

"Old Paths" Baptist Ministries

presents

THE BLOOD ATONEMENT

A FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

While a great many believe that the blood of Christ has cleansed us of our sin, few could explain the importance of His shed blood. To understand the importance of blood atonement we must return to the beginning of man's spiritual demise. In the book of Genesis we find recorded the creation of man. Man was created in God's triune image, Genesis 1:26 says "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..." as the verse says man was created in the image and likeness of God. Created a spirit, soul, and body man was the perfect, crowning, creation without flaw or imperfection of any type. At creation God instilled in man portions of His moral attributes, which include: will, intellect, and emotions. It was the moral attribute of will that played the greatest role in man becoming a flawed creation. Man willed himself from perfection to imperfection.

We call this act of will on man's part "The Fall" for man fell from his perfection into condemnation. This fall is the result of Adam, the first man, breaking the first law, or commandment. The law begins in Genesis chapter 2 verses 16 and 17. Verse 16 "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:" 17 "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." A penalty for sin was clearly stated, sin and immediately die. Later in the book of Genesis, (Genesis 3:6) we see that Adam does willfully eat of the forbidden fruit and dies spiritually.

One might ask how we know that Adam died spiritually, and this would be a fair question. There are several ways that we know, all of which are found in the Bible. First let us look to the testimony of Jesus Christ in John 4:24 "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Jesus declared that God must be worshipped in spirit here in John chapter 4, in John chapter 3 Jesus is

dealing with Nicodemus and we read that man must be born again in verse 3, in verse 6 we read that there is both a physical birth and a spiritual birth (born again). Back in Genesis we read that Adam lived a long time in the flesh, and that he had children in his own image, not the image of God (Genesis 5:3). The soul of man is eternal and will exist somewhere for all eternity, the body of man is corruptible and will either die and then be judged, or will be caught away in the Rapture being transformed into incorruptible flesh. Since the Scripture records that Adam lived in the flesh after he ate, and since we know that the soul of man is eternal it stands to reason that Adam died spiritually.

We also read in Genesis that God provided a death penalty for sin, and that this death penalty resulted in eternal separation from God (John chapter 4 shows that God must be worshipped in spirit). The problem then is how to meet the requirements of the law without perishing eternally. A substitute must be provided which is acceptable to God. One must pay the price, one not under condemnation, and must meet every requirement by pouring out his life for another. Jesus is that perfect sacrifice.

If Jesus had died without the shedding of blood, and then taken up his life again, what payment would have been made? To find the answer to this question is to understand the importance of "The Blood Atonement" and Christ's substitutionary death and bloodshed.

The first recording of blood being shed as a result of sin is found in Genesis 3:21 "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them." Logic would indicate that the Lord had slain an animal or animals to make the coats for Adam and Eve. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." (Hebrews 9:22). Remission means: a. Release, as from a debt, a penalty, or an obligation. - b. Forgiveness; pardon.¹ It is pardon from sin that we all need.

God, in providing a covering for the nakedness of Adam and Eve, showed the pattern of things to come from the very beginning. The Bible, especially the Old Testament, is full of types and promises. As Adam and Eve had awareness of their nakedness, we too should be aware of the nakedness of our sin before righteous God.

The importance of blood is clearly established in Genesis 9:4 "But flesh with the life thereof, *which* is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." Life is blood, medical science clearly understands the importance of blood and its life-giving role. Blood is sacred, not to be eaten, God has declared. Biologists teach that it is the blood that carries away the waste, and brings nutrients for every cell in the body. The blood is the one common denominator for all of the body, even as Christ is the One all Christians must have in common. Life is in the blood and life for life as a system of sacrificial atonement is established in the book of the law, Leviticus. "For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul (Leviticus

17:11). God continues a few verses later "For *it is* the life of all flesh; the blood of *it is* for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh *is* the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off. (Leviticus 17:14) clearly, blood is sacred and has atoning power.

Perhaps the greatest picture of the importance of blood sacrifice is found in the mercy seat. Here we find the covering over the law between man and God. Each year the blood was to be renewed upon the mercy seat, but Christ our propitiation (mercy seat) shed His blood once for all. Leviticus 16:14 says "And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle [it] with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.", and Hebrews 9:25 states "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;" it is the blood upon the mercy seat that covered the law which man had broken. The Mercy Seat was a type of Christ a physical picture of our spiritual need for intervention, redemption, and atonement.

The most important fact that God teaches in His word is that it is the blood of Christ that atones for the sins of man. Acts 20:28 says, "...feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." The purchase price of the church was blood. In Romans chapter 3 verses 24 & 25 we read "24Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25Whom God hath set forth [to be] a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;" God set Jesus to be our propitiation, our covering. It is His blood that is between man's sin and God's judgment. King David wrote in Psalm 32 "Blessed *is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.*" Clearly, the Scripture teaches it is the blood of Jesus Christ that purchased our redemption. It is His blood that meets the requirements of God's law. The Bible also teaches that His provision is an act both of justice and of love. Romans 5:8&9 "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

The record of Scripture is clear, it is the blood of Christ, the perfect Lamb of God, that purchased our redemption. It is the Blood Atonement, that shedding of blood upon the tree of Calvary that is our hope.

respectfully submitted
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