

The Blood-Sealed Covenant

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Heb. 9:

Today's subject for consideration is "The Blood-Sealed Covenant."

Do you realize that in every age, both the Old Testament and the New Testament times, there has been great importance attached to blood by God in His divine plan of redemption?

Whether during the Patriarchal Age (beginning with Adam), the Mosaic Age (beginning with the giving of The Law of Moses), or the Christian Age of the New Testament, our God has always employed blood in His redemptive plans.

Regardless of modern man's mockery of a so-called "bloody religion," many of the principles of the Bible revolve around the use of blood. At this time I would like for you to consider the teachings of the Word of God concerning "The Blood-Sealed Covenant."

Sin and blood

The most terrible reality known to man is sin! Every grave you have stood beside, every tear that has come to your cheek, every sickness you have experienced has come about because of sin; if not directly, it was brought about because of the first sin in the Garden of Eden.

When we consider the fact that only the blood of Christ can remit sin, it becomes obvious that this topic is a vital one.

Blood sacrifices in the Patriarchal Age

During the Patriarchal Age, extending from Adam and Eve down to the giving of the Law of Moses, animal sacrifices of blood were required by God.

In the first family, the two brothers, Cain and Abel, offered sacrifices to God. By inference, we can see that a sacrifice of blood was commanded by God.

- Gen. 4:2-5, *"And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto*

Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.”

- Heb. 11:4, *“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.”*

The fact that Abel’s offering was made “by faith,” indicates that God commanded the type of sacrifice He desired.

Rom. 10:17, *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*

Therefore, Abel offered his sacrifice according to the instructions of God, not his own personal wishes or opinions.

Since Cain’s offering was rejected, and in light of God’s requirement for a blood covenant in other ages, it is obvious that only animal blood sacrifice was what God specified to them.

Saved by blood – The Passover

The sacrifices to God by the children of Israel and the observance of the Passover are examples of the importance of blood. The 12th chapter of Exodus reveals the story of the sacrifices that were offered with the institution of the Passover. This feast was instituted on the eve of Israel’s departure from Egyptian slavery and was observed throughout centuries to follow, in memory of that grand occasion of freedom.

On that fateful night, the Israelites were to take the **blood of a lamb** and wipe it on the doorposts of the house where the Passover was being observed. God promised that when He saw the blood the death angel would pass over them. He would save them from death. The death angel did exactly that, smiting only the uncircumcised Egyptians who did not protect themselves by the blood.

The **blood and obedience** meant salvation. Without the blood on the doorposts, death was inevitable; without obedience, death was certain.

Final coming

There is a parallel between this occasion and the day of the coming of the Lord at the end of time, when He will appear once again as an angel of vengeance to punish those who have not obeyed the gospel, and who are not protected by the blood of the eternal Lamb of God.

In 2 Thess. 1:7-9, the Bible warns that “...*the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;*”

Today, just as in the Old Testament times, we are under a blood-sealed covenant!

The gospel facts of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ constitute the fundamentals of the gospel, the power of God unto salvation.

The facts concerning the Son of God must be believed and His commands obeyed, if the saving blood is to affect the souls of men.

Mark 16:16, “*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*”

Just as there was no human reason, or human logic, involved in the blood upon the doorposts in the Passover observance and their deliverance from the death angel, so, to many people, there may seem to be no significance of faith, repentance, confession, baptism, and remission of sins for us today.

However, in both cases, it is not a matter of whether or not we fully understand the wisdom of God’s will; rather, we accept the fact that God has spoken and it is our responsibility to trust and obey!

We can know that ours is a blood-sealed covenant, too, and that God will keep His promises to us the same as He did with Israel, if we obey Him.

The Mosaic Age and blood

Let us now briefly observe the Mosaic Age. We find in it, too, that God required sacrifices involving blood.

The New Testament, in looking back to the Old Covenant, declares:

Heb. 9:18-22, “*Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.*”

In the Mosaic Age, blood sealed the divine covenant of God. The tabernacle and all its vessels of ministry were cleansed with blood.

There were many regular sacrifices that were to be offered continually, according to the first seven chapters of Leviticus.

Blood under the Old Law, A remembrance

All of those bloody animal sacrifices of the Old Testament times could not take away the sins of the people, however.

The New Testament reveals that they were simply the shadows of that powerful blood of the Lamb of God, which was to come in the future.

The blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, would ultimately and completely cleanse men of their sins.

Heb. 10:1-4, *“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”*

Sins could not actually be remitted through the animal blood sacrifices under the Old Law. But by those sacrifices, commanded by God, there was a “remembrance made of sins year by year.”

The bloody animal sacrifices of those former ages could never cleanse the people of their sins. They were shadows that led men to the blood of Christ, as revealed in the New Testament, which actually remits one’s sins.

Gal. 3:24-27, *“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”*

Blood in the Christian Age

Today we are living in the Christian Age. The New Testament speaks of the blood of Christ as our sacrifice.

Heb. 10:19-20, *“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh,”*

This new way, by way of the blood of Christ, was prophesied by the writers of the Old Testament, of whom the Apostle Peter wrote:

1 Pet. 1:10-11, *“Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”*

The prophet Isaiah was one of those who spoke so eloquently of the coming death and exaltation of the Messiah..

Isa. 53:4-6, *“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”*

In verses 10-12 of this prophetic chapter, the prophet concludes:

Isa. 53:10-12, *“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”*

Almost every prophet of the Old Testament periods foretold the coming of the Lamb of God. The final prophet, John the Baptist, declared of Christ:

John 1:29-34, *“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.”*

Death and exaltation of Christ

Jesus Christ, of whom John spoke, lived among the men of this earth for thirty years before He was suddenly taken and put to death. He gave up the glories of heaven in order to come to the earth and carry out His divine mission.

The Apostle Paul once exhorted Christians:

Phil. 2:5-11, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Yes, Jesus Christ came to this world as the gift of God's love, to offer himself in our place – for our sins! This thought should profoundly affect every one of us!

Paul, in comparing the Old Covenant with the New Covenant, declared:

Heb. 9:13-14, "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: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Surely, there can be no doubt about the sanctifying, cleansing power of the blood of Christ. The soul of man is cleansed and sanctified that he may serve the living God!

One final sacrifice

An important feature of the offering of Christ was its finality.

Paul wrote of the Old Covenant of Moses, declaring:

Heb. 10:9-12, "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;"

Yes, the offering of the **blood of Christ** was a “**once for all**” sacrifice. It is not to be repeated continually, as did the offerings of the Old Testament era.

The inspired writer affirms:

Heb. 10:14, “*For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*”

Great High Priest Over God’s House

In the 10th chapter of Hebrews, Paul speaks of a great priest over the house of God.

Our boldness and confidence toward God is enhanced by the fact that Jesus serves with authority and power of the house of God as High Priest.

The high priest of the Old Covenant was the only one who could enter the holy of holies into the presence of God. Today, Jesus is our High Priest, performing in the presence of God.

- 1 Pet. 2:5, “*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*”
- Heb. 2:17, “*Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*”
- Heb. 8:1, “*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;*”
- Heb. 4:14-15, “*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*”

Conclusion

All of our hope for eternity is based upon the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God!

Sin may spot and stain our souls, but the blood of Christ will cleanse us from every defilement.

Isa. 1:18-19, *“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”*

