

Hebrews 10:1-9

Verses 1-9 (as well as 10-18) gives the reasons about the priesthood and sacrifice of Jesus and why Jesus is the better priest and sacrifice. He is the fulfillment of the Yom Kippur sacrifice. The Yom Kippur sacrifice was for the nation, repeated every year, a type, and Jesus is the anti-type, the sacrifice for the nation, and the world, never to be repeated. We will look at verses 1-18 with four reasons why Jesus' sacrifice is the best sacrifice.

1. Futility of Mosaic Law and sacrifices
2. Fitness of Jesus' sacrifice
3. Finality of Jesus' sacrifice
4. Fruitfulness of Jesus' sacrifice

THE FUTILITY OF THE MOSAIC LAW AND SACRIFICES - Verse 1-4

- 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.**

The Law was a shadow of things to come - the need for Jesus. Notice the entire Law was a shadow. The sacrifices are the focus of this passage but the entire Law was a shadow of things to come. The implication, then, is the entire Law, not just the sacrifices, was to be done away.

Ephesians 2:13-15

- 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.
 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;
 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

Galatians 3:19-25

- 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.
 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.
 23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.
 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.
 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

2 Corinthians 3:1-11

- 1 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?
 2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:
 3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.
 4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:
 5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;
 6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.
 7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:
 8 How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?
 9 For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.
 10 For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.
 11 For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

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.

The reality that the sacrifices had to be offered every year was indication that the sins of the people were not forgiven. An acceptable sacrifice would produce in the recipient a conscience freed of guilt before God.

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

The continual offering of sacrifices reminded the people their sins were not forgiven.

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

The blood of animals was never God's intended provision for forgiveness of sins.

Isaiah 1:10-18

Amos 5:21-27

THE FITNESS OF JESUS' SACRIFICE - Verses 5-9

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

This is the beginning a quote from Psalm 40:6-8.

40:6 Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

The LXX writers translated this verse as follows substituting *soma* (body) for *otia* (ear)...

"Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not; but a body hast thou prepared me:..."

Why the difference between *mine ears hast thou opened* and *a body hast thou prepared me*? Or, is there a difference?

Exodus 21:1-6

Jesus was completely obedient to the Father - a perfect sacrifice - John 5:30

"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

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

God had no pleasure in these offerings and sacrifices in that they did not take away sin.

"Sin" is the Greek word *hamartia*. "*Sacrifices*" is in italics meaning it was added by the translators.

The verse should read "In burnt offerings and sin offerings thou has had no pleasure."

It is not that "*sacrifices* for sin" is wrong. It is not. But, "sin offerings" is consistent with other uses in the Bible (see notes from Hebrews 9:16-28, verse 28).

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

The Jewish Bible has hundreds of prophecies about the Messiah. Many of these are about His first coming to die for the sins of the world.

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 5:46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

Acts 10:43 To him [Jesus] give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

See article "The Science of Probability and Messianic Prophecy"

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldst 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.

For a second time we are reminded that Mosaic sacrifices and offerings could never take away sins. Jesus came to do the will of God (He lived a perfect life and died for the sins of the world) so the first covenant would be done away and the second covenant, New Covenant, would be established.

The Science of Probability and Messianic Prophecy

In fact, what does the science of probability make of this [reliability of Messianic Prophecy]? The science of probability attempts to determine the chance that a given event will occur. The value and accuracy of the science of probability has been well established beyond doubt - for example, insurance rates are fixed according to statistical probabilities. Professor Emeritus of Science at Westmont College, Peter Stoner, has calculated the probability of one man fulfilling the major prophecies made concerning the Messiah. The estimates were worked out by twelve different classes, representing some 600 college students. The students carefully weighed all the factors, discussed each prophecy at length, and examined the various circumstances which might indicate that men had conspired together to fulfill a particular prophecy. They made their estimates conservative enough so that there was finally unanimous agreement even among the most skeptical students. However, then Professor Stoner took their estimates and made them even more conservative. He also encouraged other skeptics or scientists to make their own estimates to see if his conclusions were more than fair. Finally, he submitted his figures for review to a Committee of the American Scientific Affiliation. Upon examination, they verified that his calculations were dependable and accurate in regard to the scientific material presented (Peter Stoner, *Science Speaks*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1969, 4). For example, concerning Micah 5:2, where it states the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem Ephrathah, Stoner and his students determined the average population of Bethlehem from the time of Micah to the present; then they divided it by the average population of the earth during the same period. They concluded that the chance of one man being born in Bethlehem was one in 2.8×10^5 - or rounded, one in 300,000. **After examining only eight different prophecies (Idem, 106), they conservatively estimated that the chance of one man fulfilling all eight prophecies was one in 10^{17} .** To illustrate how large the number 10^{17} is (a figure with 17 zeros), Stoner gave this illustration : If you mark one of ten tickets, and place all the tickets in a hat, and thoroughly stir them, and then ask a blindfolded man to draw one, his chance of getting the right ticket is one in ten. Suppose that we take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom (Idem, 106-107).

In financial terms, is there anyone who would not invest in a financial venture if the chance of failure were only one in 10^{17} ? This is the kind of sure investment we are offered by God for belief in His Messiah. Professor Stoner, from these figures, draws the conclusion the fulfillment of these eight prophecies alone proves that God inspired the writing of the prophecies (Idem, 107) - the likelihood of mere chance is only one in 10^{17} ! Another way of saying this is that any person who minimizes or ignores the significance of the Biblical identifying signs concerning the Messiah would be foolish. But, of course, there are many more than eight prophecies. In another calculation, Stoner used 48 prophecies (Idem, 109) (even though he could have used Edersheim's 456) and arrived at the extremely conservative estimate **that the probability of 48 prophecies being fulfilled in one person is the incredible number 10^{157} .**

How large is the number one in 10^{157} ? 10^{157} contains 157 zeros! Stoner gives an illustration of this number using electrons. Electrons are very small objects. They are smaller than atoms. It would take 2.5 times 10^{15} of them, laid side by side, to make one inch. Even if we counted 250 of these electrons each minute and counted day and night, it would still take 19 million years just to count a line of electrons one-inch long (Stoner, op. cit., 109). With this introduction, let us go back to our chance of 1 in 10^{157} . Let us suppose that we are taking this number of electrons, marking one, and thoroughly stirring it into the whole mass, then blindfolding a man and letting him try to find the right one. What chance has he of finding the right one? What kind of a pile will this number of electrons make? They make an inconceivably large volume. The distance from our system of stars, or galaxy, to the next nearest one is nearly 1,500,000 light years; that is the distance that light will travel in 1,500,000 years going 186,000 miles each and every second. This distance is so great that if every man, woman and child in the United States, 200,000,000 of them, had a library of 65,000 volumes, and you collected every book in all of these libraries and then started on this journey of 1,500,000 light-years, and decided to place one letter from one of the books on each mile (e.g., if "the" was the first word in the first book you would put "t" on the first mile, "h" on the second mile, and "e" on the third mile; then leave a mile blank without a letter and start the next word in the same manner, etc.), before you complete your journey you will use up every letter in every book of every one of the libraries and have to call for more (Idem, 110). **This is the result from considering a mere 48 prophecies!** Obviously, the probability that 456 prophecies would be fulfilled in one man by chance is vastly smaller. According to Emile Borel, once one goes past one chance in 10^{50} , the probabilities are so small that it is impossible to think that they will ever occur. As Stoner concludes, **"Any man who rejects Christ as the Son of God is rejecting a fact proved perhaps more absolutely than any other fact in the world (Stoner, op. cit., 112)."**

Peter Stoner calculated the probability of just 8 Messianic prophecies being fulfilled in the life of Jesus. As you read through these prophecies, you will see that all estimates were calculated as conservatively as possible.

The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

The average population of Bethlehem from the time of Micah to the present (1958) divided by the average population of the earth during the same period = $7,150/2,000,000,000$ or 2.8×10^{-5} .

A messenger will prepare the way for the Messiah (Malachi 3:1).

One man in how many, the world over, has had a forerunner (in this case, John the Baptist) to prepare his way?
Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^{-3} .

The Messiah will enter Jerusalem as a king riding on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9).

One man in how many, who has entered Jerusalem as a ruler, has entered riding on a donkey?
Estimate: 1 in 100 or 1×10^{-2} .

The Messiah will be betrayed by a friend and suffer wounds in His hands (Zechariah 13:6).

One man in how many, the world over, has been betrayed by a friend, resulting in wounds in his hands?
Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^{-3} .

The Messiah will be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12).

Of the people who have been betrayed, one in how many has been betrayed for exactly 30 pieces of silver?
Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^{-3} .

The betrayal money will be used to purchase a potter's field (Zechariah 11:13).

One man in how many, after receiving a bribe for the betrayal of a friend, has returned the money, had it refused, and then experienced it being used to buy a potter's field?
Estimate: 1 in 100,000 or 1×10^{-5} .

The Messiah will remain silent while He is afflicted (Isaiah 53:7).

One man in how many, when he is oppressed and afflicted, though innocent, will make no defense of himself?
Estimate: 1 in 1,000 or 1×10^{-3} .

The Messiah will die by having His hands and feet pierced (Psalm 22:16).

One man in how many, since the time of David, has been crucified?
Estimate: 1 in 10,000 or 1×10^{-4} .

Multiplying all these probabilities together produces a number (rounded off) of 1×10^{-28} .
Dividing this number by an estimate of the number of people who have lived since the time of these prophecies (88 billion) produces a probability of all 8 prophecies being fulfilled accidentally in the life of one person.
That probability is 1 in 10¹⁷ or 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. That's one in one hundred quadrillion!