

THE NEW AND LIVING WAY

BIBLE TEXT : Hebrews 10:1-39

LESSON 441 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 10:16, 17).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Hebrews 10:1-39

1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3 But in those *sacrifices there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year.

4 For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes

Bible References:

Notes:

A Shadow

"FOR the law having a shadow of good things to come, . . ." (Hebrews 10:1).

It does not say that the Law was a shadow, but it says that it had a shadow. What was the shadow? Those very services which God had ordained by which they might draw nigh unto Him. A shadow is about the most intangible, transitory thing that we can think of in this present life. In figures of speech, it always carries that significance with it, that it is something that is shadowy, intangible, transitory, which passes away. That is exactly what the author meant when he said that the Law had shadows of good things to come, and was not the very image of the things.

There is a vast difference between an image and a shadow. The Law was a shadow but Jesus Christ was an image. He was the express image of the Person of God. Not only had this Law shadows in this respect, but the priests were also shadows, as it were.

"Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: . . ." (Hebrews 8:5).

So the priests themselves served as shadows also. The sacrifices were offered repeatedly because they were transitory.

"For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins" (Hebrews 10:2).

There is not a system of man by which the conscience can be purged. God requires a man to have a conscience void of offence toward Him and man. Man's substitutes cannot lift the condemnation that rests upon the conscience.

"But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:3, 4).

The blood of bulls and goats will not suffice to take away sins.

It was never intended that this Tabernacle service, as elaborate as it was, should constitute the heart and centre of their religion. The Lord expected it to be a representative of the spiritual truths that lay underneath them, and the spiritual truths to which they pointed.

Vision or Lack of it

Abraham saw the significance before the Law was ever given. Jesus said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day." What is the significance of that? Abraham rejoiced in the great Gospel dispensation as he had been given a foretaste of it. All those great men of God saw it. Moses, as he came into contact with God up on the Mount when he was given the Law, saw beyond all that, saw what it must mean to Israel -- righteousness in this life, holiness and an upright walk before the Lord without which these

the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

15 *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

16 This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

18 Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more offering for sin.

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And *having* an high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;)

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

26 For if we sin wilfully after that

things meant nothing.

But that was the very point in which the Israelites failed: they took the shadow and made it the substance. The all important thing to them was to go through the routine, to go through the motions, to keep up that service.

We have people who are doing the same thing today. The Seventh Day Adventists are repeating what the Israelites did; they are taking the shadows and trying to make them the substance. It is true also of many other religions. The nominal church has fallen into the same rut where all their emphasis is put upon their service, the form through which they go. If it is not the church service, then it is the church organisation, their committees, their boards, their elders, their deacons, their program, their financial budget.

The very first and all-important thing is that a man go down before the Lord and seek Him until he gets a real experience; then it is not a matter of all-importance whether he joins our church or any other church. He is a member of the Church of Christ, and it is incidental whether he be a member of the Apostolic Faith or not..

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

"When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?" (Isaiah 1:11,12).

Those priests were marching in and out with solemn parade, with their vestments, going through their daily routine, going by course into the Holy Place with their censers, lighting the lamps, putting the incense onto the golden altar, changing the bread upon the table every week; and their lives full of sin. They were practicing fraud and deception, failing to measure up to the least of the commandments of God, walking in duplicity. Yet when they came to tread the courts of the Lord, they walked very soberly and piously, with their long robes and their phylacteries. No wonder the Lord was sick of it.

Sacrifices

The sacrifices of animals were kept up year in and year out, but under the New Covenant Christ, who offered Himself once for all, became a sacrifice which stands eternally and universally. It is for the entire world, without any repetition.

Here is another place where the Catholic order is absolutely contrary to the Word of God. A Council of Trent formulated the Catholic Creed and they distinctly say that the mass is a sacrifice with provisory virtue in it. The mass is kept up continually in the Catholic Church, and daily in most of their churches. That is just a continuation of the old Levitical order of having the sacrifices continually. Some Catholics tell you that that is not the case, that the mass is just symbolical. If they do that they deny the very word of their Creed, which says it is a provisory sacrifice. In one point after another we find that the Catholic Church has continued the old Levitical order in priests and sacrifices, which passed away.

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12).

As it is with the sacrifices, so it is with the blood. As Jesus' sacrifice stands continually, so the Blood is an ever-open fount flowing freely for sin and all uncleanness, never ceasing, never

we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,
27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;

33 Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.

34 For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

failing.

That is what that great song of William Cowper signifies: "And sinners, plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains." That is our cleansing fountain under this New Dispensation. To symbolize that, they kept slaying their oxen, their bulls, their goats, their sheep continually under the Old Testament. But it just pointed to that fount which flows forever. It says that the bodies of these animals whose blood was taken into the sanctuary were taken without the camp and burned. But we have today that body of Christ to which the writer has reference when he says:

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

"In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure" (Hebrews 10:5, 6).

What pleasure could there be in it for God or for any true believer, except as he saw through them the great profound truths of God's worldwide Atonement, which was an all-sufficient, all-availing Atonement for mankind?

"Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second" (Hebrews 10:8, 9).

We may say that that first is the Old Covenant and the second is the New Covenant, because it means a sweeping away of all the old and bringing in the new to take its place. Therefore we have swallowed up in Jesus Christ the whole Mosaic covenant, including the Tabernacle in the wilderness, perfectly, completely, and eternally fulfilled throughout the countless ages of eternity.

The Veil

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Hebrews 10:19).

That is brought into contrast with the way the high priest went into the Holiest of All. He had to obey the Law implicitly, as a transgression of the Law endangered his life. He had bells on his garments so that they would know whether he was ministering in there or not. But now through Jesus, who made a new and a living way into the true Holy of Holies, we may come boldly and not in fear.

"By a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Hebrews 10:20).

That new and living way is contrasted with the old and dead way. Those sacrifices were dead sacrifices of the animals; but Christ is a living sacrifice. It is true He went down to the grave, but the grave never held Him. He came forth a living sacrifice, and ever liveth to make intercession for us.

It is stated in the Psalms: "Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10). He came forth without His body suffering the least taint of corruption -- a living sacrifice. That is the very thing, which Paul had reference to when he said in the 12th chapter of Romans: "Present your bodies a living sacrifice," in contrast to the dead sacrifices, which were offered under the Old Dispensation. We must so offer ourselves in order to be sanctified.

It is no wonder then that there are so many dead churches in the world who have forsaken the living sacrifice, who have

38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

forsaken the all-essential fundamental truths which are necessary to be in contact with the living God.

These lessons should so impress us with the all availing Atonement that God has provided for the entire world, that they will give us a foundation to stand upon in these days. One of the things, which Modernism is most viciously attacking is the importance of the Atonement. That is an all-vital issue of Christianity. If the Atonement fails, all has failed; because it is our only access to God. It is our only means of putting ourselves into a position, and having the experience, where we can receive His law, receive His truths, be built up in the faith, have His commandments so written upon our hearts that we shall keep them. If the Atonement is denied, neglected, or forsaken, then we have no entrance at all.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)"

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:"

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Hebrews 10:23-26).

Many who are of a doubtful frame of mind, like Thomas, seem to think that they come within the class pointed out in these verses. It is, therefore, a good thing to get thoroughly fixed in our mind whom Paul has in view when he is writing on this subject.

In view of what we know about other portions of God's Word, as well as of what we know about the experience of believers, we will have to conclude that Paul is speaking here about a certain class of sin, not sin in general, but the kind of sin that this passage of Scripture alone can cover. We have seen that in the Old Testament sacrifices nearly every manner of sin was covered by the trespass offering which the sinner brought and that offering availed for his sin in case he had lied, defrauded, or stolen. Nearly the whole category of sin was covered by this offering.

Many think that because we are told that if we sin wilfully after we have received a knowledge of the truth, there is no possibility of returning to the Lord. Correspondents frequently write to our office and want to know if there is a possibility of a man's being renewed if he has fallen away after he has received his experiences, especially the baptism of the Holy Ghost. There certainly is. We know it from personal experience as well as from the Word of God. Therefore this covers something, which does not come under the classification of ordinary sin.

When Paul says, "If any man sin wilfully, 'he means sinning wilfully in the particular class of sin of which he is speaking here. From what he says afterwards we now understand that what Paul is dealing with is that sin of denying the faith, of turning from the faith, forsaking the whole plan of redemption which God has laid down for mankind. For that man there remains no longer a sacrifice for sin. He has rejected his very means of approach to God in denying the faith. In denying the faith he denies the power of the Atonement.

Then he goes on to bring out a comparison between that kind of sin and the punishment that was meted out to one who set at naught Moses' law. That was a similar sin.

"But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:27-29).

That defines the kind of sin, which Paul is speaking of here: looking with contempt upon the very means of grace which God has provided through the sanctifying Blood. Thus he has done despite to the Spirit of grace. That is the sin of which Jesus spoke when He said, "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven" (Luke 12:10). This is the very sin with which the Apostle is dealing, the unpardonable sin.

In the Old Testament we have a passage of Scripture that corresponds to this; it is found in Numbers 15. We are told about the trespass offering and the different offerings which must be brought for sins committed -- even sins of ignorance. When one came to a knowledge of having sinned, even though it was through ignorance, he had to bring a trespass offering for his sin.

"But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

"Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him" (Numbers 15:30, 31).

In other words, there is no sacrifice available for him. He is cut off from Israel. The adjective "presumptuous" is defined as: unduly self-confident. It refers to one who assumes a position and arrogantly maintains it without sufficient grounds. To my mind that is a very good description of people who have forsaken the Gospel. You will find them taking on that attitude immediately; especially those who have turned to something false and crooked. Then presumptuous sin may be defined thus: scorning God's commandments and wilfully breaking them through contempt for His plan of redemption -- substituting a lie for the truth. For such there remains no longer a sacrifice for sin.

That was the very kind of sin which David prayed about when he said, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression" (Psalm 19:13).

A transgression that shuts you from the atoning merits of Jesus Christ is certainly a transgression above all others. We see, therefore, that there is a dividing line between ordinary backsliding and this sin of which Paul is speaking, and which is also mentioned elsewhere in Scripture. This is the unpardonable sin of which Jesus spoke. It is that sin unto death of which John spoke. It is the presumptuous sin of the Old Testament. That is the sin for which there remains no longer a sacrifice.

Any sin that scorns God's plan, that turns away from it, and has no faith in it, is in that classification. You will notice that Paul particularly speaks of those who have been enlightened, those who have tasted of the good Word, those who have trodden

under foot the Son of God, and have "counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing." In other words, they are those who have experienced His saving grace and then have renounced the means of grace.

I have heard sinners say that they had no faith whatever in the Gospel or in the plan of redemption -- sinners who had never experienced any of God's saving grace. But when a man has had that experience and then can say such a thing, that man is close to the deadline, if indeed he has not gone over it.

There is a decided line of demarcation between backsliding and apostatising. That does not mean that there are allowances made for backsliding, for it is condemned by God. But it is not apostatising. The Apostle warns these Hebrews against continuing to waver and to backslide. If they did, they were in danger of reaching the place of apostasy through repeated backslidings.

Repeated failures can bring a man to a point where he will apostatise. These Hebrew Christians were forsaking the assembling of themselves together. They were not doing it simply out of carelessness, or because they were discouraged, or disheartened, but because some of them perhaps were losing faith in God's saving power.

"For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:30, 31).

That means the God of judgment. Man has his choice of two things: either God's judgment or God's mercy.

"But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions" (Hebrews 10:32).

The Hebrew Christians had evidently come through much. We have evidence that this church of Judea was persecuted to a great degree, perhaps more than any other church. Through the persecutions that were assailing them upon one hand, and the enticement to Judaism upon the other hand, there was danger of their apostatising completely.

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward" (Hebrews 10:35).

This goes deeper than merely one's being assayed by doubts. Doubts will come to any true believer, and he will often have conflicts over the question of his own experience. I presume every one of us has gone through that experience of being assailed on every hand by the enemy who sets up a regular bombardment against us. After all attack of that nature, he begins to insert doubts and questions as to our experiences. But what Paul is speaking of goes beyond that: "casting away confidence" to the extent of having no confidence in God's plan of salvation.

Patience

"For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Hebrews 10:36).

Sometimes we will have purposed to line up to God's will, and have watched our step and have known that we are measuring up in all things and yet something for which we have entreated the Lord and prayed for has not come to pass. We know that we have done the Lord's will, that as far as we know nothing is standing in the way. Why then does not the Lord act? Here we have the answer.

The Lord will probably allow a little stretch of time to interpose just to see whether we are going to hold on in faith before He fulfils His side of it. He has a right to do that.

"For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Hebrews 10:37).

See how He was trying to bring a little consolation to these Hebrews: warning them upon the one hand and then bringing them comfort upon the other hand, that they might have reawakened within them that fervent faith and hope that in the beginning filled their hearts.

We are living in days when we need to keep that fire: burning upon the altar of our hearts; when we need fervency of spirit. If we find ourselves growing indifferent or unconcerned about the cause of Christ, then is a good time to seek the Lord, and renew our vows and see that the fire continues to burn.