



## Daily Verse and Comment

### Hebrews 10:1-4

(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. (2) 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.

*New King James Version*

Part of the problem with animal sacrifices is that a consciousness of sins remains. The Israelites went through the ceremony, but spiritually, nothing happened. Christ's sacrifice, though, includes the removal of sins from consciousness, which is implied in the role of the [azazel](#) but not actually accomplished. Along these lines, the author of Hebrews notes three times that Christ's sacrifice cleanses the conscience ([Hebrews 9:9](#), 14; 10:22).

[Hebrews 10:4](#) uses significant wording when speaking of taking away sins. The Greek word, *aphaireo*, has familiar meanings and implications. Its basic meaning is “to remove,” while it can also be translated as “cut off.” The author uses terminology that exactly describes the *azazel*, the goat of “complete removal” (as *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* renders it) that bears the sins to a land that is “cut off.”

Certainly, nothing involving animals can do that. Christ's sacrifice, though, was both necessary and entirely sufficient to deal with [sin](#). He became sin for us ([II Corinthians 5:21](#)) and was cut off. He paid the death penalty, giving us access to the Father, as well as bearing the sin into forgetfulness and cleansing the consciences of those who accept Him.

— David C. Grabbe

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