

21. Understanding the Superiority of the Blood of Christ

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand why it was only necessary for Christ to shed His blood once. It was only necessary for Christ to suffer once because His blood was sufficient to blot out our sins for all eternity. In our topic today, we are going to see why the blood of Christ was far superior to the blood of animal sacrifices.

In Hebrews 10:1-4 we read, “For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” Here, we are reminded again that the law was a shadow of the good things to come and not the image. The word translated “shadow” speaks of a shadow that appears on the wall of a dark room when the light shines on your hand or some other object. In contrast, the word translated “image” speaks the exact image of an object or person. Colossians 1:15 says, “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.” Here, we see that Christ is the exact image of the Father.

The law could never make it possible for us to enter into the very presence of God with boldness because it was only a shadow. That was made clear by the fact that the high priest could only go into the Most Holy Place once a year. He had to take blood first as a covering for his own sins and then for the sins of the people. Even though the high priest was coming into the presence of God, he knew that did not make him perfect (provide him with salvation and forgiveness of sin) because he had to do the same thing the next year. If an offering could have provided salvation and forgiveness, then it would only have been offered once and the need for it would have ceased.

The fact that the high priest had to offer a sacrifice for his own sins every year made it very clear that the sacrifice did not take away sin. That was due to the fact that the blood of animals could never take away sin. In contrast, when John the Baptist introduced Christ we read in John 1:29, “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’” Christ could take away sin which the blood of bulls and goats could never do.

That is why the writer of Hebrews quoted the Old Testament when he wrote, in Hebrews 10:5-7, “Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come--in the volume of the book it is written of Me--to do Your will, O God.’”” This statement is quoted from Psalm 40:6-8.

As we look at these verses from Psalm 40, we are reminded that many of the Jews offered sacrifices to the Lord even when they were not following the Lord. In fact, God used Isaiah to rebuke the Jews when they offered sacrifices while their heart was far from God. Isaiah 1:11-15 says, “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?” says the Lord. ‘I have had enough of

burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs or goats. When you come to appear before Me, who has required this from your hand, to trample My courts? Bring no more futile sacrifices; incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies--I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.” God did not want sacrifices that did not come from the heart.

In contrast to those Jews who offered meaningless sacrifices, we see that Christ came to do the will of the Father. Christ told His disciples early in His ministry in John 4:34, “Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.’” Christ also showed His desire to do the will of the Father as He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before His crucifixion. Luke 22:42 says, “Saying, ‘Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.’” Christ was focused on doing the will of the Father.

Hebrews 10:8-10 gives some additional quotes from Psalm 40:6-8 when those verses say, “Previously saying, ‘Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them’ (which are offered according to the law), then He said, ‘Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.’ He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” Even for those who offered sacrifices from a heart that had genuine faith, those sacrifices could not take away sin. God could not be well pleased with those sacrifices because they could never take away sin. In contrast, the Father said of Christ in Matthew 17:5, “While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’” The Father also showed that He was pleased with the sacrifice Christ offered by raising Him from the dead.

As a result, when Christ came to this earth He came to fulfill the law and take away the sacrifices that were offered according to the law. Philippians 2:7-8 says, “But made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” Christ was willing to die the most horrible form of death that the Romans could devise to be obedient to the Father and to pay the penalty for our sin. The Father showed that He was satisfied with the payment that Christ made by raising Him from the dead.

When Christ carried out the will of the Father, His obedience made it possible for the Father to sanctify us. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” The Father made Christ sin for us by placing our sin on Christ as He hung on the cross. That has now made it possible for the Father to place the righteousness of Christ on us so that we are set apart to God. God sees us as righteous (without sin) because we stand in the righteousness of Christ. The offering that Christ made for our sins was complete so He only had to pay that penalty once for it to be sufficient for all people and for all eternity.

Hebrews 10:11-14 says, “And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.” The Old Testament priests were at the tabernacle and later the temple offering sacrifices every day as a covering for sin. However, we are reminded that those sacrifices could never take away sin. They only covered the sins of the people until Christ came to pay for sin by His offering of Himself.

In contrast, we see that Christ offered Himself as one sacrifice for sins that was sufficient forever. The priests stood as they offered their sacrifices because they had to continue to offer sacrifices. In contrast, once Christ offered Himself as the payment for our sin, He sat down at the right hand of the Father. Hebrews 1:3 says, “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 at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Christ had completed His payment for our sins and so He sat down at the right hand of the Father.

The payment that Christ made and the Father accepted was so complete that it had both present and eternal benefits. Hebrews 9:14 says, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” Here, we see that one present benefit is that we can have a clear conscience because our sins have been removed. In the future, we can look forward to eternal life.

Christ sits in peace, because He knows that the day will come when all enemies will be placed under His footstool. Philippians 2:10-11 says, “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Even Satan will one day be forced to recognize that Christ is Lord. However, that recognition will come too late to save him and those who follow him from eternal judgment in the lake of fire and brimstone.

In contrast, each person who has placed his or her faith in Christ can rejoice in the fact that the sacrifice of Christ has made us perfect in the sight of the Father forever because we stand in the righteousness of Christ. Every person who has been set apart to God has been perfected forever. As we help our physical and spiritual children understand the superiority of the blood of Christ, they can enjoy the peace that comes from knowing that we have been perfected forever by the blood of Christ. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children understand the superiority of the blood of Christ because it has produced both present and eternal benefits for us.