 - Yet all have fallen short of the glory of God
 - So a sacrifice for that sin is required
 - The sacrifice required is the life of every sinful man or woman
 - Or in our place, we can sacrifice the life of one who has been obedient in all the things we could not be obedient (sinless)
 - And even the death itself must be an act of obedience on the part of the one dying
 - Where would we hope to find someone who could meet all these requirements?
 - One who is a man
 - But a perfectly obedient man
 - And a perfectly obedient man who would be willing to die and allow his blood to be a sacrifice to cover our sin
- Verse 5 provides proof that God always intend to give us a solution outside the Law
 - The psalmist says that God has provided a body for Himself
 - The writer then repeats the quote from Ps 40:6
 - Then in verse 7 He quotes Ps 40:7
 - This body is written in the scroll
 - And in verse 8, I delight to do your will – obedience

- So the writer has very skillfully connected scripture to reveal an underlying truth or message intended by the HS
 - God says I don't want sacrifices of animals to address the problem of your sin
 - I want obedience
 - And ultimately I will prepare a body for myself
 - A body that is described in the scroll
 - This reference to the scroll of the book is a reference to the OT Torah
 - It was a scroll
- So the entire Torah (Law) was a testimony in one way or another to Jesus and His eventual coming to die
 - A body God prepared for Himself that was without sin and obedient
 - And this body will delight to do the Father's will
 - And the irony is found in how the Law itself was a testimony to two things
 - First, it called for the animal sacrifices that by their endless repetition, revealed the Law own uselessness
 - Secondly, we're told here that it's true message was a testimony to the Messiah, Who was the real solution to man's need for sacrifice
- Look at how the writer makes the same conclusion

[Heb. 10:8](#) After saying above, "SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND *sacrifices* FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE *in them*" (which are offered according to the Law),

[Heb. 10:9](#) then He said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL." He takes away the first in order to establish the second.

- The fact that God says I don't want the sacrifices given under the Law

- Tells us that He is doing away with the Law
 - It was never the solution
- Secondly, the reference to a coming Messiah to do God's will is proof that a better solution was to be established in place of the first

[Heb. 10:10](#) By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

[Heb. 10:11](#) ¶ Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;

[Heb. 10:12](#) but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,

[Heb. 10:13](#) waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.

[Heb. 10:14](#) For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

- Verse 10 is a great single verse to remember for use in discussion of works versus grace
 - Verse 10 says by this will
 - The will of the one who was promised in the Psalms
 - This will refers to the obedient will of that perfect Messiah
 - In other words, by His obedience, we are sanctified
 - We are set apart or made holy because His body was offered once for all
 - A single event that satisfied for all time
 - And then the writer takes that opportunity to make another contrast
 - Briefly, the law provided for priests to stand, daily, offering time after time
 - And yet all that activity got us no where spiritually
 - But Jesus accomplished what they could not
 - There was only one sacrifice
 - For all time

- And after it was done, Jesus sat down at the right hand of God
 - Quoting from Psalm 110
 - Priests never sat in the temple
 - There were no chairs
 - They remained standing because standing was a sign that work was underway
 - And sitting meant that work had ceased
 - So Jesus can sit because His work has finished
 - And the reference to the Psalm is used as further proof that the work of the Messiah is finite and comes to a conclusion
- And He waits for the appointed time when all His enemies will be brought before Him
 - Then when that time arrives, He will rise to become judge of the world
- To sum up the effect of this sacrifice, the writer says that He has perfected
 - Made perfect and complete
 - Those who are being sanctified
 - Who are being set apart and made holy
 - We are positionally perfect because of the Jesus' will
 - Yet we are not perfect in practice as yet
 - But nevertheless, a process is ongoing in each of us to move in the direction of holiness even now
- Why does God make effort to perfect us even now when we can't hope to reach perfection this side of Heaven?
 - Because in that movement, we form a picture ourselves
 - Where before God's picture of being set apart from sin was achieved in the Law and it's practices under the Old Covenant

- Now you and I and the church form the new picture in the world of Christ's body
- We are a picture in our very lives and actions of Christ (His Body)
 - And so the world is yet still receiving a picture of holiness and the necessity of being set apart from sin by the existence of the Church
- It's interesting that the picture reverses in tribulation
 - The church having been raptured, the sacrifices resume in the third temple so that the picture of sin and atonement continues uninterrupted
 - Though in a different form

[Heb. 10:15](#) And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying,

[Heb. 10:16](#) "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD:
I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART,
AND ON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM,"

He then says,

[Heb. 10:17](#) "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS
I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

[Heb. 10:18](#) Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer *any* offering for sin.

- And then the writer sums up his teaching on sacrifice by quoting Jeremiah again
 - His first quote was simply intended to remind the reader of the New Covenant described in Jeremiah again
 - He had already given the full quote in the previous chapter
 - Now he simply makes reference to it again
- But the writer proceeds the quote with:
 - "After saying"
 - And then follows the quote with "He then says"
 - Meaning, Jeremiah also says that this covenant would result in all sin being done away with permanently

- So again, the OT quote was showing that God intended that His NC would completely eliminated the need for sacrifice
 - Since it would do away with sin
- Which then gives us his concluding statement
 - Where forgiveness has taken place for sin, there can be no reason, no need for offerings for sin
 - All other sacrifices should stop
 - We have no need or altars any longer
- Now following this long exposition tracing back to chapter 7
 - Now the writer is ready to move to an exhortation
 - Which is followed by his fourth warning

[Heb. 10:19](#) ¶ Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,
[Heb. 10:20](#) by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh,
[Heb. 10:21](#) and since *we have* a great priest over the house of God,
[Heb. 10:22](#) let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

- Therefore announces the exhortation
 - Brethren speaks of the believer at least nominally
 - We have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus
 - Remember his readers were largely no Levites
 - So none of them would have ever thought to enter the Holy Place
 - But the writer says they could now enter the Holy Place by Jesus blood
 - And if we're talking about Jesus blood, then which temple is the writer talking about?

- The heavenly one, where Jesus' blood resides
- And He gave us a door or veil through which to pass in reaching that Holy Place
 - The way was provided through His flesh, meaning through the sacrificial death of His body
 - A "way" into the Holy Place was provided
 - A great high priest, the writer reminds us
- For all these reasons, the writer then begins to challenge the readers to act a certain way given what they know to be true about Jesus
 - Let us draw near
 - The phrase is often used as a call to worship in Greek
 - So it can be seen as a call to worship a certain way
 - It can also simply be a word to mean seek or approach God in this way
 - In other words, since God has granted this access, let's use it
 - And the he lists some elements to our approach
 - A sincere heart
 - Not a false motive or superficial purpose
 - With a full assurance of faith
 - Or with certain faith
 - Not doubting or with any questions
 - And by faith, he means of course faith in the person and work of Jesus
 - Having clean hearts
 - Or in other words, the baptism of the HS
 - True salvation
 - Justification and the pure conscience it brings us

- Then finally, bodies washed with pure water
 - The word washed (or bathed) is in the perfect tense of Greek
 - A continuous action, not a past tense
 - It refers to the sanctification process that the body undergoes
 - We approach Jesus clear in conscience but continually washing our bodies of our sinful practices
- Look at that pattern
 - The writer calls his audience to approach the Lord first with sincerity
 - No false confessions
 - Which then leads to a full and certain faith in Him
 - Not a false confession
 - Which then results in justification and a clear conscience
 - Which then makes possible the sanctification of the body
 - This is really nothing more than a call to the gospel
 - In light of all that the writer has explained about Jesus
 - But it also has practical value for the true believer who's being urged to take advantage of the way God has provided for approaching Him

[Heb. 10:23](#) Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful;

[Heb. 10:24](#) and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, [Heb. 10:25](#) not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

- To this same group, he then says hold fast the confession of hope without wavering
 - For the promises we are given in faith are certain and the one who promised is faithful

- The word for hold fast here is the same one the writer used when he gave his second warning
 - He said we are in God's house if we hold fast our confession firm until the end
 - Now he says let's do that
 - Let's be one of those who holds his confession fast
 - Without wavering, in other words
- Secondly, consider (or look for ways) to stimulate (or provoke) one another to love and good deeds
 - Reinforce the right kinds of behaviors and attitudes with the church
- And of course, you can't do that if the gathering of believers isn't a regular practice for everyone
 - So he warns them not to be like some who have become lazy and don't bother to gather with other believers
- Because in the gathering encouragement can take place
 - And it will become even more important as the day draws near
- That day is a reference to two points
 - On the one hand, it had immediate prophetic meaning to the church in the writer's day
 - AD 70 was right around the corner when many lives in the city would be lost
 - And persecution of Jews and later Christians would break out elsewhere
 - Secondly, this same exhortation is becoming more and more relevant for the church today as it speaks ultimately of Christ's return for the church
- This leads to the warning for those who don't do these things