



Ministry of the Word

Sunday 17st March 2019

by Vincent Gannon

Scripture: Hebrews 10:1-18

Subject: Part 24 - The Shadow and The Substance

The book of Hebrews so far has led us through the Supremacy of Jesus Christ. This Book presents us with solid evidences that He is the perfect sacrifice, the perfect substitute, a greater promise, a better covenant, a better guarantor, a superior High Priest, with a superior Priesthood in a superior Sanctuary. Now in chapter 10, we are presented with Jesus as the Superior Saviour as we compare the Shadow of the Old Covenant with the Substance of the New.

In Verse 1 of our text this morning opens up with the words - '*For the Law*'. This reminds us that the whole Levitical system, inclusive of the commandments and ordinances, were put in place to reveal the Holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. Sin is a serious problem that separates us from God. It is a horrible devastating bridge that we cannot cross by ourselves. Its wages is Death and destruction. Nothing good comes from it. People these days often view sin as just a few wrong doings that we need to get over, and so will God, because He is all Love. But as we looked at last week, this is a drastically frightening delusion straight from the pit of Hell itself. For Sin is solemn, serious and death itself. It should not be taken lightly. This was the whole point of the Law. It showed man's weakness and inability to be reconciled to God on his own terms. The strength of the Law was as Paul said in Galatians 3 verse 24 –

“Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

In chapter 9 we saw the necessity of a blood sacrifice and also the necessity for the sacrifice of our Messiah, Jesus Christ; here we see the character of His sacrifice. The first four verses show us the ineffectiveness of the old sacrifices. Then verses five to ten shows us the effectiveness of the new covenant, the shadow giving way to substance. Then in verses 11 to 18 we see Christ saves and sanctifies, personally and permanently.

Let’s go back to verse 1 to begin to examine **The Ineffectiveness of the Old Sacrifices.**

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

The great cry in the hearts of Old Testament saints was to be in the presence of God for example Job 19 verse 27 –

‘I myself will see him, with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!’

They really had no way of getting into the presence of God on this earth. Even the high priest on the Day of Atonement could not take the priests never mind the people inside the veil, where God’s presence was found. As Colossians 2 verse 17 states that the Law and Old Covenant *“are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ”* Christ is the fulfilment of these good things that were prophesied: forgiveness, peace, a clear conscience, security, and, above all, personal access to God. These blessings were only pictured in the Old Covenant, but they were never realised.

The word Shadow used here arrives from the Greek word ‘skia’. Skia means pale in relation to skin. This is a sharp contrasted with the word image also used in verse one. The word image here is derived from the Greek word Ikona, which means perfect or true representation. This is the exact same word that we find in Colossians 1 verse 15 which tells us – *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.*

We must never get confused between the shadow and the reality. The shadow spoken of here is not in any way the same as the reality. As John Phillips wrote in his book, Exploring Hebrews

“In the Old Testament, the Israelites had only shadows. The substance is in Christ. The shadow of a key cannot unlock a prison door; the shadow of a meal cannot satisfy a hungry man; the shadow of Calvary cannot take away sin”

The law, the ceremonies and rituals together were only a pale shadow of the things Christ would bring. The true purposes of God were there for all to see but not clear for everyone to understand until the time appointed. This is an important point to remember. Verses 2 to 4 stress –

“For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. ³ But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.”

The repetition of the old sacrifices is a theme that itself is repeated many times in Hebrews. You can pile shadow on shadow on shadow, and you still have no substance. Repetition of a symbol is like multiplying with zero. No matter how many times you repeat the process, the result never increases. Repetition conflicts with finality. An action that is constantly repeated goes to shows itself to be inconclusive. What is inconclusive is imperfect both in itself and in its effect. The law’s prescription of sacrifices offered year after year, shows that it was unable to make perfect those who drew near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased sacrificing?

The Old Covenant was a shadow, a powerful imaginary of the prophetic promises, pointing to the salvation that was to come. It was to make God’s people expectant.

“As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful search and inquiry” (1 Peter 1:10)

The old covenant showed people their guilt before a Holy God. **Consciousness** in verse 2 is referring to the conscience that God built into man’s makeup. It is man’s innate awareness of sin in his life and his sense of guilt because of it. It acts on our minds and hearts much as pain acts on our bodies. Shame can self-destruct a person as it points only inward, which is why we need to be rescued. The removal of sin is what men need. Sin, guilt and shame can eat away at us. The old system could not remove sin, guilt or shame. If it had the power then the sacrifices would have stopped, but instead they were a continual reminder that they could

not. Old Testament believers were never freed from the presence and awareness of guilt or, consequently, from the anxiety and tension that it brought (see Romans chapters 5 and 6), kind of like Catholic guilt which many of us here can identify with. We only have to read Psalm 51 to realize how deeply David felt his guilt. He was "a man after God's own heart," and yet he was never free from his guilty conscience before God. David knew, as this psalm testifies, of God's love, mercy and grace, and yet, the deliverance he described so beautifully was always future. He knew that salvation, with its cleansing, renewing and joy, was coming. He did not speak as one who has experienced it, when he says, "*My sin is ever before me*" (Psalm 51:3).

It is a wonderful blessing, one that we should be so grateful to God for, that we as believers know, it's a living reality for us, that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ (Romans 8:1). It is a wonderful thing to be free from guilt and to recognize that our sins are continually being forgiven by the grace of God through the death of Jesus Christ.

Yet in saying this, a believer should be more aware of God's holiness and standards of righteousness as they long to grow to be more like Jesus. The forgiven sinner is not insensitive to sin, but he knows he is forgiven in Christ, thereby, delivered from fear of judgment, and no longer unduly burdened by it. How different it is for us compared to the saints in the Old Testament. For those saints they only knew costly and continuous sacrifices to cover their sin and they were presented as a tribe in the tabernacle, not personally. Their grain offering was often presented after the animal sacrifice. This grain offering was a fellowship offering, to thank the Lord for His mercies and for supplying their needs. Yet for us, Jesus Christ was our perfect Lamb substitute, costing The Lord Jesus everything and us nothing for the ransom of our souls. He did not cover our sin, but completely pardoned us from the just judgement and power of our sin, when He nailed our sin to His cross,

"having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. (Col. 2:14)

When we come together for the breaking of Bread, it acts as a reminder that Christ has accomplished eternal redemption for us, we are eternally forgiven and adopted into God's family. He knows us by name and personally. We are reminded that He provided for us the

perfect substitute, a finished work, his everlasting mercies, and the blessed hope of His return.

Verse 4, points to the ineffectiveness of the blood of animals. An animal, by its very nature, is unqualified to serve as a substitute for man who is the crown of God's creation. It was impossible for the blood of an amoral animal to be a perfect substitute for a man's immoral offenses against God. Lacking both choice and rationality, it is passive and inarticulate and therefore incapable of the spontaneous declaration, "*Lo, I have come to do thy will, O God*" (v. 7).

This is a great declaration that Jesus made and it opens up Isaiah 53 verse 7 - *He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.*

In the light of these necessities, so frequently stressed in this epistle, there is no escape from the conclusion that it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. There is no getting away from it, God choose this way until the new covenant was fulfilled. For as we seen last week, life required life and he allowed an animal sacrifice as a substitute for sin, just for a set-time, until the perfect lamb of God would give Himself up for us. Only Jesus Christ, the perfect union of humanity and deity, could satisfy God and purify man. Only His death could be the ultimate sacrifice, the only effective sacrifice stretching across time.

It is through Christ Alone that we see the effectiveness of the new covenant. For here in the next few verses we see the shadow giving way to the substance.

⁵ Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. ⁶ In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin. You had no pleasure. ⁷ Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me—To do Your will, O God.' "

These are incredible verses taken from Psalm 40 verses 6 to 8. If you looked at Psalm 40 on its own, we see that the psalmist had a desire to praise God for deliverance and to commit to doing God's will. But when we look at verses 6 to 8 of this Psalm, through the eyes of the author of Hebrews, we can see clearly, they are in fact Messianic. In the Psalm 40 verse 6, there is a little more than the quotation found here in Hebrews, which is "My ears, You have opened". This was not a deaf man suddenly hearing, but hearing man obeying.

What is being implied in these verses is a discussion between God the Father and the Son with the Holy Spirit observing. It is the Triune God deliberating the incarnation, how Jesus would be given a body to become our Kinsman Redeemer and how Jesus would do the will of the Father by obeying Him, even before the foundation of the world.

We read here in verse 5, *“but a body You have prepared for Me”*. Here we have reference to the Incarnation which is an amazing, mind blowing doctrine of Scripture. For the will of the Father to be carried out, for the Son to become a kinsman Redeemer, and for the Son to offer Himself up in the place of you and I, He required a body of flesh and blood just like we have. Deity took on Humanity in every aspect, apart from sin. To do this He left the Heavenly splendour and all that goes with that. Philippians 2 verses 5-8

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

We need to keep in mind that when Jesus was born in Bethlehem as a little baby, this was not His beginning. Jesus always was and is, divine. John 1: 1 – 5,

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

The doctrine of incarnation commenced in the Book of Genesis chapter 3 verse 15. From this verse we get the clarity that the Messiah would be Male. This is confirmed in Isaiah 9 verse 6 – *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given*. The Old Testament is full of Messianic prophecies but in the first five books of the bible there are only 4 references, however, there were 3 Theophanies. So, He who is King of kings and Lord of lords, descended to our estate in the self-humbling act of incarnation, so that the Psalmist's words, a body hast thou prepared for me, shows us the planned purposes of God for redemption.

This is why Christ could say in verse 7 – *Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me—To do Your will, O God.’ ”*

When Jesus walked this earth, he testified that this is indeed true – John 5 verse 39

“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.”

The Jews were known to be people of the Book, yet their adherence to it was mostly external and often neglected. The Jewish people should have known the signs of their time. Those who were faithful to the Book did. Remember Simone and Anna to name a few. They should have understood and recognised that the whole theme that God spoke about and planned from the beginning in the book was there in front of them. It was revealed to them but hidden from their understanding until the appointed time. Kind of like the Apostles, a lot of what Jesus taught them they didn't understand until the day of Pentecost. We cannot overemphasise the importance of the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament. Neglecting the study of the bible, makes many ship wreck in their spiritual life. I am speaking of taking and reading your own Bible, thinking as you go, make notes, take out the concordance, read and read, ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and understanding before you even read it, study it for yourself. Hosea 4 verse 6 -

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

The Jews were known as the people of the Book and so should we. Not only because we know our Bible but with the indwelling Holy Spirit's help, we can live it, we can know and understand the signs of our time. We have to be balanced, faith and works matter as James in his epistle teaches. We need to also take Scripture seriously for Jesus did. As time is marching on, we see in this day and age, how people manipulate and distort the Scriptures to fit in with their agenda. They don't want to take the bible too literally as it often confronts and contradicts their lifestyle. But whoever reads the book, and searches it out, the book will change them for it is the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit that moves in between every space, letter, jot and tittle. This leads us to verses 8 to 10 –

Previously saying, “Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the law),⁹ then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second.¹⁰ By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Verse 8 stresses further the inadequacy and unacceptability of the sacrifices of the Levitical system. The point being made here is identical with that of Samuel's reproving words to Saul:

"Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Samuel 15:22)

This is not a stand-alone expression in the Old Testament see for instance the following;

Isaiah 1:11- *"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" Says the Lord. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams. And the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats."*

Amos 5:21- *"I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savour your sacred assemblies."*

Hosea 6:6 - *For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.*

When you read them, you are left with the clear impression that there was a sacrifice which answered to the will of God in a way that no animal sacrifice could ever. To sacrifice without obedience, to go through a ritual without faith and devotion to God, is a mockery and hypocrisy which is worse than no sacrifice at all. In Psalm 51 David describes the only kind of sacrifice acceptable to God, even under the Old Covenant:

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise" (Psalm 51:17).

When sacrifices were not offered in the right spirit, they could not cover sin temporarily. They even lost their symbolic value. They were mere form without content and were absolutely worthless. Instead of pleasing God, they became an abomination that He hated (Isaiah 1:13-14). God wants a person's heart not what is in their hands.

We need to be imitators of Christ. We need to imitate His obedience to the Father. When we look at Christ's Ministry, we find Him expressing the Father's will very clearly in the gospels. Look at John 4:34 and 6:38. Jesus' supreme mission on earth was to do His Father's will. We don't have to ponder long or deep to know what that will was. It was the salvation of our souls and Paul assures Timothy of this fact in 1 Timothy 1:15. His was the perfect sacrifice because it was offered in perfect obedience to God.

During the wilderness temptations in Matthew 4, Satan's purpose was to deter Jesus from His divine mission, to turn Him from His Father's will. Peter tried to deter Jesus from His ultimate mission of the cross out of misguided loyalty to Him, but it was prompted by Satan which is why Jesus said, Get behind me Satan to him (Mark 8:31-33). Jesus' ultimate act of obedience was His death on the cross, paying the divine debt by taking man's total sin upon Himself, thereby, satisfying divine justice. Many people, before and after Jesus, have willingly and bravely faced a martyr's death. But no one else could take upon himself the sins of the whole world. No one else has been, or could have been, so utterly repulsed at the prospect. And no one else has been, or could have been, so obedient.

God confirmed that it was His will to abolish the old covenant, and replace it with a better one, an all sufficient everlasting new one which is founded in Christ alone. Sanctification as seen in this epistle involves the purging away of our sin resulting in our access into the presence of God. This is all part of Salvation which again, is only available through Christ alone. Whatever purpose and validity the first covenant had, it's now past. God has set it aside forever. All this repeated emphasis reveals a pleading heart, calling the readers to salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The new sacrifice is effective because it sanctifies the believer, it makes him holy. The old system had no way of making a man holy. To be sanctified, or made holy (hagiazo), basically means to be set apart. In biblical terms, a saint is a person whom God has set apart for Himself. It is God's will that we be set apart, not only positionally but practically.

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification" (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

The force of the statement is, "You have been permanently made holy." This fulfils the desire of our Lord - ***"You shall be holy, for I am holy"*** (1 Peter 1:16; Leviticus 11:44).

One act, in one moment, provided permanent and personal sanctification for anyone who places his trust in Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:10; 2 Peter 1:3-4). Christ sanctifies us, sets us apart unto Himself, forever holy and dear to Himself and to the Father. If we are in Christ, we will forever be in Christ. This position before the Father will not be modified one iota throughout all eternity. It is positional holiness that is in mind in Hebrews 10:10, for the holiness here is an accomplished fact, we have been sanctified.

In the next few verses of chapter 10, the writer goes back to compare the shadow with the substance -

“And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God. Waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a foot-stool for His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.” (10:11-14)

The ineffectiveness of animal sacrifices is now compared to the effectiveness of Christ's sacrifice. Christ's sacrifice is effective because it removes sin, which the other covenant could never do. The New Covenant went from daily sacrifice to just one sacrifice, from ineffective sacrifices to the one perfectly effective sacrifice for all time. The old system did not lack for priests, but it did lack effectiveness. All the priests together could not make an effective sacrifice for sin. Christ was but one priest, yet His work was perfectly and permanently effective hence why Christ sat down at the right hand of God. His work in relation to Salvation is finished. It's over, He won.

All the sacrifices of the Old Testament did nothing to get rid of Satan. They had absolutely no effect on him at all, nor on the demons and godless people. When the Israelites went into battle, God went before them to give the victory only when they sought His face. How different is this compared to when Jesus died on the cross and rose again. He dealt a death-blow to all His enemies. He conquered -

“him who had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Hebrews 2:14).

He also triumphed over all the fallen angels. He disarmed and triumphed over all rulers and authorities of all ages who have rejected and opposed God - (Colossians 2:15)

¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.”

Because of Jesus' victory, he has given us authority in His name. He has given us a suit of armour for the spiritual fight. He enters into each battle with us as well as going before us. May we never lag behind. It is too often that we live life's as victims and not as victors. The bible tells us that we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us and gave His life

for us (see Romans 8:37). He is now only waiting until all His enemies be made a footstool, that is, until they acknowledge His lordship by bowing at His feet.

Salvation is bigger than we realise and give The Lord credit for. Jesus not only is saving us but he is also sanctifying us as we see in verse 14.

“For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.”

The new sacrifice is effective because it gives believers eternal perfection. It saved us from the punishment of sin, now it saves us from the power of sin and it will one day save us from the presence of sin. Sanctification is a process and trials are part of it, be it people or circumstances. We are totally secure in our Saviour.

We even see in verse 15 that the Holy Spirit Himself witnesses to these facts –

“But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, ¹⁶ “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,” ¹⁷ then He adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” ¹⁸ Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.”

The sacrifice of Christ is effective because it fulfils the promise of the New Covenant. In other words, Christ’s sacrifice had to be made and had to be effective because God promised that it would. God said that would put His laws upon their heart, and upon their mind, and would choose to remember their sins no more. Christ’s sacrifice accomplished the prophesy in Jeremiah 31:33-34,

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their ^[a] hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

So God’s fulfil His promises in Christ, for His promises cannot be broken. Though the New Covenant was new, its revelation was not. The Jews, more than any others, should have welcomed it with unbounded joy and relief. The promise was not Jeremiah’s, but was God’s promise, the very witness of the Holy Spirit.

The original readers were put in a great dilemma when they read this, they could not escape it. The Holy Spirit, through the writer of Hebrews, is saying, "You cannot accept the teaching of your own beloved prophet Jeremiah and yet reject the New Covenant he prophesied. You cannot accept one without the other."

Let's go back to the example I gave you when we spoke about Jesus as our Guarantor. Imagine you ask the bank for a loan of money on the back of a great idea you had. You would need a guarantor with you. Based on your idea, and mostly based on who your guarantor is, the bank agrees to give you a loan. Now imagine your idea doesn't pan out as you expected, and your debt piles up but, it will be o.k. because the bank knows that your guarantor is good for it. Now imagine, time passes and the debt increases so much that it is time for the bank to get payment. You have a choice, don't you? You can go to your guarantor and ask Him to pay it, or you can refuse the help of your guarantor and say that you will pay the debt yourself regardless of the consequences. That option sounds like madness, doesn't it. But actually this is exactly what the Jews did by rejecting Christ. They rejected the payment of their sin as they said that they wanted to pay the excess of their debt by their traditions and their own ways. The World today doesn't want to except Jesus Christ as the only way to God. They are caught up with their own ideas and their own wants, their own pride. But eternal death is the consequence of this choice.

In the present era of Grace, the proclamation of the cross ever calls to remembrance the sinfulness of mankind, while at the same time it presents the remedy which God has provided in Christ. But Christian faith, too, cannot exist without remembrance, for the whole life of the believer should be the expression of his gratitude as he remembers the infinite cost at which his redemption was purchased. The Lord has provided the church a dramatic aid to the declaration of our thankful remembrance by his institution of the breaking of bread, with the command, "*Do this in remembrance of me.*" The gospel transforms a remembrance of guilt to a remembrance of grace. Let me just summarise what we have just covered -

The Shadow gave way to Substance, The Perfect Substitution, The Perfect Sacrifice, Permanent Forgiveness of Sin, Sanctification, The Perfect Saviour who is Personal. Something may stand out more than others, but surely, we cannot fail to see the preciousness of our

Sunday 17th March 2019

Messiah, The Lord Jesus Christ. He took our place, our guilt and our punishment so that we can be free. Charles Wesley wrote in the 4 stanza of his hymn 'An Can it Be' –

**No condemnation now I dread, Jesus, and all in Him, is mine, Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine, Bold I approach the eternal throne, And claim the
crown, through Christ my own, Amazing love! How can it be, That Thou my God, shouldst
die for me?**

Can we, ought we, should we, will we rejoice in such a salvation? Yes! **Amen.**