

Lesson 26
The Blood in Christ's Sacrifice
Hebrews 9:15-28

Why is Christ's sacrifice and the shedding of blood so important? Blood is at the basis of all Christianity and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. To remove the "blood" from Christianity is to do away with the sacrificial death of Christ for sin, and to do away with the sacrificial death of Christ is to obliterate true Christianity. Christianity stands or falls on the shed blood of Christ.

The enemies of the cross think the whole concept of a blood sacrifice for sin is repugnant and based on ignorance and superstition. Christianity is sneeringly referred to by rank unbelievers and liberal preachers as "the religion of the slaughter house" and the gospel has been called "the gospel of gore." Unsaved men hate the blood of Christ, but saved men are humbled to know they are washed in the blood of Christ. Saved men know that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

BLOOD IS THE BASIS OF THE NEW COVENANT - Hebrews 9:15-17

"And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant ..." -- The words "and for this reason" take us back to Hebrews 9:14. It is "the blood of Christ" that is able to cleanse a person's conscience from sin and dead works. It was not the blood of animals that could cleanse from sins but special blood, the blood of Christ, the Son of God, the Lamb without spot or blemish. The blood of Christ not only cleanses from sin but also the blood of Christ is the basis of the New Covenant. The New Covenant is contrasted with the Old Covenant or the Mosaic Law. The Mosaic Law provided for animal sacrifices to be made so as to cover one's sins but animal sacrifices never took away sin. All the animal sacrifices pointed forward to Christ who made a perfect atonement for sin.

Today, the Old Covenant has been done away with and the New Covenant has been enacted by God and it is based on the blood of Christ. God has made a New Covenant and the Church is partaking of the spiritual blessings of this covenant in that the Church has the forgiveness of sins.

"... in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant..." -- How were people saved in the Old Testament? They were saved by grace through faith in the promise of Messiah to come. However, their sins were only covered and not actually atoned for until Christ died on the cross. The blood of animals could never provide a real atonement for sin, but Christ, in His death, died for all the sins of every true believer from Adam to the end.

"Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed" (Rom. 3:24-25).

“... those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” -- Those whom God has sovereignly called to salvation cannot be saved except through the shedding of blood. God does call men to salvation but they must be cleansed by the blood of Christ in order to enter into God’s presence. There was simply no other way God could have saved men except through the shedding of blood for their sins.

Those who are sovereignly called by God’s grace and cleansed by the blood of Christ have an eternal inheritance. Why? Because they have been called by an eternal God and cleansed by the eternal Christ; therefore, they have been given eternal life and an eternal inheritance.

“For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. A covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives.” -- The author of Hebrews brings up the point of a will to show the necessity of Christ’s death. When a will is made, no benefits can be given to the beneficiaries of that will until after the death of the testator or will-maker.

God always deals with His people on the basis of covenants and the New Covenant could not go into force until Christ died by the shedding of His blood. Christ had to die so God’s covenants (promises) would be carried out.

God has promised in the New Covenant to give eternal salvation to all who accept the fact that Christ shed His blood for their sins.

BLOOD WAS THE BASIS FOR THE OLD COVENANT - Hebrews 9:18-22

“Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood. For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, ‘THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD COMMANDED YOU.’ And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood.” -- The concept of blood was not foreign to the Old Covenant or Mosaic Law, for when the Mosaic Law was given, the Tablets and the people were sprinkled with blood and water. Exodus 24:8 is quoted to show the importance of animal blood to the Mosaic system. Even the tabernacle, which had its authorization from the Mosaic Law, and the various pieces of furniture in the tabernacle were sprinkled with blood.

Anything that sinful men are connected with must be cleansed by blood.

“And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” -- This verse states unequivocally that there can be no forgiveness of sins by God without the shedding of blood. If a person shuns the blood of Christ as repugnant, then he shuns salvation. Salvation is only for those who are bathed in the blood of Christ.

Today, there are several denominations that have taken every reference to the blood of Christ out

of their hymnals. What can we say to this? If they have rejected the blood of Christ, God has rejected them, for forgiveness of sins is only by the blood of Christ.

We had a visiting lecturer come to Dallas Theological Seminary and he told about an interesting event that happened to him after he preached on the blood of Christ. A woman came up to him and said, "Oh, Pastor, I wish you wouldn't talk about the blood of Jesus Christ; it's so nauseating to ladies and gentlemen." The pastor said, "Yes, madam, you're right. She smiled and said, "I'm so glad you agree." But then the pastor said, "Yes, Madam, but Jesus didn't die for ladies and gentlemen, He died for sinners! And the blood is not repugnant to guilty sinners."

BLOOD IS NECESSARY FOR THE CLEANSING OF HEAVEN - Hebrews 9:23

"Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." -- The earthly tabernacle was cleansed with animal blood, but in some mysterious way the heavenly tabernacle was also cleansed by the blood of Christ. We cannot be dogmatic but perhaps portions of heaven needed to be cleansed because Satan had access to God, or perhaps it is because the sins of men are written there in God's book, or perhaps our eternal relations with God, even as sinners saved by grace, require the purification of heaven.

We simply do not know; however, we do know that the atoning death of Christ, His shed blood, had effects in heaven as well as on earth. When we get on that side of glory, we will discover how many multiple facets there were to the death of Christ and how it affected the whole universe and all of heaven.

BLOOD IS THE BASIS FOR CHRIST BECOMING A REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHRISTIANS - Hebrews 9:24

"For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, not to appear in the presence of God for us ..." -- Christ entered into heaven on the basis of His shed blood, and He did it that He might be in the presence of God on our behalf. Christ is our representative in heaven and He is pleading His blood on our behalf. We have seen how Christ is our intercessor in heaven, praying that our faith will not fail, but now we are told that He is our advocate or defense lawyer, pleading His shed blood and sacrificial death whenever we do sin.

"My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (1 John 2:1-2).

Picture a heavenly court scene with the Father as the Judge and the Lord Jesus as the defense lawyer; also Satan is the prosecution attorney. It is the believer that is on trial. Each time a believer sins, Satan, the prosecutor says, "Let him be judged!" Immediately Christ steps up and says, "Father, you cannot judge that believer in Christ because I shed by blood for his sins." Immediately, the Father says, "Case dismissed."

In her poem MY ADVOCATE, Martha Snel Nicholson says:

*“I sinned, and straightway, post-haste, Satan flew
Before the presence of the Most High God,
And made a railing accusation there.
He said, “This soul, this thing of clay and sod,
Has sinned. ‘Tis true that he has named Thy name
But I demand his death, for Thou has said,
‘The soul that sinneth, it shall die.’ Shall not
Thy sentence be fulfilled? Is justice dead?
Send now this wretched sinner to his doom.
What other thing can a righteous ruler do?”
And thus he did accuse me day and night,
And every word he spoke, O God, was true!*

*“Then quickly One rose up from God’s right hand,
Before whose glory angels veiled their eyes.
He spoke, “Each jot and tittle of the law
Must be fulfilled: the guilty sinner dies!
But wait ...Suppose his guilt were all transferred
To Me that paid his penalty!
Behold My hand, My side, My feet! One day
I was made sin for him and died that he
Might be presented faultless, at Thy throne!”
And Satan fled away. Full well he knew
That he could not prevail against such love,
For every word my dear Lord spoke was true!”*

BLOOD ALONE PUTS AWAY SIN - Hebrews 9:25-26

“... nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priests enters the holy place year by year with blood not his own.” -- The high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year to pour the sacrificial blood of animals on the Mercy Seat for Israel’s sins, and the sins were covered for one year. However, this whole process had to be repeated every year, for the blood of bulls and goats could never permanently take away sins. Furthermore, the high priest in Israel offered animal blood and not his own blood. But Christ offered Himself once and entered into heaven by His own shed blood.

“Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” -- Christ did not have to be sacrificed over and over again as were animals, but He died once for all and forever for sins. At the consummation of the ages, Christ came to atone for the sins of men. Calvary is the consummation of the ages -- past, present and future. All ages up to Christ looked forward to His sacrificial death for sin, and all the ages yet future will look back to the death of Christ for sin. Ten million years from now, in glory, saved men will be talking

about the once for all death of Christ for sin. The Cross was the great event of time and it is the one event that will be talked about for all eternity, for it is the blood of the Son of God that washed our sins away.

The Book of Hebrews refutes the Roman Catholic mass, for in the mass Christ is re-sacrificed again and again, but the Bible says that Christ died once for sin and that He made a complete and perfect atonement for sins.

BLOOD IS RELATED TO THE SECOND ADVENT - Hebrews 9:27-28

“And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this comes judgment ...” -- Every person in God’s plan has been given an appointed day of death and after that death comes judgment. Death and judgment are inevitable for sinful men. Is there annihilation after death? No! Is there a second chance after death? No! Will God be merciful to sinful men after death? No! God is going to judge all sinners after this life!

One day I happened to be at home when the Phil Donahue show was on and that day they were interviewing Marjo Gortner. Marjo was the famous child evangelist who began giving out the gospel at the age of three. He saw all kinds of outward manifestations on his ministry but he did not believe the gospel himself, and saw only the business end or the money-making aspect of mass evangelism. Apparently, his father made some three million dollars on Marjo’s talent to preach. When Marjo was fourteen, he threw over the whole Christian faith and declared it to be a fraud and a hoax. He went back into preaching when he was twenty-two to make more money, but he only preached the social gospel and found people not interested in this type of message. He then went into movies. On the program he was mocking people who believe in original sin and a judgment after this life. He said it was wrong to preach judgment and the only reason it was preached was to scare people into belief in a heaven that does not exist. The biblical concepts of sin, man’s lost spiritual condition, judgment and hell were mocked and laughed at by Marjo. Marjo believed that if men needed religion that was okay but every man had to find his own way in this life, for heaven and hell were in this life. There is no real afterlife. Marjo laughed at the concept of Christ’s death for sin and said the Bible was just another book written by men.

The tragedy of the whole program was that some evangelicals called in to the program and said that Marjo had to receive Christ to be saved. This was correct and then Marjo asked them about the heathen in Africa and they all said that the heathen would be saved if they never heard. They were saying that the heathen could be saved without the applying of the shed blood of Christ. These evangelicals were making a mockery of the Cross and both Phil Donahue and Marjo made fools of them.

Death and judgment are sure for all men, even Marjo Gortner. He may mock and laugh about it now but the Bible says that it is appointed unto men once to die but after that there is judgment!

“...so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many ...” -- The only way that eternal judgment can be avoided is through the death of Christ. Christ offered Himself for “many;” He atoned for “many” people. Who are the “many?” They are all those who will place

their faith and trust in the blood of Christ alone to save them from their sins.

“... shall appear a second time, not to bear sin, to those who eagerly await Him, for salvation.”

-- Just as Christ offered Himself for sins, He is coming again in His second advent. Christ came once in His first advent to die and He is coming a second time to judge the world and reward the saints. Here the reference is to the second advent in relation to the saints, for He is going to reward them with redeemed bodies, and they shall be removed from the presence of sin forever. At the second advent, saints are going to have the final phase of their salvation.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the Dower of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:3-5).

Who is Christ going to award this final salvation to? All those who are washed in His blood, and they are those who constantly look forward to the second advent of Christ. One of the marks of a true Christian is that he looks forward to the coming of Christ.

The shedding of blood was the consummation of the first advent, but that death set the stage for the Second Advent. Christ was resurrected from the dead and ascended to the Father's right hand in heaven. One day He will return to give redeemed bodies to all He shed His blood for at the Cross.

Christ is coming again. There are liberal preachers who say that Christ came many times. One minister said, “The Lord comes every time we have a revival, or when a Christian dies, or when Christ comes into the heart.” Not so, the Lord will come again literally and bodily at the appointed time. He is coming a second time. Are you watching for Him?

CONCLUSION

The second coming of Christ will be a glorious event to all who have been washed in Christ's blood, for they shall have their redeemed bodies. But what of those who die without Christ or are not saved when Christ comes back? They shall perish in their sins.

“... when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed...” (2 Thess. 1:7b-10).

There is only one physical death for every man and then there will be certain judgment, but men do not have to be judged for their sins in eternity. There is an escape from judgment. What is this escape? The sacrificial death of Christ in which He shed His blood for “many.” Judgment

can only be reversed through the shed blood of Christ. Turn to Christ and His atoning death before it is too late! Only Christ can save you, for without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins!