

Hebrews 9:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

Analysis

If animal blood and ashes of a heifer 'sanctify for the purifying of the flesh,' how much more shall Christ's blood cleanse? The argument is from lesser to greater. The old covenant provisions genuinely accomplished ceremonial purification, restoring ritual fitness. But they were external only. Christ's sacrifice accomplishes infinitely more - actual, internal, spiritual cleansing. The rhetorical question expects the answer: 'infinitely more effectively.'

Historical Context

Numbers 19 prescribed the red heifer sacrifice whose ashes, mixed with water, purified from ceremonial defilement. This addressed external uncleanness but pointed to the greater cleansing Christ provides from actual sin and guilt.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. If Old Testament rituals genuinely accomplished their limited purpose, what does that teach about God's faithfulness even in the temporary provisions?
2. How much more, then, does Christ's perfect sacrifice accomplish its greater purpose of cleansing conscience and removing sin?

Interlinear Text

εἰ	γὰρ	τὸ	αἷμα	ταύρων	καὶ	τράγων	καὶ	σποδὸς
if	For	G3588	the blood	of bulls	and	of goats	and	the ashes
G1487	G1063		G129	G5022	G2532	G5131	G2532	G4700
δαμάλεως	ῥαντίζουσα	τοὺς	κεκοινωμένους	ἀγιάζει	πρὸς			
of an heifer	sprinkling	G3588	the unclean	sanctifieth	to			
G1151	G4472		G2840	G37	G4314			
τὴν	τῆς	σαρκὸς	καθαρότητα					
G3588	G3588	of the flesh	the purifying					
		G4561	G2514					

Additional Cross-References

Acts 15:9 (Parallel theme): And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

1 Peter 1:22 (Parallel theme): Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

Psalms 51:7 (Parallel theme): Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

2 Chronicles 30:19 (Parallel theme): That prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.

