

What is this blood?

¹¹ But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; ¹² and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. (Heb. 9:11-12)

Silence ...

For 400 years God had been silent ...

Like the silence of the 400 years Israel had spent in Egypt, from the time of the great prophets after the Babylonian captivity God had been silent.

The empires of Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece had walked onto the stage of human history and just as quickly disappeared into the darkness of history past ...

Many things had changed, but a few things remained constant ... God was silent and Israel was still subservient to the control of outside foreign powers ...

Now in the first century Rome was the new superpower that ruled the world ...

The throne of Israel is still empty ...

... to too many of the Jews the promises of God seem to be nothing more than old legends full of unfulfilled promises ...

The **Pharisees** (Israel's elite ruling class) and The **Sadducees** (the wealthy aristocrats and chief priests) culturally and religiously ruled the people...

Although the Pharisees and Sadducees didn't always get along, they would, at times, come together around a common cause—a common enemy.

Under this blanket of God's deafening silence, the Jews, year after year continued their relentless repetition of feast days, religious ceremonies, and unending sacrifices.

Suddenly, into this silent void, through the religious monotony God spoke ...

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, (Heb. 1:1-2)

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John documented God's voice ...

... they wrote of the birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ ...

... they told of this Nazarene who became the common enemy of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

In a wonderful way these four writers of the gospels recorded for us, not just historical facts, but they made sense of the origin, historical unfolding, and redemptive work of our Lord and Savior.

From them we learn who Christ is, what He taught, what He did, and where He went ...

After 400 years of deafening silence the New Testament bursts forth with God sending, speaking, revealing, and declaring ...

...that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. (1 Jn. 5:20)

God spoke **IN** his son Jesus Christ and this is exactly what Jesus meant when he told Thomas, "if you have seen me, you have seen the father."

But God **not only spoke IN** his son Jesus Christ, He also spoke **THROUGH** Jesus Christ.

This is what the teachings, sermons, parables, behavior and redemptive work of Jesus Christ was all about.

... and in that great sermon on the Mount Jesus says something very powerful.

"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. (Matt. 5:17)

Jesus views Himself as being the center of all God's plans:

- He was to be the sacrifice that replaced all other sacrifices
- ... the hope that replaced all other hopes
- ... the High Priest that replaced all other priests
- He alone is to be the one who ushers in the promised “rest” that has been lost in Adam’s fall.
- He alone is the fulfillment of God’s glorious promises
- ... He alone is the culmination of all prophetic revelation

²⁷ "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. (Matt. 11:27)

Jesus shattered the deafening silence as John the Baptist declared, “**Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world.**”

Nothing before or after will ever compare to Christ coming into the world.

That energetic impulsive passionate disciple Simon Peter was so enthralled that he finally said, “You are Christ, the Messiah.”

In Mark 3:11 we read that even the unclean spirits cried out, “You are the Son of God!”

All that had happened before was leading up to that moment when Jesus would return unto glory and take his rightful place at the Father’s right hand.

... and listen ..

...here is what is so profound ... because Jesus is the Son of God

... because He poured out His blood on Calvary, he is able to do three things that no one else could ever do:

- He appeared in the Holy Place as our High Priest
- Obtained Eternal Redemption
- Through His own blood purchased our victory

1. Jesus Appeared in the Holy Place as our High Priest

*Before the throne of God above, I have a strong and perfect plea
A great High Priest whose name is love, who ever lives and pleads for me
My name is graven on His hands, my name is written on His heart
I know that while in heav'n He stands, no tongue can bid me thence depart*

The hymn we sang this morning said that Jesus is before the throne of God as our High Priest.

How is that even possible?

Jesus is able to do this because he gave his blood (his life) for us.

Last week we read Hebrews 12:24 which says that Jesus' blood speaks a better word than the blood of Abel ...

... and what does it say.

Unlike Abel's blood which cried for vengeance, Jesus blood declares that we have been accepted by God.

... it declares that we are accepted in Christ Jesus and we have no need to fear.

The apostle and disciple Peter elaborate on this in his epistle.

¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. ²⁰ For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, (1 Pet. 1:18-20)

Notice the adjective Peter uses to describe the blood of Jesus: PRECIOUS

Precious means that it is both **valuable** and **cherished**.

To whom is this blood precious?

I want you to know that the blood of Jesus Christ is precious to God the Father because it is the blood of His son.

... at Jesus's baptism God the Father said, "this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

The blood of Jesus is precious to God because it demonstrates the **righteousness of God** ...

... it demonstrates **Christ's propitiation** for the sins of humanity.

... it demonstrates that **God who is just** and must condemn sin, is also the one who **justifies** the sinner.

Look at this really long sentence that the Apostle Paul writes in Romans.

(Rom. 3:21-26) ²¹ But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶ for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Paul says that the shed blood of Jesus Christ is a demonstration of the righteousness of God.

Because God is righteous, he cannot ignore sin ... sin must be punished ... somebody had to fix what had been broken by humanity's disobedience ...

God could have created a thousand worlds and destroyed every one of them ...

... but it would not have been enough ... humanity's sinfulness was too great

But God loves us and wanted to redeem us...

Jesus was God's only path and Jesus was God's only plan.

... Isaiah said, God was pleased to crush His son the Lord Jesus Christ and put him to open shame ...

- Jesus bore our iniquities ...
- He was poured out in death
- He was the innocent victim who died on behalf of the people.
- He was numbered with the transgressors
- ... and when Jesus gave himself as a guilt offering for our sins God the Father was pleased Isaiah says HE WAS SATISFIED!

This is why Jesus can stand before the Father's throne as our High Priest!

The shed blood of Jesus Christ has accomplished what the old covenant priesthood with animal sacrifices could never achieve.

¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?¹⁵ For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, (Heb. 9:13-15)

Here, the blood shed by Christ is said to have an ability, a quality, that was missing from those animal sacrifices.

... the ability to cleanse the conscience... to give complete inward peace.

¹⁹ Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,²⁰ by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh,²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God,²² let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Heb. 10:19-22)

When we come to God in prayer there is no doubt, there is no uncertainty, there is no trepidation ... GOD WILL HEAR THE PRAYERS OF HIS PEOPLE!

No doubt about it.

... how do we know. Because Jesus has entered into the Holy Place and heaven through his own blood.

*Before the throne of God above, I have a strong and perfect plea
A great High Priest whose name is love, who ever lives and pleads for me
My name is graven on His hands, my name is written on His heart*

I know that while in heav'n He stands, no tongue can bid me thence depart

Charles Spurgeon in his classic work: Sermons on Prayer said this.

“The streaming wounds of Jesus are the sure guarantee of answered prayer.” — Charles Spurgeon

2. Jesus has obtained Eternal Redemption

*When Satan tempts me to despair, and tells me of the guilt within
Upward I look and see Him there, who made an end of all my sin
Because the sinless Savior died, my sinful soul is counted free
For God the Just is satisfied, to look on Him and pardon me*

Jesus isn't just our High Priest ... He was our victim ... but that's exactly the point

Because Jesus our sinless Savior has died our SINFUL soul is free!

I want to make a statement and I hope you'll understand it.

It is possible to doubt ... but it is not possible to doubt away your inheritance in Christ Jesus!

We are not saved by our faith ... WE ARE SAVED BY GRACE **through faith**

That is important because there are times our faith is weak...

... if you are honest you have to admit there are times in your life your confidence, faith, and certainty gets WOBBLY!

That's why even Jesus said even the smallest faith (mustard seed) can move mountains.

Sometimes life, stress, work, humanity, self (whatever) just gets you down ...

... as A.W. Tozer put it, *“the tyranny of the urgent saps the strength of our faith.”*

What are we supposed to do when that happens?

And the hymn writer tells us exactly what to do when we doubt.

*When Satan tempts me to despair, and tells me of the guilt within
Upward I look and see Him there, who made an end of all my sin*

Do you know this is one of the reasons why taking the Lord's Supper every week is so important?

In the Lord's Supper Jesus is teaching us to look to His shed blood as the source and foundation of our hope.

In Matthew 26:28, Mark 14:24, Luke 22:20 and 1 Cor. 11:25 Jesus says, **“this cup is the New Testament in my blood.”**

You may wonder, worry, fear and doubt (because we are flesh and blood and weak) but the writer of Hebrews gives us the remedy for our doubt...

² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb. 12:2)

And here is why when we doubt and fear we need to look and fix our eyes on Jesus ...

... Because when you look on Jesus you are suddenly reminded that your doubt and fear doesn't change anything

... WHY? ... because what the blood of Jesus has done, it has done permanently and eternally.

3. Through His Own Blood purchased our victory

*Behold Him there, the risen Lamb, my perfect, spotless Righteousness
The great unchangeable I AM, the King of glory and of grace
One with Himself, I cannot die, my soul is purchased by His blood
My life is hid with Christ on high, with Christ my Savior and my God*

The radical difference between our behavior and God's is that we sometimes "fly by the seat of our pants" but God never does, never has, and never will!

God didn't decide to redeem us from our sins on an impulse...

... this glorious redemption was already planned before the worlds were formed.

All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. (Rev. 13:8)

¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. ²⁰ For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you (1 Pet. 1:18-20)

God's redemption of humanity was not some WHIMSEY, it has always been God's eternal plan ...

... as John writes in his gospel, "*In the beginning was the word, the word became flesh and dwelt among us ... and as many as received Him to them gave he the power to become the children of God.*"

So please understand, when God does something of this magnitude it is not flimsy ...

... this redemption of Jesus Christ is no faulty redemption

... the work of the blood of Jesus Christ HAS TEETH

- The curse of the law and the wrath of God is removed (Gal. 3:13)
- We are justified and reconciled to God. (Romans 5:9)
- We are forgiven and declared righteous. (2 Cor. 5:21)
- We are made alive (John 6:53)
- We have the favor of God (Eph. 1:7)
- We have been brought near to God (Eph. 2:13)
- We will never perish (1 Peter 1:18-19)
- We are free (Gal. 5:1)

The writer of Hebrews says that the “life is in the blood” and when we speak of the blood of Jesus we are talking about the VERY LIFE OF GOD.

... and I want you to know that no matter what you are going through or having to deal with ...

... Whatever struggle you find yourself in the midst of ...

You don't have to worry because the very life of God flows through you

... “greater is He that is IN YOU than he that is in the world.

Through His blood Jesus has purchased our salvation, our life, our hope ... even our victory.

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. ¹¹ "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony... (Rev. 12:10-11)

*Behold Him there, the risen Lamb, my perfect, spotless Righteousness
The great unchangeable I AM, the King of glory and of grace
One with Himself, I cannot die, my soul is purchased by His blood
My life is hid with Christ on high, with Christ my Savior and my God*