

A KNOCK-OUT PUNCH: THE "LAST AND FINAL SACRIFICE" TAKES THE TEN-COUNT¹



A Boxer Takes the Ten-Count²

I. INTRODUCTION

Christian missionaries claim that those who do not accept Jesus as their lord and savior, which includes the Jewish people, are doomed to burn in “hell” because they cannot have their sins forgiven by God. This claim is rationalized with the allegation that, in Biblical times, the only way to bring about the remission of sins was via the blood of a certain animal. This animal had to be brought to the priest to be slaughtered at the altar in the Sanctuary, first while in the portable Sanctuary and later in the Temple, as a sacrificial offering. According to this claim, since there has been no Temple standing in Jerusalem since the year 70 C.E., valid sacrificial offerings can no longer be made and, therefore, the only way for Jews to have their sins forgiven is through the blood shed by Jesus in his "sacrificial" death on the cross. In other words, the claim is that the blood of Jesus, who was allegedly sacrificed by God (the "Father") as a demonstration of his great love for mankind,³ has once and for all removed the stain of “Original

¹ Transliterations of Hebrew terminology into the Latin alphabet will follow these guidelines:

- Transliterated terminology is shown in ***bold italicized*** font
- The accented syllable in transliterated terminology is shown in **SMALL CAPS** font
- Latin vowel-sounds, A – E – I – O – U, are used (not the English versions thereof!)
- Distinct Hebrew letter that have ambiguous Latin letter sounds are transliterated according to the following rules:
 - A vocalized letter א is transliterated as the equivalent Latin vowel
 - A vocalized letter י is transliterated as the equivalent Latin vowel with an added underscore
 - The letter ה is transliterated as “h”
 - The letter ח is transliterated as “ch”
 - The letter כ is transliterated as “k”
 - The letter ק is transliterated as “q”
 - A vocalized **SHVA** (וְ נִיּוֹ) is transliterated as a superscripted “e” following the consonant
 - There is no “doubling” of letters in the transliterations to reflect the **dagesh** (emphasis)

² Original Photo Credit - CB107800 Corbis Royalty Free Photograph, found at the following web-link: <http://www.fotosearch.com/comp/corbis/DGT080/CB107800.jpg>

³ John 3:16(KJV) - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Sin" from those who follow Jesus (the "Son"). This act of love by God allegedly made Jesus the "last and final sacrifice" forever.

There are two main aspects to the claim that Jesus was "the last and final sacrifice". The first concerns the suitability of Jesus and his death as a sacrificial offering for the remission of sins. The second aspect, which was investigated in another essay, concerns the need for blood in the atonement process.⁴

This essay examines the suitability of Jesus and the manner in which he died as a sacrificial offering for the remission of sins.

II. THE CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE VERSUS THE SPECIFICATIONS IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

The process for testing this claim by Christian missionaries consists of contrasting the requirements concerning sacrificial offerings, as specified in the Hebrew Bible, against the accounts in the New Testament that describe the death of Jesus on the cross as a sacrificial offering. As part of this analysis, it is important to bear in mind the following two conditions that existed during the life of Jesus, at the time of his death, and for several decades following his death:

- ⦿ The Second Temple was still standing in Jerusalem
- ⦿ The Hebrew Bible was the Scripture in force

The salient issue to be addressed, and answered, is:

According to the requirements set forth in the Hebrew Bible, was Jesus a valid sacrificial offering, and was his death by crucifixion an acceptable process, for remission of sins?

The analytical phase of the testing process identifies ten elements for which the respective accounts in the New Testament are compared with the specifications provided in the Hebrew Bible, primarily in the Torah.

One

⚬ According to the accounts in the New Testament, Jesus was crucified by Roman soldiers:

**John 19:18,23(KJV) – (18) Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.
(23) Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. [See also Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luke 23:33.]**

⚬ According to the Levitical Law of Sacrifice in the Torah, the animal brought as a sin sacrifice had to be slaughtered by the person who offered it:

⁴ "Don't Mess with the Blood!" – <http://thejewishhome.org/counter/Blood.pdf>

Leviticus 4:27-29 - (27) And if any one person from among the common people sins unwittingly, by performing one of the commandments of the Lord which may not be done, and incurs guilt; (28) Or if his sin, which he has committed, is made known to him, then he shall bring his sacrifice, an unblemished female goat, for his sin which he has sinned. (29) And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and he shall slaughter the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.

Two

✧ According to the Levitical Law of Sacrifice in the Torah, some of the blood of the (sin) sacrifice had to be rubbed by the priest with his finger on the horns of the altar in the Temple, and the rest had to be poured out at the base of the sacrificial altar. The fat of the sacrifice had to be removed and burnt:

Leviticus 4:30-31 - (30) And the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, and put [it] upon the horns of the altar [used] for the burnt offering; and [then] he shall pour out all of [the rest of] its blood at the base of the altar. (31) And he shall remove all of its fat, as was removed the fat from the sacrificial peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a pleasant fragrance to the Lord; and [thus] shall the priest make an atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven.

✝ The New Testament is silent on what was done with the blood of Jesus and with the fat of his body.

Three

✝ According to the accounts in the New Testament, Jesus was beaten, whipped, and dragged on the ground before being crucified:

Matthew 26:67(KJV) - Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, [See also Mark 14:65; Luke 22:63; John 18:22.]

Matthew 27:26,30-31(KJV) – (26)Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. (30) And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. (31) And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. [See also Mark 15:15-20; John 19:1-3.]

✧ According to the Torah, a sacrificial animal had to be without any physical defects or blemishes:

Deuteronomy 17:1 - You shall not sacrifice to the Lord your God an ox or a sheep that has in it a blemish or any bad thing, for that is an abomination to the Lord, your God.

Sidebar Note: As a born Jew, Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day following his birth, a ritual that leaves a scar (Genesis 17:10-13; the “sign of the covenant”). The circumcision of Jesus is mentioned in the New Testament (Luke 2:21), yet Paul refers to circumcision as being tantamount to mutilation (Galatians 5:11-12; Philippians 3:2).

Four

✝ According to the New Testament, Jesus was "*the Lamb of God*" whose bones may not be broken [a reference to the *Paschal Lamb* of Exodus 12:46 and Numbers 9:12]:

John 1:29(KJV) – The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

John 19:36(KJV) - For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

☆ According to the Torah, the *Paschal Lamb* was not offered for the removal of sins. Rather, it was a festive, or commemorative, offering. Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) would have been a more appropriate time for a sin offering:

Numbers 29:11 - **One young male goat for a sin offering**, beside the sin offering of atonement, and the continual burnt offering, and its meal offering, and their drink offerings. [Yom Kippur – Individual sin offering]

Leviticus 16:15 - **He shall then slaughter the he goat of the people's sin offering** and bring its blood inside the dividing curtain, and he shall do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull and sprinkle it upon the cover of the ark, and before the cover of the ark. [Yom Kippur – Communal sin offering]

Five

☆ According to the Torah, the *Paschal Lamb* had to be slaughtered and its blood used to place markings on the side-posts and lintels of the entrances to the dwelling. Moreover, the meat had to be roasted and eaten, and whatever was not consumed by the time the Israelites were to leave their homes, had to be burnt and destroyed:

Exodus 12:6-10 - (6) And you shall keep it under watch until the fourteenth day of this month; and the entire congregation of the community of Israel shall slaughter it at dusk. (7) And they shall take [some] of its blood, and place it on the two doorposts and on the lintel, on the houses in which they will eat it. (8) And they shall eat the meat in that night, roasted over fire, and [with] unleavened bread; with bitter herbs they shall eat it. (9) You shall not eat from it raw, nor boiled in water; but roasted over fire, its head with its legs, and with its inner parts. (10) **And you shall not leave any of it until morning; and that which left over until the morning you shall burn in the fire.**

✝ According to the accounts in the New Testament this was not done with Jesus after his death. In fact, Jesus was buried.

Matthew 27:57-60(KJV) – (57) When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: (58) He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. (59) And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, (60) And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. [See also Mark 15:42-46; Luke 23:50-53; John 19:38-42.]

Six

- ✝ According to the New Testament, the death of Jesus was a sacrificial offering that expiated the sins of mankind for all times:

Hebrews 10:10,18(KJV) – (10) By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

(18) Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. [See also Romans 6:10; Hebrews 9:12.]

- ✧ According to the Torah, the Passover (sin) sacrifice, a male-goat, had to be offered on an individual (per household) basis, not as a communal offering:

Numbers 28:22 - And one young male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you.

Seven

- ✝ According to the New Testament, the death and blood of Jesus took care of (almost) all sins:

Hebrews 9:22(KJV) – And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

- ✧ According to the Levitical Law of Sacrifice in the Torah, the sacrificial sin offering brought atonement only for *unintentional* sins, except as noted in Leviticus 5:1-6, 20-26[Leviticus 5:1-6, 6:1-7 in Christian Bibles]:

Numbers 15:27-31 - (27) And if a person sins inadvertently, then he shall offer a female goat in its first year as a sin offering. (28) And the priest shall atone for the erring person who sinned inadvertently before the Lord in order to make atonement on his behalf; and it shall be forgiven him. (29) For the native born of the children of Israel and the stranger who resides among them, one law shall apply to him who sins inadvertently. (30) And the person who does anything presumptuously, whether he is a native born or a stranger, that person blasphemes the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from among his people. (31) Because he has scorned the word of the Lord, and has violated his commandment; that person shall surely be cut off, for his iniquity is upon him.

Eight

- ✝ According to the New Testament, the death of Jesus brought about the remission of sins yet uncommitted, and of sins of those yet to be born:

Hebrews 10:18(KJV) – Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

- ✧ According to the Levitical Law of Sacrifice in the Torah, sacrifices could bring atonement only for sins committed prior to the offering of the sacrifice. No sacrifice was provided for the atonement of sins committed after the sacrifice

was offered and, thus, no sacrifice can bring atonement for sins of people born after it was offered. This includes both **חַטָּאת (*hata't*)**, a **sin offering**, described in Leviticus 4:1-5:13, and **אֲשָׁמָה (*asham*)**, a **guilt offering**, described in Leviticus 5:14-26. Had there been, among the listed sacrifices, even one kind of sin or guilt offering that could bring atonement for future sins, the person who would have offered that particular sacrifice would not have had to do so again for the rest of his life. Moreover, Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), which is ordained by the Torah as an annual Holy Day (Leviticus 16:29-34), would have had to be celebrated by the Israelites only the very first time after the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai, had they used one of those "super" sacrificial offerings that could atone for sins of the future.⁵

The claim by the author of Hebrews, that there are no more sin offerings required following the death of Jesus, is false for other reasons as well:

- ⊙ **The Second Temple stood in Jerusalem for nearly 40 years following the death of Jesus, during which time literally thousands of animals were offered as sacrifices of all sorts, including sin and guilt offerings, as prescribed by the Torah.**
- ⊙ **The Hebrew Bible contains prophecies about the building of the Third Temple in the messianic era, and of the resumption of the sacrificial system at that time. All the types of sacrificial offerings described in the Hebrew Bible will be made on the sacrificial altar [מִזְבֵּחַ (*mizbe'ah*)] in the Temple, including both the חַטָּאת and אֲשָׁמָה sacrificial offerings. In other words, the sacrificial system, which has been in a state of suspension since the year 70 C.E., when the Romans destroyed the Second Temple, will be completely restored in the messianic era:**

Ezekiel 43:21-22 - And you shall take the bull of the sin offering, and he [the priest] shall burn it at the edge of the Temple, outside the Sanctuary. (22) And on the second day you shall offer an unblemished he-goat for a sin offering, and they [the priests] shall purify the altar as they purified it with the bull. [See also: Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 33:17-18; Ezekiel 40:39,46-47, 41:42, 42:13, 43:13,15,18-19,22,25-27, 44:27,29, 45:17,19,22-23,25, 46:20, 47:1; Zechariah 14:21.]

Nine

✠ According to the New Testament, God's "only begotten son" died on the cross for the sins of mankind, and all who accept this belief are "saved" (i.e., get salvation) and will go to heaven:

Romans 5:8-11(KJV) – (8) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (9) Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. (10) For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.(11) And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. [See also Acts 10:43; 1Corinthians 15:3; 1Peter 3:18.]

⁵ Consequently, even if Jesus were some kind of a "super- sacrifice", one that atoned for all sins of mankind, his death could have brought the remission of sins committed only prior to his crucifixion.

✧ The Hebrew Bible strictly prohibits (human) vicarious atonement, and mandates that everyone is responsible for his or her own sins.⁶

Deuteronomy 24:16 - Fathers shall not be put to death because of children, nor shall children be put to death for fathers; **each person shall be put to death for his own sin.** [See also Exodus 32:31-33; Numbers 35:33.]

Ten

✧ According to the New Testament, Jesus was "God manifest in the flesh" (this would make it a human sacrifice):

Romans 8:3(KJV) - For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: [See also 1Timothy 3:16; 1John 4:2.]

✧ The Hebrew Bible strictly prohibits human sacrifices. The concept of human sacrifices to a deity is foreign to Judaism. Human sacrifice is a pagan rite:

Leviticus 18:21 – And **you shall not give any of your offspring to pass through the fire for Molech, and shall not profane the name of your God; I am the Lord.** [See also Deuteronomy 18:10; Jeremiah 7:31, 19:5; Ezekiel 23:37-39.]

The results obtained from the analysis are summarized in Table IV-1.

Table II-1 – The "Last and Final Sacrifice": The New Testament versus the Hebrew Bible

#	On the subject of ...	✧ The New Testament says* ...	✧ The Hebrew Bible says* ...	Valid?
1	Who must slaughter the sin offering?	Jesus was crucified by Roman soldiers.	The person who brings it.	No
2	What is done with the blood and fat of the sin offering?	Nothing. The New Testament is silent on what was done with the blood of Jesus and with the fat of his body.	Some of the blood is rubbed by the priest with his finger on the horns of the altar in the Temple, and the rest is poured at the foot of the sacrificial altar. The fat is removed, placed on the altar by the priest, and burned.	No
3	What must be the physical condition of an animal being offered as a sacrifice?	Jesus was beaten, whipped, and dragged on the ground before being crucified. Would such treatment leave a body without blemishes and scars?	The sacrificial animal has to be without any physical defects or blemishes.	No
4	Was the Paschal Lamb a sin offering?	Jesus was called "the Lamb of God".	No. The Paschal Lamb was a festive, or commemorative, offering, not a sin offering.	No

⁶ This Christian belief also contradicts the words of those who were inspired by God throughout the rest of the Hebrew Bible:

2Kings 14:6 - And the sons of the assassins he did not execute, as it is written in the book of the Torah of Moses, which the Lord commanded saying: "Fathers shall not be put to death for sons, nor shall sons be put to death for fathers, but each man shall be put to death for his own sin." [See also Jeremiah 31:29(30 in Christian Bibles); Ezekiel 18:4,20; Psalms 49:7-8.]

5	What is to be done with the Paschal Lamb?	Nothing. The New Testament is silent on whether this was done with Jesus following his death.	The Paschal Lamb had to be slaughtered and its blood used for placing markings on the side-posts and lintel of the doors of the house. Its meat had to be roasted and eaten. Any leftovers at the time the Israelites were to leave their homes, had to be burnt.	No
6	What is unique about the sin sacrifice to be offered on Passover?	The death of Jesus, termed a sin sacrifice, expiated the sins of mankind.	The Passover sin sacrifice, a male-goat, has to be offered on an individual basis, not as a communal offering.	No
7	For which sins can the sin sacrifice bring atonement?	The death of Jesus on the cross took care of all sins.	Except as noted, the sacrificial sin offering can atone only for unintentional sins.	No
8	What is the span of time for which sin (and guilt) offerings can bring atonement?	The death of Jesus atoned for sins of the past, present and future, and for sins of those born after the crucifixion.	Sin and guilt offerings can atone only for sins committed prior to the offering of the sacrifice.	No
9	Can one person take on the sins of another and thereby have atonement granted to the sinner?	God had His "only begotten son" die on a cross for the sins of the people, and all who accept this belief are "saved" and will partake in the heavenly kingdom.	Human vicarious atonement is strictly prohibited. Each person is accountable for his or her own sins.	No
10	Can a human being serve as a sacrificial offering of any kind?	Jesus, as "God manifest in the flesh", was a human sacrifice when he died on the cross.	Human sacrifice is strictly prohibited.	No

* Entries shown in **bold font** indicate the "lead-off" item under the specific count number.

Clearly, the accounts in the New Testament violate the Hebrew Bible on all ten counts.

**The "Last & Final Sacrifice"
Takes the Ten-count**



III. SUMMARY

The analysis of the missionary claim that Jesus was "the last and final sacrifice" demonstrates that, according to the specifications provided in the Torah, Jesus could not have served as a valid sacrificial offering of any kind. Any one of the above ten "counts" would render a sacrifice unfit for the atonement of sins.

Those who choose to accept the belief that Jesus died for their sins, must understand and realize that such a belief is not supported by the Hebrew Bible. The notion that one person can take on, suffer, and die for the sins of another was introduced into Christianity via the New Testament and has, therefore, no place in, nor relevance to, Judaism. The dilemma facing those who accept the Christian Bible as their Scriptures is that the two “halves” of their Bible contradict each other – the New Testament contradicts the Christian “Old Testament” on this particular doctrine as well as on other elements of Christian theology.