

Hebrews 10:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

Analysis

But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. The emphatic contrast "But this man" (houtos de, οὗτος δὲ) sets Christ apart from every Levitical priest. The phrase "after he had offered one sacrifice for sins" (mian hyper hamartiōn prosenēgkas thysian, μίαν ὑπὲρ ἁμαρτιῶν προσενέγκας θυσίαν) stresses both the singularity and sufficiency of Christ's offering. One sacrifice—not thousands repeated endlessly. The aorist participle "having offered" indicates completed action; Christ's sacrificial work is finished, never to be repeated.

The phrase "for ever" (eis to diēnekas, εἰς τὸ διηνεκές) can modify either "sacrifice" (one sacrifice with eternal efficacy) or "sat down" (He sat down permanently). Both truths stand: Christ's single sacrifice possesses eternal effectiveness, and His session at God's right hand is permanent. Unlike priests whose work was never done, Christ "sat down" (ekathisen, ἐκάθισεν)—the aorist tense marking decisive, completed action. His sitting demonstrates finished redemption.

"At the right hand of God" (en dexia tou theou, ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ) quotes Psalm 110:1, the most-cited Old Testament verse in the New Testament. The right hand position signifies honor, authority, and shared rule. Christ's enthronement fulfills messianic prophecy, demonstrates divine approval of His sacrifice, and positions Him as intercessor and ruler. The imagery combines priestly sacrifice completion with royal enthronement—Jesus is both priest and king, having accomplished

redemption and now reigning over all. His seated posture contrasts absolutely with standing priests, visually declaring salvation's completion.

Historical Context

Psalm 110:1's declaration "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand" was recognized in Judaism as messianic, though its meaning was debated. Jesus Himself used this verse to demonstrate the Messiah's superiority to David (Matthew 22:41-46)—David called his own descendant "Lord," indicating the Messiah's divine nature. Peter proclaimed it fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2:34-35), Stephen saw it in his vision (Acts 7:55-56), and Paul cited it frequently (Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1).

The imagery of sitting at God's right hand combined elements from both priesthood and kingship. After offering sacrifice, the high priest would emerge from the holy of holies, and the people knew atonement was accepted when he appeared alive. Similarly, Christ's resurrection and ascension vindicated His sacrifice. But unlike the high priest who returned to continuous service, Christ sat down—His work complete. Yet His sitting isn't retirement; it's enthronement, the position from which He reigns and intercedes.

For first-century Jewish Christians, this truth was revolutionary and comforting. They faced pressure to return to Judaism's sacrificial system, to doubt whether Christ's death alone sufficed for sin. Hebrews' emphatic declaration—Christ sat down, His work finished—provided assurance that they needed no additional sacrifices, no supplementary rituals, no other mediators. Christ's enthronement meant salvation was accomplished, secured, and eternal. This doctrine liberated believers from religious anxiety and established confidence in approaching God through Christ alone.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's sitting down at God's right hand assure you that your salvation is completely finished, not partly completed?
2. What difference does it make that Christ now reigns with divine authority after accomplishing your redemption?
3. How can you more fully rest in Christ's finished work rather than anxiously trying to add to it through religious performance?

Interlinear Text

αὐτός	δὲ	μίαν	ὑπὲρ	ἁμαρτιῶν	προσενέγκας	θυσίαν
this man	But	G1520	for	sins	after he had offered	sacrifice
G846	G1161		G5228	G266	G4374	G2378
εἰς	τὸ	διηνεκὲς	ἐκάθισεν	ἐν	δεξιᾷ	τοῦ Θεοῦ
for	G3588	ever	sat down	on	the right hand	G3588 of God
G1519		G1336	G2523	G1722	G1188	G2316

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 1:3 (Sin): Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Colossians 3:1 (References God): If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Romans 8:34 (References God): Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Hebrews 8:1 (Parallel theme): Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

Hebrews 9:12 (Parallel theme): Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

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