

SACRIFICE: OLD TESTAMENT AND NEW TESTAMENT

Hebrews 10:4-12

The only way a person could approach the holy God was by first performing a sacrifice that cleansed sin. But there are two versions of effective sacrifice: Old Testament and New Testament. And although they had the same goal, the nature of these two sacrifices was vastly different in how they operated and what they accomplished.

[1] OLD TESTAMENT SACRIFICE: WHAT IT COULD NOT ACCOMPLISH

Hebrews 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.

Hebrews 10:11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

The Hebrew words kippurim and kaphar which we translate “to atone,” literally mean “to cover.” Therefore what Old Testament sacrifice did was to cover sins, which was a wonderful thing, but those sacrifices could never really get rid of sin, they could only hide them.

Further, not only did Old Testament sacrifice just hide sins (rather than eliminate them), it couldn’t accomplish even that for very long. When you sinned again, you had to sacrifice again. So the offerings had to be done over and over to keep the people right with God.

[2] NEW TESTAMENT SACRIFICE: WHAT IT ACCOMPLISHED

Hebrew 10:10 We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all.

Hebrew 10:12 After he [Jesus] had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.

Christ did not have to offer his offering over and over. He did it once and once was enough for all of us and forever. Once done, it was done forever. When he “sat down on the right hand of God” that forever, and its effect, our sanctification, is forever.