

The Blood of the New Covenant

How the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is fulfilling the New Covenant promise of salvation and eternal life.

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ opened the way for the fulfilling of God's plan of salvation for all mankind. Through His death, Jesus ratified the New Covenant, which enables every sinner who repents to receive forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life. The New Covenant was sealed with the blood of Jesus Christ, "the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). His shed blood is symbolized by the wine that every true Christian partakes of during the Christian Passover ceremony. When Jesus instituted this ceremony, He "took the cup, and after giving thanks, He gave *it* to them, saying, 'All of you drink of it; for this is My blood, the *blood* of the New Covenant, which is poured out for many for *the* remission of sins'" (Matt. 26:27-28).

By offering His own blood, He purchased remission of sin for all time, for "without *the* shedding of blood there is no remission.... But now, once and for all, in *the* consummation of the ages, He has been manifested for *the* purpose of removing sin through His sacrifice *of Himself*" (Heb. 9:22, 26). The blood of Jesus Christ was poured out to remove the sins of all mankind. But Jesus Christ is a personal Savior, which means that His blood must be individually imputed to each one who repents of sin and believes in Him: "This cup *is* the New Covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:20).

Each Christian who partakes of the small cup of wine during the Christian Passover service is symbolizing his or her acceptance of the shed blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and deliverance from the penalty of death. By partaking of the wine and the unleavened bread, each one is acknowledging his or her personal faith in the shed blood and the broken body of Jesus Christ, which alone can bring eternal life. Jesus Himself clearly said that "unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you do not have life in yourselves." (John 6:53).

The blood of Jesus Christ works in many powerful ways to bring eternal life to those who accept His sacrifice. This work began with the establishment of the New Covenant and will continue to the return of Jesus Christ.

Let us examine the many ways in which the blood of Jesus Christ is fulfilling the promise of salvation and eternal life:

1) Jesus Christ ratified the New Covenant with His blood. At the institution of the Christian Passover, Jesus said, "This cup *is* the New Covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:20).

No covenant can be established without a blood sacrifice. When God established His covenant with Abraham, He ratified it by passing between the halves of sacrificial animals (Gen. 15:17-18). This covenant was the foundation for both the Old Covenant with the physical seed of Abraham and the New Covenant with the spiritual seed.

When the Old Covenant was established, the people of Israel agreed to obey all the laws and statutes of God, which were written in the book of the covenant, known as "the book of the law." The covenant was then ratified with the blood of animals, which became "the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you concerning all these words" (Ex. 24:6-8). The blood represented the death that would be required of every person who broke the covenant.

The Old Covenant was broken countless times during the history of Israel and Judah. By breaking the covenant, the people forfeited their right to the blessings of God and brought themselves under the curses of the covenant, which included the sentence of death. To redeem them

from the curse of death, Jesus Christ, the Lord God of the Old Testament, sacrificed His life. Since the Old Covenant required the death of all the children of Israel, God chose to end that covenant with His *own* death instead. As the God Who had established that covenant, He had the power to end it. In His great mercy and love, God Himself became flesh and died! Through His death, He terminated the Old Covenant and established the New Covenant, which offers eternal life through faith and loving obedience (John 14:15-23).

Like the words of the Old Covenant, the words of the New Covenant are recorded in the Bible. The books of the New Testament reveal the way to enter the New Covenant and receive the promise of eternal life. This promise was sealed WITH THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST. God Himself, Who cannot lie, guaranteed the promise of salvation with His own blood. There can be no surer guarantee!

Jesus Christ, Who ratified the New Covenant with His blood, is now actively fulfilling the promise of salvation by serving as Mediator of the covenant. Every sinner can be reconciled to God the Father by coming to “Jesus, *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant; and to sprinkling of *the* blood of *ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that of* Abel.” (Heb. 12:24).

2) Jesus Christ redeems sinners and removes sins through His blood. The word “redeem” means to “buy back” what has been sold. All human beings have been “sold under sin” by transgressing the commandments and laws of God (Rom. 3:23; 7:14; I John 3:4). In becoming the servants of sin, all have earned the penalty of death (Rom. 6:16, 23). The only escape from this death is through Jesus Christ, Who paid the price for the redemption of every human being “as a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28).

Jesus Christ sacrificed His own life as the Passover Lamb of God (I Cor. 5:7). His one, perfect sacrifice purchased redemption for sinners throughout all ages: “But Christ Himself has become High Priest of the coming good things, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made by *human* hands (that is, not of this *present physical* creation [the temple in Jerusalem]). Not by *the* blood of goats and calves, but by the means of His own blood, He entered once for all into the holiest [into the presence of God the Father, as the perfect and complete sin offering], having *by* Himself secured everlasting redemption *for us*” (Heb. 9:11-12).

Each one who is redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ receives forgiveness of sins: “[God the Father] has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Eph. 1:6-7). When a person truly repents of his or her sins and accepts the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God the Father counts every sin the person has committed as paid in full by the blood of His own Son. Each one who is redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ is freed from the ownership of sin and the penalty of death (Rom. 5:21; 6:1-4).

Those redeemed are no longer slaves of sin, but have become the property and servants of Jesus Christ and God the Father (Rom. 6:18, 22). Those who are purchased by Christ’s blood and become the property of God the Father are obligated to serve Him with wholehearted devotion: “WHAT! Don’t you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which you have *within you* from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (I Cor. 6:19-20).

As the servants of God, each one must forsake the way of sin: “Knowing that you were not redeemed by corruptible things, by silver or gold, from your futile way of living, inherited *by tradition* from *your* forefathers; but by *the* precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (I Pet. 1:18-19).

Every believer who repents of sin and is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ receives the Holy Spirit as a begetting from God the Father (Acts 2:38). Each Christian then begins a new life of service to God (Rom. 6:4, 10). The Gospel of John shows that this new life is a continuing

process of growth (John 3:21).

Christians who are following the example of Christ will continue to receive forgiveness when they stumble: “However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:7-9).

3) Christ justifies sinners through His blood. Justification before God comes through faith in the blood of Jesus—“having been justified by faith” (Rom. 5:1). Indeed, “God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him” (verses 8-9). Justification means that a person has been placed in right standing with God and is counted as blameless. This right standing with God is made possible because the righteousness of Jesus is imputed, or attributed, to the individual.

Justification through the blood of Jesus Christ is granted only to those who repent of their sins and transgressions of God’s laws: “Because the hearers of the law *are* not just [justified] before God, but the doers of the law [the ones who are keeping the commandments of God] shall be justified” (Rom. 2:13).

4) Christ purifies the conscience and brings peace with God through His blood. Indeed, peace with the Father is possible only through Jesus’ blood (Col. 1:19-20; Eph. 2:14-15).

Jesus purifies the mind of each one who has repented of sin: “For if the blood of goats and bulls, and *the* ashes of a heifer sprinkled *on* those who are defiled, sanctifies to the purifying of the flesh [not the mind], to a far greater degree, the blood of Christ, Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, shall purify [purge or cleanse] your conscience from dead works [works that lead to death] to serve *the* living God” (Heb. 9:13-14).

Those whose consciences have been purified from the works of the flesh are no longer the enemies of God because they are no longer “alienated ... by wicked works” (Col. 1:21). They have forsaken the way of sin to begin a new life of righteousness, learning to do the good works that God has commanded: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). By keeping the commandments of God with a pure conscience, true Christians are manifesting the love God desires (I Tim. 1:5; I John 5:2-3).

5) The sacrifice of Christ gives direct access to God the Father through His blood. The apostle Paul declares, “But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once far off [cut off from God] are made near by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13).

In his epistle to the Hebrews, Paul reveals that those whose consciences have been purified by the blood of Jesus Christ have direct access to God the Father: “Therefore, brethren, having confidence to enter into the *true* holiest [into the presence of God the Father in heaven] by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He consecrated for us through the veil (that is, His flesh), and *having* a great High Priest over the house of God, let us approach *God* with a true heart, with full conviction of faith, our hearts having been purified [by the blood of Jesus] from a wicked conscience, and our bodies having been washed with pure water [by baptism]. Let us hold fast without wavering *to* the hope *that* we profess, for He Who promised *is* faithful” (Heb. 10:19-23).

Jesus revealed that His followers would receive direct access to the Father and would be able to pray to Him directly (John 16:26-27). From the time of Jesus’ ascension into heaven,

every Christian has been given authority to approach the Father in Christ's name. The only intermediary between Christians and God the Father is Jesus Christ, Who intercedes as High Priest to remove sins with His own blood. Thus, Christians have no need of a priesthood of men, nor of a temple in which to worship God. Not only do they have direct access to the throne of God the Father in heaven, but He is dwelling within them through the Holy Spirit (II Cor. 6:16, 18).

6) Jesus Christ is building His Church through His blood. The New Testament reveals that each spiritually begotten child of God is placed into His Church. The Church of God is a spiritual body, and is called the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23). Every true believer is a member of the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:27). When a believer is baptized, he or she is baptized into the covenant death of Jesus Christ, being co-joined with the body of Christ into the same death. In this symbolic covenant death, the believer is united with the body of Jesus, being buried with Him in the baptismal grave, then rising out of that watery grave to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4). Upon receiving the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, each believer becomes a member of the body of Jesus Christ. This body is composed of all spiritually begotten Christians and constitutes the true Church.

The Church belongs to God the Father, Who has made Christ the Head. Paul reveals that the Church's members have been purchased with the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28).

7) Jesus Christ delivers Christians from Satan the devil through His blood. Each Christian who has been redeemed from sin by Jesus' blood has also been rescued from the power of Satan: "Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the light; Who has **personally rescued us from the power of darkness** and has transferred *us* unto the kingdom of the Son of His love; in Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins" (Col. 1:12-14).

Satan is the great evil force, the prince of the power of the air, who captivates the minds and hearts of people and draws them into sin (Eph. 2:1-2). Many people do not believe that Satan exists. Those who do, usually see his influence only in the gross, obvious evils in the world around them. However, they fail to realize that Satan does not present himself as an evil being, but as an angel of light (II Cor. 11:14). He is, in fact, called the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4).

Every Christian who has been begotten by the Spirit of God has been delivered from the power of Satan. But Satan does not give up on those who turn from the way of sin and disobedience. He uses all the wily devices of his wicked mind to lure Christians back into sin. Each Christian must continually be on guard against Satan's deceptions and must use the full power of God's Holy Spirit and all the spiritual weapons that He provides to resist the devil (Eph. 6:10-18; I Pet. 5:8-9). Christians must draw close to God daily in prayer, lest they be drawn into temptation and sin. If they do sin, they must repent and ask God the Father to cleanse them from their sin through the blood of Jesus Christ (I John 1:7-9).

Cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ is a lifelong process. It is this continued application of the blood of Christ that gives each Christian the victory over Satan: "But they overcame him [Satan] through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death" (Rev. 12:11).

8) Jesus Christ is perfecting Christians through His blood. As human beings, with the law of sin and death within our flesh, not one of us is perfect. But in order to enter the kingdom of God, we must all become spiritually perfect (Matt. 5:48).

However, nothing we do, of and by ourselves, can make us perfect before God. No amount of human willpower and work can bring spiritual perfection. The only way to attain spiritual perfection is through the blood of Christ, which enables us to receive the gift of the

Holy Spirit from the Father—which gives us the power to become like Jesus, Who Himself attained spiritual perfection by overcoming the temptations of Satan the devil and the flesh (Heb. 5:8-9).

The spiritual perfection of individual Christians is now being accomplished through the blood of Jesus Christ: “And *may* the God of peace, Who raised our Lord Jesus from among *the* dead—that great Shepherd of the sheep—**through *the* blood of *the* everlasting covenant, perfect you in every good work** in order that you may do His will; accomplishing in you that which *is* well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom *be the* glory into the ages of eternity. Amen” (Heb. 13:20-21). It was the apostle Paul’s desire to “present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Col. 1:28).

In a vision that the apostle John recorded in the book of Revelation, Jesus Christ appears as the Lamb of God, Who was slain for the sins of the world, and a new song accompanies the prayers of the saints: “Worthy are You to take the book, and to open its seals because You were slain, and did redeem [purchase] us to God [the Father] BY YOUR OWN BLOOD, out of every tribe and language and people and nation...” (Rev. 5:9).

This is the glorious salvation that Jesus envisioned when He said, “For this is My blood, the *blood* of the New Covenant, which is poured out for many for *the* remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28). How profound these words are when we understand the multi-faceted work of the blood of Jesus Christ!