

1. The Inferior Sacrifices of the Law (Heb 10:1-10)

The author now elaborates upon his previous statements about the ineffectiveness of animal sacrifices under the Law. He has previously noted that they “cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience” (Heb 9:9), and he asserted that they merely had the effect of “purifying the flesh” (9:13). Now he bluntly says, “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins” (10:4). The repetition of the sacrifices is evidence to the author that they were impotent and served as a constant reminder to the Jews that their sins hadn’t adequately been dealt with. As proof of the inadequacy of these sacrifices Ps 40:6-8 is cited. The author makes two points: 1) Animal sacrifices didn’t satisfy God’s justice, and 2) God intended to send His Son to provide atonement and, in the process, establish a new covenant (10:8-9). The once-for-all offering of Jesus is proof of its efficacy (10:10).

1. In whose mind is there a reminder of sins by the animal sacrifices of the Law?
2. Describe the Law of Moses from Hebrews 8:5; 9:9, 23-24; 10:1.

2. One Sacrifice for Sins Forever (Heb 10:11-18)

This section concludes the discussion of priesthood/sacrifice begun in Heb 5:1. Note again the present tense “stands” (10:11), an indication that the book was written before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. In summation, Jesus offered one sacrifice which “perfected forever those who are being sanctified” (10:14). A final appeal is made to Jeremiah confirming that the new covenant which granted true pardon has come to pass.

3. For what is Jesus now waiting?
4. Comment on the role of the Holy Spirit from Hebrews 10:15; 9:8 and 2:4.

3. “Let Us ...” (Heb 10:19-25)

The remainder of the Hebrew epistle is an impassioned plea to avoid apostasy. Hebrews 10:19-21 encapsulates the great blessings of the new covenant. In view of this rich, bold access to heaven, three imperatives follow, each with amplification: 1) **Let us** draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith (10:22). On what grounds? The purification of Christ which fully cleanses our evil conscience; 2) **Let us** hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering (10:23). With what assurance? For He who promised is faithful; 3) **Let us** consider one another in order to stir up love and good works (10:24). In what way? By mutual exhortation arising from occasions of public assembly (which some had already begun to neglect). The phrase “as you see the day approaching” (10:25) has induced much controversy. If it is a specific event, it is most likely the destruction of Jerusalem which could have extended fallout among these brethren. Certainly this would be a calamitous day accompanied by definite signs (Mt 24:4-28). If the warning is general, it could have reference to the day of judgment. Some object to this explanation on the grounds that no one will “see” that day approaching. But the faithful man

understands that life is brief and uncertain (Jas 4:13-14), and spiritual maturity brings a sense of urgency. Truly *“our salvation is nearer than when we first believed”* (Rom 13:11). Thus we should take advantage of every opportunity to correct and exhort brethren who are drifting from the Lord.

5. What kind of way has been consecrated for us by Jesus?

6. What should we stir up in others? How do we go about this?

7. What are some consequences of forsaking the assembling of the saints?

4. Trampling the Son of God Underfoot (Heb 10:26-31)

“For if we sin willfully ...” (Heb 10:26) indicates a condition more fully described as *“trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant ... a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace”* (10:29). This is apostasy, not the occasional sin which beleaguers every faithful saint. Further evidence of this is the warning from the Law: *“Anyone who has **rejected** Moses ...”* (10:28). God is not to be trifled with, and His love for man though deep and genuine will not excuse rebellion: *“Vengeance is Mine, I will repay ... The Lord will judge His people”* (10:30).

8. What is not available for the one who rejects Christ (Hebrews 10:26)?

9. What is a fearful expectation for those who are rebellious?

10. What phrase(s) indicate that the prospective apostate was truly saved at first?

5. The Former Days of Faith (Heb 10:32-39)

The author now urges his readers to reflect upon their earlier days of faith when *“you endured a great struggle with sufferings ... and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods”* (10:32, 34). Since that time they had forgotten *“that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.”* Persecution can weary the soul, and these brethren *“have need of endurance”* (10:36). God asks different things of different people. From some He asks perseverance amid trials. But *“we are not of those who draw back ...”*.

11. When do we receive the promise of God?

12. In whom does God have no pleasure?

13. What do you know about the relationship between the author and readers?