

Shadow Of Things

With the new year upon us, we turn our attention towards a new theme. As was the case with all our previous themes, the intent is to try and bring into focus something relating to our walk with Christ. You may be surprised then to hear that a good portion of that attention, both in the sermons and soon in our Sunday morning bible class, will be given to the sacrificial system under the Law of Moses. Some believe that learning about the Old Law, which is obsolete (Hebrews 8:13), is unnecessary to the Christian's walk. Paul, on the other hand, penned that through the old testament, Christians can learn and "through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). As Paul told the Galatian church, "Therefore, the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Galatians 3:24). Who of us would not want to grasp hope more fully?

*For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.
Hebrews 10:1*

I suspect that many of us have placed our hands together in front of a light to project a shadow of some kind on a wall in hopes that others would be able to guess what we were thinking about. The writer of Hebrews calls the Law of Moses "a shadow of good things to come." By shadow, the writer means a *likeness* or as one commentator put it, "a foreshadowing" [F.F. Bruce]. The Old Law was always intended to point forward, guiding man towards something better, with greater promises. The writer of Hebrews points to Christ saying, "But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come..." (Hebrews 9:11).

The law, although "holy and just and good" (Romans 7:12) could not "make those who approach perfect." The flaw in the law was in man's ability to uphold it perfectly (Hebrews 8:7-8) and also the reality that no matter how many animal sacrifices were made, they could "never take away sin" (Hebrews 10:11). The Old Law's objective was to point man towards the only true and perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ. Our study of the Old Law and sacrificial system, can expand and enrich our understanding about Jesus Christ the sacrificial Lamb of God.

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