

The Wednesday Word, December 28, 2022: ONCE

The book of Hebrews demonstrates the superiority of the Lord Jesus over the Old Covenant. In fact, Hebrews makes it very clear that the Old Covenant has been done away. Because of the sufficiency and finality of Christ's sacrifice, the Old Testament priesthood has been abolished. When we comprehend the teachings of Hebrews, we realize, among other things, that there can be no priesthood in existence today which is qualified to make sacrifices for sin. Why not? Simply because there is no need for one. Those, such as the Roman Communion, who claim to be able to offer sin-forgiving sacrifices declare themselves and their followers separate from the New Covenant. Why? Because in the New Covenant there is but **one** priest who has offered Himself **once** for sin. Christ Jesus is that priest and His work of dealing with our sins is finished.

Let's look at this more closely and consider 4 instances in the Book of Hebrews where the word ONCE is applied to Christ and the Finished Work.

- 1) He offered Himself Once; Hebrews 7:26-27.
- 2) He entered in Once into the holy place; Hebrews 9:12.
- 3) He appeared Once in the end of the world to put away sin. Hebrews 9:26.
- 4) He was Once offered to bear the sins of many. Hebrews 9:26.

1) Hebrews 7:26-27

For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once when he offered up himself.

He offered Himself!

How many times did He offer Himself?

Once!

And who was this who offered Himself once?

He was God-clothed with a human body. No wonder then He only had to offer Himself once!

God didn't send a mighty angel to save us.

God didn't send a mighty army to rescue us.

God didn't send a mighty man to speak for us.

He came Himself.

But why did He come to offer Himself? He did so because of our sin. Sin cannot be tolerated by a just and holy God because sin is contrary to His perfect, sinless nature.

Sin had caused a fatal separation between God and man. Man's rebellion required propitiation, atonement reconciliation and payment. So, God came as one of us and offered Himself! How many times did He do this? He did this ONCE!

This is what we celebrate at the Communion Table. The bread and the wine represent His body and blood given as payment for our sins. When we come to the 'Table', we come, not to

sacrifice Him again for our sins, but to remember Him and what He has already done about our sins.

Jesus offered Himself. No Old Testament priest could ever have, even for a moment, thought of doing that. The Old Testament priest knew he was a sinner and he, as such, needed an offering to be made for his own sins. He would never have thought of making himself the actual offering.

It was an impossibility for the Old Testament priests to offer themselves up to God for the sins of the people. They could not even atone for their own sins much less for those of the people.

But Jesus Christ "offered Himself" and did it ONCE

This is a magnificent arrangement. Jesus who is our one, true Mediator, reconciled us to God by the sacrifice of Himself.

Indeed, so immense was this sacrifice that it is sufficient for eternity. What need then do we have for Christ to be offered again and again as the Roman Communion teaches?

He offered Himself ONCE!

And that's the Gospel Truth!

To be continued.