



[Hebrews 10:1](#)

(1) 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.

New King James Version

Scripture clearly teaches that the Old Covenant ceremonies are symbolic of essential, New Covenant, spiritual truths. Further, the author reinforces this by saying they are "a shadow of good things to come." The verb "having" in [Hebrews 10:1](#) is a present active participle, expressing continuous or repeated action. This means that the Old Covenant ordinances of divine service and the sanctuary are still valid and effective teaching vehicles.

Where there is a shadow, there must also be a reality. In this instance, the reality is the life of Christ—the reality we are to strive to emulate as closely as we can, "as dear children," as Paul puts it, to be "a sweet-smelling aroma" to [God \(Ephesians 5:1-2\)](#).

In [Luke 24:27](#), Jesus buttresses this concept while instructing the two men on the road to Emmaus after His resurrection: "And beginning at [Moses](#) and all the [Prophets](#), He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Jesus draws teaching from the books of Moses to show parallels with His own life.

Be careful not to make the careless mistake of thinking of the offerings as childish, insignificant, primitive, or barbaric. Undoubtedly, they are different from what we are culturally familiar. However, these quoted scriptures make it clear that God intended all along to use them as teaching vehicles. To those under the Old Covenant, the offerings looked forward to what would occur. We look back on what occurred and accept the spiritual intent of the teaching as applicable to us under the New Covenant.

The sacrifices of Leviticus stood at the heart of the worship of God under the Old Covenant. The overall image we may retain from them may indeed be of an endless

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Hebrews 10:1 (<http://www.theberean.org>)
number of bulls, sheep, goats, and birds slaughtered and burned with profound solemnity on a smoking altar. However, there is absolutely no doubt that they prefigured the sacrifice of [Jesus Christ](#) in His death by crucifixion. Less understood is that they also foreshadowed the depth of His consecrated devotion to God and man in His life. Even less understood is how they demonstrate the life we also are to exemplify as living sacrifices.

Is not being living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, and not being conformed to [this world](#) but being transformed by the renewing of our minds into the image of Christ our Redeemer, to be at the center of our lives once we are redeemed ([Romans 12:1-2](#); [Ephesians 4:13](#))?

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Offerings of Leviticus \(Part One\): Introduction](#)

Related Topics:

[Forms, Shadows, Symbols, and Types](#)

[Jesus Christ's Crucifixion](#)

[Jesus Christ's Sacrifice](#)

[Old Covenant Sacrifices](#)

[Sacrifice](#)

[Sacrifice as Metaphor](#)

[Sacrifice, Living](#)

[Shadow of Things to Come](#)

[Type/Antitype](#)