

The All Sufficient Sacrifice

Michael Woody | Hebrews 9:23–28

Do you possess the sufficient sacrifice to atone for your sins?

WHY THIS TEXT:

1. In our last study we looked at three reasons for the necessity of the blood of Christ
 - a. It is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that makes the covenant valid (v. 15-17)
 - b. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that ratifies the New Covenant (v. 18-21)
 - c. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that grants the exclusive means of forgiveness (v. 22)
2. The all important concepts that carry forward are found in Hebrews 9:22
3. Hebrews 9:23-28 build on these concepts as well as the role of the High Priest, the Tabernacle as a copy of Heaven and the all sufficiency of the blood of Christ. The author of Hebrews finishes with a daunting statement in verse 27...
4. The question I pose to you today is simple - do you possess the sufficient sacrifice to atone for your sins? Again, do you possess the sufficient sacrifice to atone for your sins?
5. You might say, I am working on that. Well, you will never work hard enough or long enough or sufficiently enough my dear friend.
6. My points today are simple
 - a. Jesus' sacrifice is sufficient for it has been made in the realm of the eternal versus the realm of the temporary (v. 23-24)

- b. Jesus sacrifice is sufficient for it was not for His own sins but for ours (v. 25-26)

JESUS' SACRIFICE IS SUFFICIENT FOR IT HAS BEEN MADE IN THE REALM OF THE ETERNAL VERSUS THE REALM OF THE TEMPORARY (v. 23-24)

1. This speaks to the contrast of the copies of the heavenly things and the heavenly things.
2. What is being said? One is better than the other!
3. What are the copies?
 - a. The earthly tabernacle and its ceremonies (Hebrews 8:2-5; 9:21)
 - b. The heavenly things are purified with better sacrifices
4. The real questions here are two:
 - a. What does the author mean when he says that “the heavenly things themselves” must also be purified?
 - b. What are the “better sacrifices than these” by which this purification is achieved?
5. Better sacrifices
 - a. First, there is general agreement among commentators that the plural *better sacrifices* is not a precise but a generic plural, corresponding or accommodated to the plural “these” in the first clause of the verse.
 - b. We must be specific, however, in our understanding that they were superseded not by many sacrifices but by *one*, namely, the unique and fully sufficient self-offering of the incarnate Son on the cross of Calvary
6. The heavenly things themselves to be purified
 - a. In Hebrews 8:5 we must understand these heavenly things as Heaven, itself.

- b. We are faced with the problem of explaining how the heavenly reality, where the pure presence of God dwells, can be conceived as requiring any kind of purification.
- c. Let us start with what it is not:
 - i. It is not, as Delitzsch states, that Heaven needs to be cleansed from the wrath of God.
 - ii. Nor can we say it is being cleansed from man's sin in some generic sense.
 - iii. Another unacceptable view is the expelling of Satan.
- d. Possible views
 - i. The "purification" of "the heavenly things themselves" means the "inauguration" or "consecration" of the heavenly sanctuary by reason of the "better" sacrifice of Christ.
 - ii. Another credible view is that "the heavenly things" mentioned here, or "the heavenly sanctuary" (as the same expression is translated in 8:5 above), to be the people of God who together constitute the church or temple of God, "a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5).
 - iii. A third view is that it is meant to be understood generically and we should not get caught up in like for like in every element. I would hold to this view but I see significant merits to the second also.
 - 1. Phillip Hughes, Our author's main intention is to emphasize the absolute superiority of the blood of the new covenant over that of the old. The purpose of Christ's coming was "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (v. 26 below); and now, "holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens" (7:26), he has entered the pure sanctuary above.
 - 2. This view really gives precedence to Hebrews 9:24

3. The conjunction *For* (v. 24) indicates the close logical connection between this and the preceding verse.

JESUS SACRIFICE IS SUFFICIENT FOR IT WAS NOT FOR HIS OWN SINS BUT FOR OURS (v. 25-26)

1. The key we must focus on is Jesus' appearance in the presence of God being *on our behalf*.
2. V. 25 - not that He should offer Himself often
 - a. I prefer the translation here of the CSB

Hebrews 9:25 CSB

He did not do this to offer himself many times, as the high priest enters the sanctuary yearly with the blood of another.

- b. The text is showing the uniqueness of His sacrifice, just as it showed the uniqueness of where it was made. His was made one time - it was unique and it was sufficient.
3. In this text that Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) is the basis of this comparison.
4. The one item that should be dealt with here is for whom was His death efficacious?

The key here is the term "the world," what does this mean?

- i. You may say, that is obvious, it is everyone!
 1. If you believe that then you must be a Pelagian, for then everyone is saved.
 2. No you respond, only those who have faith! Then it is your faith that saved you and not the sacrifice of Christ.

3. No you say, it is my faith that makes the sacrifice for me. Then you must believe that you possess faith as an inherent right or gift because Eph. 2:8-9 says that faith is a gift of God.
 4. Now, still, you must be fearful of falling away, for what if your exercise of faith falls short?
 5. You can see the quandary of this view.
- ii. The alternative is, what does the term “world” mean when used in association with Jesus’s death? Does it refer to everyone *without distinction* or to everyone *without exception*?
1. Scripture teaches that Jesus died for all people in the world without distinction — meaning, Jesus died for all kinds of people from every tongue, tribe, people, and nation. There is no distinction - it was just for Israel!
 2. In Romans Paul does not present Jesus’s death as hypothetically accomplishing the salvation of all people without exception, but as actually accomplishing salvation for all for whom he died (Romans 3:24-26).
 3. So the one for whom Christ died is the one who has faith in Him.
 4. A final set of verses is Ephesians 1:4-7
 5. My view, and what I see clearly from Scripture, is that those whom Christ died for He also gave His Spirit - the act of regeneration **MUST** precede faith and repentance according to 1 Cor. 2:14

CONCLUSION

1. In our passage three “appearings” of Christ receive mention.
 - a. Verse 24 (NKJV) states that Christ has entered into heaven “now to appear in the presence of God for us”; this occurred at the

- b. verse 26 (NKJV), that “He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself”;
 - c. and verse 28 (CSB), “so also Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time.”
2. In these appearings we have salvation procured and secured:
- a. He has appeared at the consummation of the age to put away sin by sacrificing Himself
 - b. He has appeared in the Heavens as our High Priest interceding in our behalf
 - c. And He will one day appear again - all those who are trusting in Him will not be disappointed and every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord.
3. All praise and glory to our Lamb who was slain.