

Hebrews 10:5-18 – No More Sacrifices

Jesus is a better priest than the Aaronic priests and he offered a better sacrifice for sins than the Aaronic priests offered. Jesus entered heaven before the presence of God to offer his own blood as a once for all sacrifice for sins. His one time sacrifice of himself is sufficient to grant forgiveness of past, present and future sins. It also covers all types of sins. The repeated offering of sacrifices under the Mosaic law revealed that the sacrifices were not effective in removing sin. They were a daily reminder of sin. The blood of bulls and goats was not able to take away sins.

Read Hebrews 10:5-10.

Verse 5 starts with “Consequently, when Christ came into the world”. ESV and NIV have “when Christ”. NKJV and NASB have “when He”. “Christ” is not in the original text, but it is clear that the verse is talking about when “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). What follows “He said” is a quote from Psalm 40:6-8. This was a Psalm of David but the writer of Hebrews understood these verses to be the words of Jesus. This passage was quoted in the context of the ineffectiveness of sacrifices under the law to remove sins. What does verse 5 say about God’s desire and pleasure concerning Mosaic sacrifices? (10:5)

In verse 5, all 55 English translations that I looked at have “body”. ESV has “a body have you prepared for me”. Psalm 40:6 in the ESV has “you have given me an open ear”. Almost all other English translations for Ps. 40:6 have “ear(s)” and or something about “listening”. The ear is part of the body, but why the change to “body” in Hebrews? One version of the LXX (septuagint.bible) does have “body” instead of “ear”. Another version of the LXX (Rahlf’s) has “ear”. It seems reasonable to assume that the writer of Hebrews was using a version of the LXX which had “body”. The reason this version of the LXX has “body” and not “ear” is a bit of a mystery. (10:5)

“Sacrifices and offerings” in verse 5 and “burnt offerings and sin offerings” in verse 6 cover the spectrum of sacrifices offered under the Mosaic law. What other Old Testament passages express the idea that God prefers something more important than sacrifices? See 1 Samuel 15:22, Psalm 51:16-17, Hosea 6:6. (10:6)

The quote from Psalm 40:6-8 was explained in verses 8-10 except for “it is written of me in the scroll of the book”. In this context, the meaning appears to be that Christ’s first coming was foretold in scripture. It is not clear whether a particular book was in view or all Old Testament scripture. (10:7)

In verses 8-9, what was the author's interpretation of Psalm 40:6-8? What was done away with? What was established? BDAG says that "does away with" here means "do away with, abolish". (10:8-9)

In verse 10, what was the author's interpretation of Psalm 40:6-8? What was the application for the hearers/readers of this letter? (10:10)

Read Hebrews 10:11-18.

In verse 11, how were the sacrifices under the law characterized? How do you reconcile this statement with statements like "And the priest shall make atonement for him for the sin that he has committed, and he shall be forgiven." This and slight variations of it are found in Leviticus 4:20, 26, 35; 5:10, 13; 19:22. Did these forgiven sins still need to be atoned for by the blood of Jesus? (10:11)

Notice the contrast in verses 11 and 12 between the priests standing daily and Jesus seated. Also, there is a contrast between the repeated offerings under the law versus Jesus' once for all offering. What is the implied contrast between the effectiveness of the sacrifices under the law and the effectiveness of Jesus' single sacrifice? (10:12)

While Jesus is seated at the right hand of God, what is he waiting for? (10:13)

From verse 14, what statement was made about the effectiveness of Jesus' single sacrifice? (10:14)

Verses 16-17 repeat parts of the Jeremiah passage previously quoted in chapter 8. Verse 15 attributes this scripture as the witness of the Holy Spirit. Parts of Jeremiah 31:33-34 were repeated in 16-17. In verse 18, what was the author's conclusion from the fact that under the new covenant our sins and lawless deeds are no longer remembered? (10:15-18)