

## **deSilva, Hebrews, Session 8b, Resources from Notebooklm**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

### **1. Abstract of deSilva, Hebrews, Session 8b, Hebrews 9:1-10:18: Christ our Atonement (Part 2), Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

Dr. deSilva's lecture analyzes Hebrews 9:1-10:18, arguing that the author contrasts the Old Testament sacrificial system's inefficacy—its inability to truly cleanse the conscience—with Jesus's single, perfect sacrifice. The lecture explores how the author uses scripture, particularly Psalms 40 and 110, and prophetic critiques of animal sacrifices, to support this claim. It highlights the author's reinterpretation of key scriptures to demonstrate Jesus' superior priesthood and the new covenant's promise of complete forgiveness and direct access to God. Finally, the analysis discusses the implications of this argument for Christian life, emphasizing the ongoing need for faithful witness and service in light of Jesus' completed and future work.

**2. 12-minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. deSilva's, Hebrews, Session 8b – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → General Epistles → Hebrews).**



**deSilva\_Hebrews\_Session08b\_Hebrews**

### 3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. David A. deSilva's "Hebrews, Session 8b":

#### **Briefing Document: Dr. David A. deSilva, Hebrews, Session 8b**

**Date:** October 26, 2023 (Based on the document creation date of 2024) **Subject:** Analysis of Hebrews 9:1-10:18: Christ our Atonement (Part 2) **Author:** Dr. David A. deSilva **Document:** "DeSilva\_Hebrews\_EN\_Session08b.pdf" **Purpose:** To analyze and interpret the author of Hebrews' argument for the superiority of Christ's sacrifice over the Old Testament sacrificial system.

#### **I. Executive Summary:**

This section of Hebrews (9:1-10:18) focuses on demonstrating the inadequacy of the Levitical sacrificial system in achieving true atonement and the absolute superiority of Christ's sacrifice. The author of Hebrews argues that the Old Testament system was a mere shadow of the reality to come, which has now been fulfilled in Jesus. The author uses scriptural interpretation, specifically of Psalm 40, to support his claims and emphasizes the once-for-all nature of Christ's sacrifice. The author also draws on the concept of the new covenant as laid out in Jeremiah to further highlight the new means of achieving true cleansing and access to God through Christ. This section concludes by exploring the implications of Christ's sacrifice for Christian life and service.

#### **II. Key Themes and Ideas:**

- **Shadow vs. Reality:** The author of Hebrews describes the Old Testament law and its sacrifices as a "shadow of the good things that were about to come" (1). This is contrasted with the real substance and efficacy of Christ's sacrifice. This idea is not Platonic, but temporal, pointing toward something still in the future from Moses's perspective, but now realized in Christ's priesthood.
- **Ineffectiveness of Old Testament Sacrifices:** The author argues that the annual repetition of sacrifices, particularly the Day of Atonement, signals their fundamental ineffectiveness. The author suggests that these sacrifices only serve as an "annual reminder of sins" (2) and do not truly cleanse the conscience. He bases this on a generalization of the sacrifice of a suspected adulteress from Numbers 5:15.
- **Critique of Yom Kippur:** While Leviticus 16:30 indicates that the Day of Atonement provides cleansing, the author argues that it doesn't improve the

relationship with God. He claims that the old covenant with its rites does not allow the people to truly break through to God, so that "it never made the people truly clean before the Lord."

- **The Blood of Bulls and Goats:** The author emphasizes that "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (2). This position is supported by the prophetic critique of sacrifices in Isaiah, where God expresses dissatisfaction with animal offerings without accompanying righteousness (3).
- **Psalms 40 and the Body of Christ:** The author uses Psalm 40:6-8 to argue that God desires obedience, not mere sacrifices. He quotes from the Septuagint, which replaces "ears you have dug for me" with "a body you have prepared for me." He uses this to connect Christ's incarnation to God's will of obedience and thus a single sacrifice of the body of Christ, thereby "setting aside the first to establish the second." (4)
- **Christ's Once-for-All Sacrifice:** The author argues that Jesus' sacrifice is a "single offering" that "has forever perfected those being sanctified" (5), contrasting it with the repeated sacrifices of the Old Testament. This leads to a complete and permanent forgiveness of sins.
- **The Seated Priest:** The author points to Psalm 110:1 as evidence that Jesus' priestly work is complete. Unlike the Levitical priests who "stand daily ministering," Jesus "sat down permanently at the right hand of God" (5), indicating the completion and efficacy of his offering. This underscores the finality of Jesus' priestly act.
- **New Covenant:** The author emphasizes that the new covenant, as prophesied in Jeremiah, is now inaugurated. He reiterates key ideas from Jeremiah 31, stating that God has written his laws on people's hearts and minds and that sins are forgiven, thus eliminating the need for repeated sin offerings (7). This new covenant includes both the removal of sins and the interior awareness of God's will.
- **Interim and Eschatology:** The author notes that Christians live in the interim between Christ's first and second comings, and emphasizes that this period is for faithful witness, worship, and acts of love, all shaped by their belief in the coming Kingdom (9). He states that their goal is to "wait eagerly for Christ."
- **Exhortation:** The entire central section of the sermon about Christ's priesthood serves to support the exhortation to go boldly before the throne of God, and

demonstrates the access to God and his help that is available to the believers because of Christ.

### III. Key Quotes:

- "For the law, holding a shadow of the good things that were about to come, and not the very likeness of those things, can never perfect those drawing nearby means of the same annual sacrifices that they offer perpetually." (1)
- "...there is an annual reminder of sins in these." (2)
- "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." (2)
- "You did not want sacrifices and offerings, but you prepared a body for me." (3) - quoting Psalm 40 from the Septuagint.
- "By means of this will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all." (5)
- "But this one, having offered a single sacrifice on behalf of sins, sat down permanently at the right hand of God..." (5)
- "Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer an offering for sins." (7)

### IV. Implications and Applications:

- **Critique of Hierarchies:** The author challenges the potential for hierarchical structures within the church that might limit access to God and emphasizes that all believers share in Christ's priesthood and have direct access to God. DeSilva emphasizes that ministry professionals are to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, rather than to be the sole performers of the ministry (8).
- **Full Access to God:** The author insists that the new covenant in Christ has removed all barriers to God, and therefore Christians should be boldly diligent in prayer and outreach.
- **Living in the Interim:** The author emphasizes the importance of living faithfully in the time between Christ's first and second coming, remaining loyal to God and his people in the face of unbelief and hostility. It is a time of waiting and anticipation, which should inform how Christians live (9).
- **Sacrificial Ministry:** The author highlights that believers offer sacrifices of worship, witness, love, and service.

- **Internal Obedience:** He emphasizes the importance of living lives that are pleasing to God, rooted in the new covenant where his law is written on the heart and mind.

## **V. Conclusion:**

This portion of Hebrews powerfully argues for the superiority of Christ's sacrifice over the Old Testament system. It underscores the once-for-all nature of Christ's atonement, the new covenant's implications, and the call for Christians to live in light of Christ's finished work. It serves not only to establish key Christian doctrines but also to encourage believers toward faithful living, service, and anticipation of Christ's return. The author challenges Christians to avoid creating hierarchies that would undermine the access to God that Christ has purchased for them, while challenging them to live lives that are pleasing to God.

## 4. Hebrews Study Guide: 8b, Hebrews 9:1-10:18, Christ our Atonement (Part 2)

### Hebrews 9:1-10:18 Study Guide

#### Quiz

1. According to Hebrews, why were the first covenant sacrifices unable to perfect those who drew near to God? The author states that the law was only a shadow of the good things to come and lacked real substance. It could only point toward a more effective ritual that could remove sins, specifically Jesus' sacrifice of himself.
2. How does the author of Hebrews use the concept of "shadow" in relation to the law and to Plato's allegory of the cave? The author uses "shadow" to describe the law as an imperfect foreshadowing of future realities, not as a reflection of pre-existing ideas like in Plato's philosophy. For the author of Hebrews, the law is pointing forward in time to Jesus.
3. What is the author's argument from the contrary to prove the ineffectiveness of annual sacrifices, particularly the Day of Atonement? If the rituals were effective in cleansing the conscience, they would not need to be repeated annually. The fact that they are repeated indicates they do not provide complete and permanent cleansing of sins.
4. What is the author's ideologically motivated interpretation of the Day of Atonement, and what does it mean that he generalizes from Numbers 5:15? The author interprets the Day of Atonement as primarily serving to remind people of their sins rather than to remove them. He generalizes from Numbers 5:15, which describes a sacrifice to bring sins to remembrance, to the entire sacrificial system.
5. How does the author of Hebrews reconcile his claim that animal sacrifices cannot take away sins with Leviticus 17:11, which affirms the atoning power of blood? The author stands more than a millennium later and draws on the Jewish prophets' critique of sacrifices. He says that obedience is more important than sacrifices.
6. How does Hebrews use Psalm 40:6-8 to support the claim that animal sacrifices are ineffective? What is the difference between how the psalm is translated in Hebrew and in Greek (Septuagint)? The author uses Psalm 40:6-8 to argue that God does not desire animal sacrifices, but rather obedience to His will, which is ultimately fulfilled through Jesus' body and offering. The Greek Septuagint version

translates "ears you have dug for me" (Hebrew) as "a body you have prepared for me."

7. How does the author recontextualize the three key words of Psalm 40 (offering, body) and embed them in his interpretation of the Psalm? He interprets the preparation of a body as Jesus' incarnation and his willing obedience as the ultimate sacrifice that replaces animal sacrifice. He sees it as God's will that we be sanctified through Jesus' once-for-all offering.
8. How does the author use Psalm 110:1 to support the claim that Jesus' sacrifice was a single, sufficient act and that his priesthood is superior? Psalm 110:1 depicts Jesus sitting at God's right hand, which contrasts with the standing posture of Levitical priests who repeatedly offer sacrifices. The author infers that Jesus' sitting signifies the completion of his priestly act.
9. According to the author, what is the significance of Jesus' second coming and what are the two alternatives it represents? Jesus' second coming will be to reward his followers and subjugate his enemies. The two alternatives are purification, which allows access to God, or being seen as an enemy and encountering punishment.
10. What are the two components of the new covenant that the author highlights from Jeremiah 31 and how does this relate to the efficacy of Jesus' sacrifice? The new covenant removes the sins that separate God and people. It also gives people an awareness of what pleases God. The new covenant means forgiveness of sins, validating the claim that there is no longer an offering for sins due to Jesus' death.

### **Answer Key**

1. The author states that the law was only a shadow of the good things to come and lacked real substance. It could only point toward a more effective ritual that could remove sins, specifically Jesus' sacrifice of himself.
2. The author uses "shadow" to describe the law as an imperfect foreshadowing of future realities, not as a reflection of pre-existing ideas like in Plato's philosophy. For the author of Hebrews, the law is pointing forward in time to Jesus.
3. If the rituals were effective in cleansing the conscience, they would not need to be repeated annually. The fact that they are repeated indicates they do not provide complete and permanent cleansing of sins.

4. The author interprets the Day of Atonement as primarily serving to remind people of their sins rather than to remove them. He generalizes from Numbers 5:15, which describes a sacrifice to bring sins to remembrance, to the entire sacrificial system.
5. The author stands more than a millennium later and draws on the Jewish prophets' critique of sacrifices. He says that obedience is more important than sacrifices.
6. The author uses Psalm 40:6-8 to argue that God does not desire animal sacrifices, but rather obedience to His will, which is ultimately fulfilled through Jesus' body and offering. The Greek Septuagint version translates "ears you have dug for me" (Hebrew) as "a body you have prepared for me."
7. He interprets the preparation of a body as Jesus' incarnation and his willing obedience as the ultimate sacrifice that replaces animal sacrifice. He sees it as God's will that we be sanctified through Jesus' once-for-all offering.
8. Psalm 110:1 depicts Jesus sitting at God's right hand, which contrasts with the standing posture of Levitical priests who repeatedly offer sacrifices. The author infers that Jesus' sitting signifies the completion of his priestly act.
9. Jesus' second coming will be to reward his followers and subjugate his enemies. The two alternatives are purification, which allows access to God, or being seen as an enemy and encountering punishment.
10. The new covenant removes the sins that separate God and people. It also gives people an awareness of what pleases God. The new covenant means forgiveness of sins, validating the claim that there is no longer an offering for sins due to Jesus' death.

### **Essay Questions**

1. Analyze the author of Hebrews' use of the concept of "shadow" in relation to the Old Testament law and its implications for the understanding of Christ's sacrifice. How does this differ from Platonic ideas of shadow and reality, and why is that distinction important for the author's overall argument?
2. Discuss the author's critique of the Levitical sacrificial system, focusing on the Day of Atonement. How does the author reinterpret key Old Testament passages, such as Numbers 5:15 and Leviticus 17:11, to support his argument about the ineffectiveness of animal sacrifices?



3. Explain the significance of Psalm 40:6-8 in Hebrews 10 and how the author uses the Septuagint translation to connect the Psalm to the incarnation and sacrificial death of Jesus. How does this reinterpretation establish the superiority of Jesus' offering over traditional Jewish sacrifices?
4. Compare and contrast the priesthood of the Levites with the priesthood of Christ as presented in Hebrews 10, particularly in light of Psalm 110:1. What are the key distinctions, and how do these distinctions support the author's overall argument about the nature and efficacy of Christ's atonement?
5. Discuss the relevance of the author's message in Hebrews 9:1-10:18 for contemporary Christian faith and practice, focusing on issues of access to God, discipleship, and the ongoing implications of Jesus' sacrificial act. What challenges does the text present for modern church structures and personal devotion?

### Glossary of Key Terms

- **Atonement:** The act of reconciliation or restoration of a relationship, particularly between God and humanity, typically through sacrifice.
- **Cultic Law:** The religious laws and rituals associated with worship practices in the Old Testament, particularly those related to sacrifices and the temple.
- **Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur):** An annual Jewish holy day focusing on repentance, atonement for sins, and purification, involving specific sacrifices.
- **Eschatological:** Pertaining to the end times, final events, or the ultimate destiny of humanity.
- **Exegesis:** The critical interpretation and explanation of a text, particularly from the Bible.
- **Hermeneutical Context:** The background of assumptions, presuppositions, and methods used in interpreting a text.
- **Incarnation:** The Christian doctrine that God became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ.
- **Levitical Priesthood:** The priestly order in the Old Testament, associated with the tribe of Levi, responsible for temple worship, sacrifices, and religious instruction.
- **Masoretic Text:** The authoritative Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the basis for most modern translations.

- **Melchizedek:** A priest-king mentioned in the Old Testament, whose priesthood is considered superior and is seen as a type for Christ's priesthood.
- **Sanctified:** To be set apart as holy or consecrated to God, often associated with purification and being made righteous.
- **Septuagint:** The Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, often used by early Christians and cited in the New Testament.
- **Shadow:** In this context, a representation of a greater reality, used to describe the Old Testament law as a foreshadowing of the New Covenant.
- **Yom Kippur:** Hebrew name for the Day of Atonement.

## 5. FAQs on DeSilva, Hebrews, Session 8b, Hebrews 9:1-10:18, Christ our Atonement (Part 2), [Biblicalelearning.org](http://Biblicalelearning.org) (BeL)

### FAQ on Hebrews 9:1-10:18

1. **What does the author of Hebrews mean by calling the law a "shadow"?** The author uses the term "shadow" to describe the entire cultic law, not just the earthly tabernacle. This indicates that the law lacks true substance and power. It points forward to the real, effective means of removing sin, which is Jesus' sacrifice. Unlike Platonic shadows representing imperfect forms, these shadows are pointing forward in time to something that was to come and has now come in the form of Jesus' sacrifice. The law itself, while divinely ordained, is not the ultimate reality but a temporary foreshadowing.
2. **Why were the Old Covenant sacrifices, particularly the Day of Atonement, ineffective according to the author?** The author argues that the annual sacrifices, especially on the Day of Atonement, served as a yearly *reminder* of sins rather than a true removal. He emphasizes that if these sacrifices were truly effective, they would not need to be repeated. The author uses the example of a specific sacrifice in Numbers 5:15, which brings sins to remembrance to establish the principle that all Levitical sacrifices simply reminded the people of their sins, rather than actually cleansing them. Additionally, the author points out that animal blood cannot truly atone for sins.
3. **How does the author use the Old Testament, particularly Psalm 40, to support the idea of Jesus' sacrifice?** The author quotes Psalm 40:6-8, but using the Septuagint Greek translation which states that God prepared a body for the Messiah, unlike the Hebrew Masoretic text which refers to God digging ears. The author interprets this "prepared body" as Jesus' incarnation and self-offering. He argues that God never truly desired animal sacrifices but instead desired obedience. Jesus' willingness to do God's will through his bodily sacrifice fulfills the true intent of the Law, which animal sacrifices could not accomplish. This interpretation positions Jesus' sacrifice as the ultimate fulfillment of what was always pleasing to God, which was obedience and not mere ritual.
4. **What is the significance of Jesus "sitting down" at God's right hand?** The act of Jesus sitting at God's right hand, as mentioned in Psalm 110:1, is a key point. In the Old Testament, priests were always standing to serve and perform rituals. Jesus, having completed his sacrifice once and for all, is now seated. This indicates

the completion of his priestly work and the lasting nature of his atonement, contrasted with the repetitive nature of the Levitical priesthood. His sitting signifies rest and triumph, further emphasizing that his sacrifice was the final and sufficient act needed.

5. **How does the author use Jeremiah's prophecy of the New Covenant in Hebrews?** The author reiterates the New Covenant prophecy from Jeremiah 31, highlighting the internalization of God's law, written on people's hearts and minds, and the definitive forgiveness of sins. The author emphasizes the importance of both the removal of past sins and the enabling of righteous living due to the internal change brought about by the New Covenant. The forgiveness of sins achieved by Jesus' sacrifice removes the need for repeated sin offerings.
6. **How does the author of Hebrews address the idea of access to God?** The author emphasizes that the Old Covenant established a limited and graded access to God through the Levitical system. However, through Jesus, all believers now have open and direct access to God's presence. This eliminates the need for earthly intermediaries and encourages believers to approach God boldly. The author warns against re-establishing hierarchies or limitations within the church that might resemble the exclusive nature of the Old Testament system.
7. **What does the author say about the Christian's life "between the times"?** The author recognizes that believers live in an interim period between Jesus' first coming and his second coming. Believers must remain faithful to God and the community. They are to live as those who are eagerly awaiting Christ's return, with their actions, priorities, and ambitions shaped by this expectation. Faithful living includes acts of worship, witness, love, and service.
8. **How does the author's teaching on Jesus' sacrifice challenge contemporary Christian practices?** The author challenges the church to consider if it is accidentally reinstating a kind of exclusive, mediated access to God that Jesus has broken down. The author raises a concern about the distinction between laity and clergy potentially recreating a system where some are closer to God than others, instead of seeing all believers equally as priests who have direct access to God and a responsibility to minister to others. The author's message calls on all to live out their priesthood through worship, witness, and acts of service to others.