

The author of Hebrews has made the case that Psalm 110 and Jeremiah 31 predict a new covenant that brings the old covenant to its fulfillment. The pictures of the old covenant point us to the reality of the new covenant. Through Jesus' death, we have received the promised eternal inheritance of the law written on our minds and hearts. The sinless blood of Christ was sprinkled on the heavenly mercy seat, coming between the law that condemned us and our holy God who always does what is just (Hebrews 9:24). The last chapter ended by telling us that Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many, and "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (Hebrews 9:28). Come Lord Jesus! Amen?

In our chapter for today, the author concludes his case that the law was insufficient to perfect the worshipers. It was a shadow of the true realities. *¹ For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. ² Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins?* Hebrews 10:1,2 We should remember that the author is warning this church of Hebrew believers that returning to Judaism is to leave the treasure and return to the treasure map. They had arrived, but now under the threat of persecution they were looking backward.

When Jesus rose from death and met the two on the road to Emmaus, *"beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."* Luke 24:27 Jesus saw that all the Scriptures pointed to Him, which means they also point to the new covenant that He would establish in His own blood.

On a treasure map you might find directions and lines that indicate routes and distances. There might be sketches of islands and reefs. Then there is the destination, the number of paces from a landmark, and at last a picture of the treasure chest. The author is telling us you can't just take the map, even memorize the map, and claim you have the treasure. Some who call themselves Christians can quote the map to you, but they have never journeyed into the waters. They've never set sail. Their boat is still in the dock. After all, there are storms out there (Acts 14:22). People claim it is a hopeless quest. Others make the journey and even uncover the treasure, but they never claim it as their own. They never spend the gold or wear a jewel. **The treasures are the promises of God and the life of Christ in us. Claim the promises!** This treasure chest is bottomless. Live in Jesus and let Him live in you (Colossians 1:27).

The author is telling that Hebrew church that the yearly repetition of the sacrifices showed that perfection had not yet come. They were still looking at the map and hoping to one day arrive at the treasure, the complete and forever forgiveness of sins. To arrive at the treasure means you are no longer conscious of sin hanging over your head and demanding that justice eventually be served.

Commented [PW1]: Psalm 110:4 (ESV)

⁴ The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

Commented [PW2]: Jeremiah 31:33 (ESV)

³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Commented [PW3]: Hebrews 9:24 (ESV)

²⁴ For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

Commented [PW4]: Acts 14:22 (ESV)

²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

Commented [PW5]: Colossians 1:27 (ESV)

²⁷ To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Certainly, we still sin, and we are convicted and take it to the cross and ask for forgiveness (1 John 1:9). But we don't have to wait until the Day of Atonement, or until we can get a goat and bring it to the priest to sacrifice it. Even with these shadows the consciousness of sin remained. There was an inner sense that this was surely not enough to pay for sins before the eyes of a holy God (Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6-8).

Have you realized that if you have received Christ as your Savior your total sin debt is paid? Some believers keep bringing up the sins they committed before they came to Christ. It is dealt with already! Jesus' sacrifice was enough. Resurrection proved it. Breathe a sigh of relief and move on. It doesn't mean we can take future sin lightly. On the contrary, Paul wrote that we have died to sin, so how can we keep on living in it (Romans 6:1-2). Our gratitude and relationship with Christ directs us toward holiness. But if we do sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus, whose sacrifice has paid our debt (1 John 2:1). We are grieved when we fail, and we ask for strength to not repeat our failure, but the treasure of forgiveness and His presence is ours!

³ *But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.* ⁴ *For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.* Hebrews 10:3,4 There are some people who teach that the sacrifices saved those under the law. Verse four says that is impossible. To go back to Judaism would be to reject the all-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus and return to what only pointed to what He would do for us. The sacrificial system would only remind them over and over that they need Jesus. The saints under the old covenant were not saved by the blood of animals. The act of sacrifice was an expression of faith that God would one day provide the perfect sacrifice. Until the Lamb of God came, those sacrifices kept pointing to that future hope. Faith in God's future provision saved the saints of old, just as faith in His past provision saves us today.

⁵ *Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; ⁶ in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.* Hebrews 10:5,6 Because sacrifices could not remove sins, because the continual repetition of sacrifice looked forward to the perfect sacrifice, when the Messiah came into the world, He quoted Psalm 40:6-8.

Now, our first question should be, "Where did Jesus say this?" I can only think of three possibilities. Either the author is quoting a lost text, or he had a revelation of this, or he believes that when the psalmist wrote the psalm, he was in the Spirit and prophetically writing what would be said (2 Peter 1:21). I believe it is the last suggestion. My reason is the verse I cited earlier from Luke. Jesus taught the disciples that all that was written of Him in the Scriptures had to be fulfilled. Jesus said the same thing to the Apostles when He appeared to them (Luke 24:44). Everything written about Him in the Law, Prophets, and the Psalms had to come to pass.

If that is indeed the case, then many commentators are shortsighted in believing the psalmist was only writing about himself but somehow it applies to Jesus too. In some cases, I believe the psalmist was prophetically writing about Jesus and only about Jesus. I think many are too overly cautious about including the supernatural. David was

Commented [PW6]: 1 John 1:9 (ESV)

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Commented [PW7]: Hosea 6:6 (ESV)

⁶ For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

Commented [PW8]: Micah 6:6-8 (ESV)

⁶ "With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?"

⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

⁸ He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Commented [PW9]: Romans 6:1-2 (ESV)

¹ What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?

² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

Commented [PW10]: 1 John 2:1 (ESV)

¹ My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Commented [PW11]: 2 Peter 1:21 (ESV)

²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Commented [PW12]: Luke 24:44 (ESV)

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

a king and a prophet. If Jesus said there were things in the Psalms that were written about Him, we should believe that is the case.

We have another thing to learn from the fact that the author writes in this way. He is quoting the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament which was done several hundreds of years before Christ, but he changes some of the words to similar sounding words. When you look up **Psalm 46:6-8** in your Bible it will read, "You have given me an open ear." This would imply that the author was inspired to see the passage in a new light. Why not? If Hebrews is God breathed, then the Scripture can be quoted by the inspired author in a new light.

If we look at the Hebrew version, the idea is similar. A bond slave could give him or herself to their master for life. The master would take an awl and bore their right earlobe open on the doorframe of the master's house (Exodus 21:5,6). The symbolism meant the slave's ear was attentive to the master to do His will. This is exactly the heart of Jesus who came to do the Father's will. His ear was continually open to the Father. That is our desire as well as we mature in our faith. We want to increasingly be like our Lord, attentive and obedient to the direction of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:13).

For Jesus to come into the world with an ear open to the Father, He had to be born sinless, and that is only possible through the virgin birth (Luke 1:34-35). Thus, the sound alike wording fits the theological implications. God prepared a body for Him. Why? Because God was not pleased with animal sacrifices. His body was the sacrifice God had always intended to redeem fallen men and women.

The quotation continues, *⁷ Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'*" Hebrews 10:7 Jesus came to do the will of the Father, that is why He had to have an open ear. The Hebrew in the psalm is even stronger, "I *delight* to do your will." When we see Jesus, we see what the Father asked Him to do (John 5:19). Jesus said, *³⁰ "I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.*" John 5:30 It was probably a reference to the Psalm 40 verse 8. We have already seen how Jesus saw Himself written about in the scroll of the book.

It is interesting to note that the author didn't include the end of Psalm 40 verse 8, as it ties in perfectly with the Jeremiah passage regarding the law being written upon our hearts and minds (Jeremiah 31:33). Psalm 40:8b reads, *^{8b} "your law is within my heart."* The new covenant does for us what was true for Jesus from His birth. I suspect the author wanted the Hebrews to make that connection on their own. Sometimes that is more powerful than being told. They could go back to tablets of stone, or enjoy the wonder of the law within our hearts.

⁸ When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), ⁹ then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. Hebrews 10:8,9 The author applied Psalm 110 and Jeremiah 31 to show there had to be a change from the old covenant to the new. Now

Commented [PW13]: Psalm 40:6-8 (ESV)

⁶ In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.
⁷ Then I said, "Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me:
⁸ I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."

Commented [PW14]: Exodus 21:5-6 (ESV)

⁵ But if the slave plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,'
⁶ then his master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall be his slave forever.

Commented [PW15]: Romans 6:13 (ESV)

¹³ Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

Commented [PW16]: Luke 1:34-35 (ESV)

³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"
³⁵ And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.

Commented [PW17]: John 5:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.

Commented [PW18]: Jeremiah 31:33 (ESV)

³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

he is also using the Psalm 40 passage to logically show that, if God was not pleased with animal sacrifice and so He prepared the body of Jesus who came to do God's will, it must mean there was more to God's will than animal sacrifices (Isaiah 1:11; Psalm 50:13). The sacrifice that did please God by removing sins once for all, was the body of Jesus with His sinless blood. While the sacrifices of the first were still continuing, the author says God has done away with it to establish the second. We saw that pictured in the scarlet cord.

¹⁰ *And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* Hebrews 10:10 What the old covenant could not bring to completion, the new covenant, sealed with the blood of Christ, has accomplished. The will of God that Jesus obeyed in every aspect was to offer Himself as a sin offering (Isaiah 53:10). The One who knew no sin became sin for us that in Him we might have the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21). All who are in Christ are positionally sanctified. More on that in verse 14. **When God looks on us He sees the righteousness Jesus merited. Hallelujah!**

The phrase "once for all" has now been used by the author four times (7:27; 9:12; 9:26; also see Romans 6:10). Three of those times are in reference to His dying on the cross once for all people, and one referred to His sprinkling of blood on the mercy seat in heaven. These two acts have eternal, unchangeable significance.

¹¹ *And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.* Hebrews 10:11 The priests were still doing what never took away sin. Priests stand when they are in the temple. There are no seats. That is because the work is never done. They cover sin until it can be removed, but as long as they are performing animal sacrifices those sins aren't removed. ¹² *But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God,* ¹³ *waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet.* Hebrews 10:13-14

Jesus sat down! The work was done. The removal of sins was accomplished. The people of faith are sanctified. He doesn't have to die again. His death was all that God required. The soul that sins must die (Ezekiel 18:4), so Jesus took all our sins upon Himself and died in our place. Now He sits and waits until God puts all enemies of Jesus under His feet forever. This again alludes to Psalm 110:1, *The LORD says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.* And that is where He is even now, at God's right hand, interceding for you and me (Hebrews 7:25).

¹⁴ *For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.* Hebrews 10:14 If you are in Christ, you are perfected for all time in God's eyes! You couldn't be more perfect. That's what Jesus has done for us. We need to realize this and stop accepting condemnation (Romans 8:1). This perfection is what is referred to as *positional* righteousness. But in daily life experiences, we are "being sanctified" (2 Corinthians 3:18). That is called *experiential* righteousness. We are learning to work out what God has put in us. That's what Paul meant when he said to work out your

Commented [PW19]: Isaiah 1:11 (ESV)

¹¹ "What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats.

Commented [PW20]: Psalm 50:13 (ESV)

¹³ Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?

Commented [PW21]: Isaiah 53:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Commented [PW22]: 2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV)

²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Commented [PW23]: Hebrews 7:27 (ESV)

²⁷ He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.

Commented [PW24]: Hebrews 9:12 (ESV)

¹² He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

Commented [PW25]: Hebrews 9:26 (ESV)

²⁶ For then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Commented [PW26]: Romans 6:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

Commented [PW27]: Ezekiel 18:4 (ESV)

⁴ Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine; the soul who sins shall die.

Commented [PW28]: Hebrews 7:25 (ESV)

²⁵ Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

Commented [PW29R28]:

Commented [PW30]: Romans 8:1 (ESV)

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Commented [PW31]: 2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

salvation with fear and trembling. ¹² *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,* ¹³ *for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.* Philippians 2:12-13 God has saved you, now let Him work in you to live like it. You are holy, now let Him help you walk in holiness. He has given you the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:18), now let Him help you take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). Redeemed people don't take it lightly. We know the discipline of the Lord can be lovingly severe. We fear and tremble lest we be found to fail the grace of God.

¹⁵ *And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,* ¹⁶ *"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds,"* Hebrews 10:15,16 He is reminding us of the Jeremiah prophecy of the new covenant promise. ¹⁷ *then he adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more."* Hebrews 10:17 The Holy Spirit inspired the prophecy and He tells us that once we enter the new covenant, He no longer remembers our sins and lawless deeds. Have you noticed in the Old Testament that God keeps reminding the Jews of their pattern of behaving like their ancestors (2 Chronicles 30:7; Zechariah 1:4)? Even Jesus said the Pharisees were just like their forefathers (Matthew 23:31,32). He remembers the sins of the unrepentant but, for those who come to the cross with a broken heart seeking grace and forgiveness, our sins are forgotten!

¹⁸ *Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.* Hebrews 10:18 There is no need for sacrifices, not even your sacrifices. You can't add merit to what Jesus did for you. You *can* step into the good works He prepared in advance for you to do out of love for Him (Ephesians 2:10), but it won't make you more righteous in God's eyes. Jesus paid it all. That is why we owe Him our all. In the words of Mercy Me, "You are righteous; you are holy; you are one of the redeemed. Set apart, a brand new heart. You are free indeed." And how should we respond? We should be working out this wonderful gift of salvation with fear and trembling, letting God work in us to will and do His good pleasure each and every day, for the glory of God. This concludes the argument to stand for their faith. Next the author will tell them and us the application.

Questions

- 1 Review the previous passage.
- 2 When did Jesus indicate the law was a shadow?
- 3 What is the believer's attitude toward past and future sins?
- 4 What does verse 5 teach us about inspiration of Scripture?
- 5 How could Jesus be born human without a sin nature?
- 6 What do we need to do the will of the Father?
- 7 What's the connection with Psalm 40:8?
- 8 How do we know the sacrifices didn't please God?
- 9 What is significant about Jesus being seated?
- 10 What is positional and experiential righteousness?

Commented [PW32]: 1 Corinthians 2:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

Commented [PW33]: 2 Corinthians 10:5 (ESV)

⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

Commented [PW34]: 2 Chronicles 30:7 (ESV)

⁷ Do not be like your fathers and your brothers, who were faithless to the LORD God of their fathers, so that he made them a desolation, as you see.

Commented [PW35]: Zechariah 1:4 (ESV)

⁴ Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets cried out, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, Return from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.' But they did not hear or pay attention to me, declares the LORD.

Commented [PW36]: Matthew 23:31-32 (ESV)

³¹ Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.
³² Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers.

Commented [PW37]: Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.