The Power of the Blood of Jesus

Introduction
Occasionally, a liberal teacher will refer to the Bible as a “bloody book.” And indeed it is! From Genesis 3:21, where God slew an animal and shed its blood to provide a covering for sinful Adam and Eve, to Revelation 12:11, where the saints are said to have overcome Satan “by the blood of the Lamb,” the Bible is a remarkable story of shed blood.

On a rock on a hillside in South Carolina someone splashed a bit of graffiti with white paint, “Who wants a God who would kill his own son?” I can’t think of anything that more vividly reveals the ignorance of millions regarding the meaning, purpose, and power of the shed blood of Jesus. This lesson is designed to give you a fuller understanding of the preciousness, value, and power of that blood.

Importance of this Lesson
- After a serious accident in Israel, my life was spared by blood transfusions. The donor was a Jew! When I was a boy, I repented of my sin, turned to God by faith, and received Christ as Savior and Lord. I was cleansed, forgiven, and redeemed by blood. I have been saved physically, spiritually, and eternally by blood. The donor was a Jew!
- Shed blood was once considered gruesome, even horrible. Today it is often more precious than gold. With hospitals, blood banks and bloodmobiles pleading for all types of blood, it has become commonly accepted as having precious, life saving value. The apostle Peter wrote, “…ye were not redeemed with…silver and gold,…but with the precious blood of Christ…” (1 Peter 1:18-19).
- If forgiveness and redemption are through the shed blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:22; Revelation 5:9), and if in this universe there is no other sacrifice for sin (Hebrews 10:26), then a thorough knowledge of the value and power of that blood could be the most important study in which you will ever be engaged!

THE LESSON

I. TWO KEY VERSES ON THE VALUE OF SHED BLOOD
   A. Leviticus 17:11 – “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.”
      1. Note that human life is in the blood. When the Bible says Christ gave His life for us (Mark 10:45; John 10:17, 18), it means He shed His blood for us.
      2. Since the value of one’s blood is measured by the value of one’s life – of what immeasurable value is the shed blood of Christ?
      3. Note that the atonement for Israel mentioned here was not accomplished by the death of one animal but by the shedding of its blood upon the altar. Nowhere does scripture teach that we are saved by Christ’s perfect life and example, but only by His blood, shed on the altar of Calvary (Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18, 19).
      4. The animal alluded to here represented a sacrificial substitute offered up in the place of the offending Israelite. Even so, Christ is our substitute who “gave himself for us” (Galatians 2:20; Galatians 1:4; Titus 2:14).
      5. The shed blood of an innocent animal indicated that the righteous sentence of the law (Ezekiel 18:4) had been executed. God’s holiness was satisfied and His justice vindicated. The same is true of the shed blood of Christ for us today.
B. Hebrews 9:22 – “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”
   1. The blood in the veins of Christ did not forgive or redeem! His shed blood alone prevailed!
   2. The shed blood of animals could only provide an atonement (or cover) for sin. Only the shed blood of Christ could put it away (Hebrews 9:26)!

II. LESSONS FROM THE INITIAL SHEDDING OF INNOCENT BLOOD IN THE BIBLE
   A. The first reference to the shedding of innocent blood is found in Genesis 3:21, “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.”
   B. Lessons to learn:
      1. Adam’s effort to hide his shame and guilt were inadequate and futile (Genesis 3:7,8). So all human efforts to deny our guilt and cover our sins, are but fig leaf aprons. We cannot hide from God.
      2. God could not deal with Adam in mercy until his justice was satisfied. Your sins, too, must first be judged before God can save you. Christ died on our behalf and for our sins (Galatians 1:4; 2:20) and satisfied all the just claims of God against us.
      3. To provide a covering for Adam, an animal had to be slain and its blood shed. Sin demanded the death penalty (Romans 6:23 and Ezekiel 18:4,20)! Religion, human effort, morality or good works can never atone for sin. Christ had to die and shed His blood before you and I could be saved (Hebrews 9:26).
      4. Here is the first illustration of substitutionary sacrifice. Either Adam or a substitute had to die for sins. In mercy, God Himself chose a substitute whom He slew in Adam’s stead. So Christ was chosen and slain from the foundation of the earth (Revelation 13:8), and by the “determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God” (Acts 2:23). So Paul could write, “who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

III. THE SHED BLOOD OF CHRIST HAS POWER
   A. To satisfy the justice and holiness of God.
      1. As we have seen from Genesis 3:21, God could not deal with Adam in mercy until sin was judged, and the penalty paid.
      2. God is merciful (Psalm 103:11) and longs to show mercy (Titus 3:5,6). But God is infinitely holy, of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look upon iniquity (Habakkuk 1:13).
      3. Consequently, God cannot and will not tolerate, look upon or bypass sin. Only when His holiness is vindicated and His justice satisfied can God deal with us in mercy.
      4. Through the shed blood of Christ, our sins were judged and put away (Hebrews 9:26, 28; 10:12). God, in unfathomable grace (Ephesians 2:8, 9), imputed our sins to Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21). His justice was satisfied, His holiness vindicated and now He can be “just and the justifier” of all who believe (Romans 3:26).
   B. To provide a garment of divine righteousness.
      1. Referring again to Genesis 3:21, we read, “and (God) clothed them.” Here we see the first illustration and reference to a divinely provided garment or covering for man’s sin. It typified God’s righteousness.
      2. God’s righteousness is viewed often as a garment.
         a) Job 29:14 – “I put on righteousness, and it clothed me....”
         b) Isaiah 61:10 – “...for he hath clothed me with the garment of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness....”
         c) Psalm 132:9 – “Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness....”
3. The righteousness God provides for all who believe is imputed righteousness and “apart from the law” (Romans 3:21-22). Concerning imputation, and basing his thoughts upon 2 Corinthians 5:21, Martin Luther wrote, “Whatsoever sins, I, you or we all have done or shall do hereafter, they by imputation were made to be Christ’s own sins, as truly as if He had done them, and His righteousness, in return, is made ours, as truly as if we had never sinned but had always been as righteous as Christ was.”

4. And that righteousness which God imputes (reckons) to us is the righteousness of Christ Himself (2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 10:4; Philippians 3:9).

   “Complete atonement Christ has made
   And to the utmost farthing paid
   Whate’er his people owed
   How then can wrath on me take place
   If sheltered in His righteousness
   And sprinkled with His blood?”

5. All of this reveals the utter futility of all self-righteousness and human endeavor to save one’s self from sin. In Genesis 3:21, we see Adam’s absolute helplessness. His salvation, like ours, had to be all of grace, all through shed blood and substitutionary sacrifice and all through divinely imputed righteousness entirely apart from the works of the law (Romans 3:21, 22; 4:5; Galatians 2:16; Isaiah 64:6).

C. To justify you in the sight of a Holy God (Romans 5:9; 3:24, 26).
1. To be justified is closely related to being made righteous since both words derive from the same root verb, “dikaioo.”
2. In common daily usage justified means “to make right.” In scripture and in God’s eyes it means “to declare blameless, without guilt”!
3. Justification is a courtroom word and “to justify” is a judicial act. When you believe on Christ you are clothed with His righteousness (Philippians 3:9; Romans 3:22). As a believing sinner, clothed with the righteousness of Christ, you walk into God’s courtroom only to hear the judge of the universe say, “Not guilty”!
4. Justification is not mere pardon. It is God declaring the believer to be without condemnation (Romans 8:1)!
5. The source and authority for our justification is GOD HIMSELF (Romans 3:26,30; Romans 8:39).
6. The means by which it is received is FAITH (Romans 5:1).
7. The basis or reason for it is GRACE (Romans 3:24).
8. The guarantee for our justification is the RESURRECTION OF CHRIST (Romans 4:25).
9. The price and the power that makes it possible and available is the SHED BLOOD OF CHRIST (Romans 5:9; 3:24).

D. To redeem you from sin and slavery (1 Peter 1:18-19; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; Romans 3:24).

   For a full explanation of redemption, review Lesson 13.
1. You and I are viewed in scripture as being a slave of sin (John 8:34; Romans 6:16; 7:14), and sentenced to death for having broken God’s law (Romans 6:16-23; 5:12).
2. Christ was willing to pay the price to set us free and remove the guilt (Acts 20:28; Titus 2:14). That price was His shed blood (1 Peter 1:18, 19; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23; Romans 8:1).
3. The idea of redemption is not only to be bought but also to be bought “out of the slave market of sin” (Galatians 3:13; 4:5). The word “redeem” in these verses means “bought out from” or “to buy out from.” The words convey the intention of removing from further sale, indicating the finality of the transaction.
4. The believer in Christ can never again be enslaved by sin or the law and can never again be put up for sale!
5. New Testament redemption goes a step further. Not only are we “bought” and “bought out from,” we are set free. The word is “lutroo” and means “to set free by the paying of a price.”
   a) Titus 2:14 – “...that he might redeem (set free) us from all iniquity....” Here we are set free from our sinful self-wills.
   b) 1 Peter 1:18-19 – you were redeemed (set free) from your vain manner of life. Here we are set free from the bondage of religious tradition.

6. A related word is “lutron” which means “to ransom” or to loose.
   a) 1 Timothy 2:6 – “Who gave himself a ransom....”
   b) Mark 10:45 – “the Son of man came...to give his life a ransom for many.”

7. Christ came to buy us, to buy us out of, and set us free from:
   a) The bondage and curse of the law (Galatians 3:12).
   b) The control and power of sin (Romans 8:2).
   c) The power and domination of Satan (Hebrews 2:14).
   d) The corruption and enslavement of this world (Galatians 1:4) – all through the wonder-working power of His shed blood (Hebrews 9:12).

E. To provide propitiation (Romans 3:25; 1 John 4:10; and 1 John 2:2).
   1. Note that propitiation is something we have in and through Christ by faith in His blood (Romans 3:25).
   2. Note also that in 1 John 2:2, John says that Christ IS the propitiation for our sins and in 1 John 4:10, he says that God sent Christ into this world to be “...the propitiation for our sins.”
   3. Propitiation is something Christ is to every believer and did for every believer. Since it is something of such magnitude that God sent Christ into this world, then surely it is something we should not merely understand but something in which we should rejoice greatly.
   4. As simply as I can possibly put it, here is its meaning:
      a) Propitiation is translated “Mercy Seat” in Hebrews 9:5 and in the Septuagint or Greek version of the Old Testament.
      b) The “Mercy Seat” was the lid or covering of the Ark of the Covenant found in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle in the wilderness.
      c) The High Priest of Israel sprinkled blood on the four corners of the Mercy Seat once a year, on the great Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:14; Hebrews 9:7).
      d) The Mercy Seat and the Holy of Holies thus became a place of communion (Exodus 25:21-22). When God saw that “shed blood” He saw that the sins of Israel had been confessed, the righteous sentence of a broken law had been carried out, His holiness was satisfied and His justice was vindicated. What would have been a throne of judgment became a throne of mercy.
      e) God could now meet with and have sweet communion with Israel through their high priest. (Hebrews 9:10-15).
      f) Now, as far as you and I are concerned, remember this: there is only one place in all the universe where an absolutely holy God can meet and have sweet communion with an unworthy sinner such as you and I, and that is at the Cross.
      g) Christ became our mercy seat when He shed His precious blood for our sins (1 John 4:10).
      h) Propitiation, thus becomes Christ’s work toward God, on our behalf. Through His shed blood, God sees the penalty for our sins fully paid, the righteous sentence of His broken law executed, His holiness satisfied as to our sins and His justice fully vindicated.
      i) Here at the Cross, through the shed blood of Christ, a repentant and believing sinner can have sweet and perfect communion with an infinitely holy God!

F. To reconcile us to God. (Read carefully, Colossians 1:20, 21; Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19; Ephesians 2:16; Hebrews 2:17).
   1. Note that it is never said that God is reconciled to us! He was never our enemy. He had never sinned. You and I alone needed to be reconciled to Him (2 Corinthians 5:18; Colossians 1:21).
   2. Note that there is nothing we can do of ourselves to become reconciled to God. Christ, our high priest, did it for us (Hebrews 2:17).
3. Reconciliation is the opposite of propitiation. While propitiation is Christ’s work Godward on man’s behalf, reconciliation is Christ’s work manward on God’s behalf. In the first, God’s claims are met and in the second our needs are supplied.

4. Through reconciliation the enmity is removed (Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:21; Ephesians 2:16); sin is purged, paid for and put away (2 Corinthians 5:19; Hebrews 9:26; 1:3); the barriers and walls are crushed (Ephesians 2:14), and you and I, who were once alienated from and enemies of God, have now been reconciled (Colossians 1:21). The war is over! A peace treaty has been signed in the blood of Christ (Colossians 1:20)!

G. To provide complete cleansing and forgiveness. (Read Ephesians 1:7; Matthew 26:28; 1 John 1:7-9).

1. Hebrews 9:22 plainly states that “without shedding of blood is no remission.” The word “remission” is identical to the word “forgiveness” and is used uniformly in scripture to mean “to send away.” When you believe on Christ, God “sends away” your sins and separates you from them.

2. The joy of forgiveness is the joy of knowing that your sins are gone! They have been “put away” (Hebrews 9:26). “...God, for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you (Ephesians 4:32).”

3. There is a great difference between human forgiveness and divine forgiveness. In human forgiveness the penalty is bypassed, remitted, “sent away.” The penalty for the offense is never executed. The guilt remains without being judged. The offense is never forgotten. When God forgives you and me, it is entirely different. In both the Old and New Testament it is made clear that God never forgives until the penalty for our offense is fully paid and the guilt is removed. The offense is never remembered (Hebrews 10:17-18)! Read Leviticus 4:35; Ephesians 1:7; Matthew 26:28 and note that Divine forgiveness is based upon the shedding of blood.

4. You and I were guilty, vile, helpless and unworthy sinners who could do nothing to merit God’s forgiveness (Titus 3:5, 6; Ephesians 2:8, 9). God in mercy sent Christ who paid the penalty for our sins by the shedding of His blood and they have been “sent away,” never to be remembered against us (Isaiah 38:17; Isaiah 44:22; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17).

5. Not only have we been completely forgiven, but also through Christ’s precious blood our sins have been purged and we are washed clean in the sight of a holy God.
   a) Hebrews 1:3 – “...when he had by himself purged our sins....”
   b) Revelation 1:5 – “...unto him that loves us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.”
   c) 1 Corinthians 6:11 – “...but ye are washed.”
   d) Revelation 7:14 – “...and have washed their robes, ...in the blood of the Lamb.”

6. God wipes the slate clean and someday we shall be presented to Christ in Glory “not having spot, or wrinkle,...holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:27).

H. To defeat Satan with all his wiles and power (Read Revelation 12:10-11).

1. While Satan has been thrust from his first estate because of his rebellion (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:15-17), he is still alive and well and operating in the world (Job 1:6-7).

2. He is still:
   a) The God of this age, blinding men to the gospel of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:4).
   b) He is still prince of this world, controlling its entire system (John 14:30; 12:31).
   c) He is still sifting saints (Luke 22:31).
   d) He is still our powerful adversary, seeking whom he might devour (1 Peter 5:8).

   ♦ For a thorough study of Satan, review Lesson 5.

3. But Satan with all his ubiquitous power and deceitfulness (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10; Revelation 12:9), is no match for the blood of Christ! Through Christ’s sacrifice, Satan’s power has been destroyed for all who believe (Hebrews 2:14-15), and all who will can plead the victory won by that shed blood and live triumphantly (Revelation 12:10-11; Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 3:8; James 4:7).

I. To open the way and provide us with direct access into God’s very presence (Hebrews 10:19).

1. We can now come “boldly to the throne of grace” (Hebrews 10:19).

2. We come through a “new and living way...through the veil, that is to say, his flesh” (Hebrews 10:20).
3. Because of the blood of Christ, all the barriers to God’s immediate presence have been removed. We can now immediately “obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

J. Finally, the blood of Christ has the power to keep us living daily in fellowship with God (1 John 1:7).

1. We are not only brought into fellowship with God through the blood (Ephesians 2:13), we are also sustained and maintained in that fellowship by that same blood (1 John 1:7).

2. If a believer slips and fails the Lord, fellowship may be temporarily broken. His relationship is maintained and his fellowship restored through the advocacy of Christ (who pleads His shed blood before the Father), and the confession of the sin by the believer (1 John 1:6-2:1).

Conclusion

In this lesson we have endeavored to present the value of the shed blood of Christ and the importance of knowing its preciousness and power. The two key verses concerning shed blood were analyzed as was the story of the initial shedding of blood in the Bible. We then presented the wonderful things the blood of Christ has power to do for you. Study them! Master them, and the blood will become as precious to you as it was to Peter (1 Peter 1:18,19).

Our prayer is that you will experience the power of the blood of Jesus daily in your Christian walk.