

The Shedding of Blood



Romans 3:9-20 Hebrews 10:1- 14

Romans 12:1-2 Luke 22:14-20

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Throughout the Old Testament times, God has taught His people the importance of a *sacrifice*. A *sacrifice* is a substitute that God will accept for you and in your place. God kept the idea of *sacrifice* and the **shedding of blood** in front of His Old Testament people from the beginning. God never wanted them to forget how serious their sin was; and that it was going to take the **shedding of blood** to cover over their sins. Every *sacrifice* in the Old Testament pointed forward to the greatest *sacrifice* of all, the *sacrifice* of Jesus, the Son of God, and His death on the cross¹.

There were many sacrifices in the Old Testament. You are probably familiar with some of them.

- ➡ The first occurred in the *Garden of Eden*, right after Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God's Word. God finds Adam and Eve hiding in the bushes; and He covers them with the skin of animals. Their nakedness -- which represented their sin at the time -- was covered over by the sacrifice. The animal died so that they could live.
- ➡ The first thing *Noah* did when he and his family stepped off the Ark was to offer a sacrifice to God. God accepted this sacrifice and it was pleasing to Him.
- ➡ *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, the great Patriarchs of the Old Testament, built altars and frequently made sacrifices to the Lord their God.

¹ This faith in the sacrifice to come, (for them He was known as the "Messiah") is what saved the Old Testament people. In faith, they looked forward to the Savior who would come for them; just as we look back in faith to the Savior who did come for us. The faithful priests and Levites would have been teaching this to the Old Testament people. Their faith in the Savior (Messiah) to come saved them, just as our faith in Jesus (Christ/Messiah) who has come saves us. The only difference is what side of the timeline one lives on. Faith in Jesus is what saves, in both the Old and the New Testament times,

- ➡ In the **10th plague on Egypt**, the Angel of death swept over Egypt killing all the firstborn sons. God told the Israelites to sacrifice a lamb that night; and that **Passover Lamb** died so that the Israelites could live; the Angel of death *passed over* their homes that night.
- ➡ Throughout the history of the Israelites, at both the Tabernacle and later at the Temple in Jerusalem, God required a **morning and evening sacrifice** for the nation of Israel. For centuries, these were daily reminders of the seriousness of their sin, and that it was going to take the shedding of blood to cover over their sins.
- ➡ The pinnacle of sacrifices in the Old Testament was the **Day of Atonement**. The Day of Atonement was a grand and elaborate ritual in which the High Priest would take the blood of the sacrifice into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle that blood on the Ark of the Covenant, which contained the stone tablets of the 10 Commandments. The sprinkled blood covered over the sins of the people, represented by the 10 Commandments.

There were many sacrifices in the Old Testament. Yet, not one of these sacrifices could take away sins. Every single one of them pointed forward to Jesus, Who's sacrificial blood on the cross takes away the sins of the world.

But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. It is **impossible** for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. ... we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Hebrews 10:3,4,10

When Jesus died on the cross, He cried out: **It is Finished!** One of the things that is finished are continual sacrifices. Jesus's death on the cross, was the sacrifice for all people of all times. His sacrifice is *once for all*. His death is payment for everyone's sins – including yours! God accepts His death in your place! His sacrifice earns your forgiveness and purchased your eternal life.

Jesus' death on the cross, His sacrifice as the **Lamb of God** who takes away the sins of the world, teaches us that salvation is God's work: it is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

God doesn't ask you to make a sacrifice for your own sins. There is nothing you can offer God to cover over your sins. Your sins are so great and so serious that they separate you from God.

As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." Romans 3:10-12

Because of sin, we are unable to save ourselves. There is no sacrifice, no good work, no merit, no good intention, nor anything else that we can offer God to make up for our sins. On our own, we have no sacrifice whatsoever to cover over our sinfulness and approach God.

So God provides the sacrifice. God sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ to be the sacrifice for the sins of the world. *Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Because of Jesus and His death on the cross, your sins are covered over. Your guilt is removed from you, and death will pass over you. God's wrath is appeased; and you now receive the grace of God. You have been given forgiveness of sins, peace with God, and eternal life. They are gifts from God; not things you have earned. Jesus is the sacrifice for your sins; He is the one we put our faith in. When He cried out, **It is Finished!** He meant that all the work of salvation is finished and complete forever². His sacrifice was *once and for all*; it is the only one that God will accept on your behalf. Jesus truly is the Lamb of God Who's blood takes away the sin of the world!

As we think about Jesus' sacrifice for us today, let me highlight two more things.

The first is Holy Communion. Holy Communion is the miracle where you are given Jesus' sacrificed and risen *Body and Blood* for the forgiveness of your sins. In Holy Communion, in a Sacramental and mysterious way, Jesus promises that when you *take and eat* and *take and drink* the **bread** and the **wine** of Holy

² The Greek word for "It is Finished" is *Tetelestai*, and in John 19:30, Jesus uses it in the perfect tense. The perfect tense indicates that the action has been done and its effect remains ongoing. Jesus's sacrifice is complete, and its power and benefit remains in effect forever. [Theologically, the effect, power, and benefit of Jesus's death is not only for those who follow Jesus, but also for those who came before Him!] He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world — regardless of *when* someone lives. He is the only sacrifice for our sins that God will accept. The Son of God is our Savior of ALL PEOPLE!

Communion, you also receive His very **Body** and **Blood**, crucified on the cross and risen from the dead for you and your salvation.

And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is **My Body** given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the New Testament in **My Blood**, which is poured out for you. Luke 22:19-20

In Holy Communion, you receive the **blessings and benefits** of the sacrifice of Jesus. In Holy Communion, you receive the **Body and Blood of Christ** the forgiveness of your sins.

A second thing to keep in mind is that **your daily life of faith is now described as a living sacrifice**.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a **living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Romans 12:1

In response to what Jesus has done for you by His sacrifice on the cross, you now live a holy life. Your **HOLY LIFE** is described as **a living sacrifice**. As you openly confess His Name, and live according to His will, you glorify God. What you say and what you do is important as a Christian. It is not important for salvation, only Jesus' work is important for salvation. But what you say and do as a Christian is done in thankfulness and praise for what God has done for you through His Son Jesus. So the picture is that you are offering up -- **like a sacrifice** --- your life, your words, your thoughts, your time, your money, your prayers, your worship --- your Christian faith and life is pictured as **a living sacrifice**³.

As we continue our Lenten journey to the cross, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, one of the central themes is that of **sacrifice**. When Jesus died on the cross, He cried out: **It is Finished!** No more sacrifices are ever needed. Jesus sacrifice is the last and final one: His sacrifice was once, and for all people of all times!

Amen!

³ Be sure not to miss the contrast. Jesus' sacrifice led to His death for the sins of the world. Your "sacrifice" is life: a holy life, not for the sins of the world, but for the glory of God and the love of your neighbor!

God the Father, we thank you for sending Your Son Jesus to be the sacrifice for our sins. **We thank You that He shed His blood for us** so that we can live eternally with You. **Deepen our faith in His once and for all sacrifice,** and allow us to respond with sacrificial lives of praise and thanksgiving. **Help others learn of Jesus through us and our words,** so that they too can know and believe that Jesus is the Lamb of God **who takes away the sin of the world.**
In His Name we pray, Amen!

Romans 3:9-20

What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. 10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; 11 there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. 12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." 13 "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." 14 "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 ruin and misery mark their ways, 17 and the way of peace they do not know." 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes." 19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. 20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

Hebrews 10:1–14

The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. 2 Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. 3 But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. 4 It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. 5 Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; 6 with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. 7 Then I said, ‘Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, my God.’” 8 First he said, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them”—though they were offered in accordance with the law. 9 Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second. 10 And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, 13 and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. 14 For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.
2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Luke 22:14-20

When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. 15 And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16 For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." 17 After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. 18 For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My Body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." 20 In the same way, after the supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is poured out for you.