DESTINY BULLETIN

A commentary sent to the supporters of the ministry of Christian Destiny.

Dear "Special Friend" of Christian Destiny,

April 2011

THE RESURRECTION AND YOU

THE PROPHESIED BLOOD SACRIFICE

It seems to me that one of the most dramatic events in the history of the world took place in the life of Jesus Christ. In Matthew Chapter 21, we have the story of how Christ instructed His disciples as to how they should find a donkey and bring that animal to Him. If the keeper of the donkey objected, they were to simply say that the King needs him.

They brought the donkey; Christ climbed astride that donkey, and rode into the city of Jerusalem. The Bible says that a great company of people shouted "*Hosanna in the highest*." They took palm leaves, and laid them before Him as He came into the city (Matthew 21:1-9). Even to this day, we celebrate that event as "Palm Sunday."

But you'll recall that upon arriving in the city, Jesus quickly presented Himself as the Son of God. He threw the money changers out of the temple. In a very short time, that tide of acceptance turned and became a reverse tide. Stunningly, the city of Jerusalem rejected Him. They rejected Him to the place where they cried, "*Crucify Him.*" The Bible says He was taken out to a place called Calvary. There, He was nailed to a cross. There, that body hung between the earth and the sky. There, He died.

ATONEMENT BY BLOOD

Now, Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And when we realize the awful thing that took place, that Christ gave His life on that cross, we must ask, "Why? What was the cause so great, what was the motivation so strong, what was the need that made it essential for Christ, the God of the universe, to die on the cross?"

The answer to that question, when understood, should produce a profound change in every one of our lives. To discover why Jesus died, we must go back through the arches of the years, back to the very first man and woman who lived in this world, whose names as you know were Adam and Eve. God created Adam and Eve in His own image. He gave them instructions about life, and one of the things that He told them was that all that they needed to do to experience success and prosperity and wonderful things in life, was to obey Him. That, of course, becomes the touchstone that makes our story understandable. Adam and Eve were told that they could partake of every one of the trees of the garden except one, the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good an evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16-17).

Keep those verses in mind. It was a very hard, but very simple prohibition that was placed upon Adam and Eve, and they fully understood the rules. You can do anything, except eat of the forbidden fruit. That one act will open the door to death!

Well, the time came when a being called the Serpent, the Devil, entered the garden. He tempted Eve, and he got her to eat of that forbidden fruit. That dramatic moment came

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when she reached out a hand, trembling with heinous anticipation. She took of that fruit and she ate. She gave to Adam, and he also ate. And so the Bible teaches: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

Every person born in this world, from that event until now, inherited what we call "original sin." From his very first breath of life until the last moment he lives, he is a sinner. The Bible says: *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).*

What then can we do about this matter of sin? Well, the Old Testament once again gives us the answer, when it says: *"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 makes an atonement for the soul" (Leviticus 17:11).* God came to visit Adam in the garden after he had sinned again Him. God listened to Adam's confession of how he had disobeyed Him. There was a lot of rationalization there, but Adam and Eve confessed to the fact that they knew better, and they disobeyed God.

Do you know better: Have you disobeyed God? Look what happened with reference to Adam and Eve! God went and got an innocent animal out of the field nearby where He talked to Adam and Eve. God took that innocent animal and killed it, and when He did, its blood was shed. Out of the death of that innocent animal, God also made coats of skin. He made them for Adam and Eve, because they knew they were naked.

So, the answer to sin in the life of Adam and Eve was the shedding of blood: "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). No one can be saved unless blood is applied to his account, and the awful scourge of death done away with. That blood was first shed by God Himself on behalf of Adam and Eve. Get the picture? An innocent animal from the field was put to death because of the sin of man. What God has ordained, that is the way it must be! The blood of an innocent party must be shed, or you can never do away with your sin. Not by high-purposing, not by promising to be better. It takes the cleansing of the blood of an innocent animal. That's the way it was, back in the early chapters of Genesis.

In another chapter early in Genesis, we have the picture of Adam and Eve's two sons, Cain and Abel. They knew that they had to bring the blood of a lamb, the blood of an innocent animal, to be a sacrifice for sin. They knew that, but one obeyed, and one did not. Cain and Abel made their altars of sacrifice before God. Abel's sacrifice was a spotless lamb, while the sacrifice of Cain was the first-fruits of the field. Corn and beans and squash and other things that he had grown. It probably was beautiful, but God rejected Cain's sacrifice, and He accepted Abel's, because it takes the blood of an innocent to cleanse us of sin.

We can bring that paradigm down to the very present moment. God will forgive you of your sin, and me of my sin, if we categorically accept the blood of Jesus Christ as the price, the payment, for our sin. However, if we don't do that, it doesn't matter if you or I do all kinds of good works, and make all kinds of new promises before God. I can promise to straighten out my life, but it will be of no avail. The righteous deeds of an unrighteous man are an abomination to God!

The message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, His salvation, is available to you by faith alone, if you will believe on the finished work of Christ on Calvary's cross.

FORESHADOWING CHRIST

The blood of bulls and goats was shed on a million occasions in the Old Testament for man the sinner. Now, what we must remember is, that the blood shed by the innocent animals in the Old Testament not only became a covering for sin before the days of the earthly ministry of Christ. But also, it became a foreshadowing of what God would do as we move through

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history. It foresaw what would take place with reference to Abraham and to all the world. Listen to what the Apostle Paul says: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (Galatians 3:6-9).

That same faith which Abraham expressed, and manifested in deed when he listened to God and trusted in the divine provision of the Lamb, would spring forth through the seed of Abraham and become a blessing to the whole world. In the Old Testament, the saints offered blood sacrifice in faith, looking forward to the atonement that would come through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Today, we can accept that atonement by believing the message that Jesus, as the spotless Lamb of God, died for the sins of men.

THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN

So, we have established the proposition that atonement - being able to be at one with God is by the blood of Christ. The sacrifices of the Old Testament foreshadowed what Jesus would do for us on the cross, which was the wonderful fact that the blood of the Lamb was shed for us.

Do you realize what Christ did when He died on the cross? When He was on that cross, God reached out into every dark heart, and every lost life, and every despairing spirit, and every sinful soul. God gathered that awful package of human sin, and He placed it upon His Son. The Bible says: *"For He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).*

THE BLOOD OF JESUS

Because of the death of Christ on Calvary's cross, the shedding of blood by the Son of God, you and I, representative of that death, are cleansed from sin and given what the Bible calls *"The righteousness of God"--*imputed righteousness. Just think of it. By virtue of our faith in what Jesus did for us on the cross, we are totally clean and pure and accepted before God, and trusting in His blood to take us all the way to heaven. Salvation, therefore, is not of human works.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5).

That is the promise of the Word of God. And that mercy was expressed by the finished work of Christ on the cross. So, it is the work of Christ, the Lamb that was slain, that makes it possible for us to be saved.

Now, expanding out from that, the Scripture indicates that the blood of bulls and goats in the Old Testament, in the last analysis, could never take away sin.

"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4).

But they foreshadowed the application of the blood of Christ on the needy, desperately sinful souls of wicked men, so that it is the blood of Jesus Christ that covered sins in the Old Testament. But the blood of Jesus Christ takes away sin entirely and completely. It is faith on what He did for us on the cross, not faith in our own good works, or promising to be better in the days to come, that produces the gift of God, which is everlasting life.

CALVARY'S LOVE

Shall ever I forget the day When grace my soul enthralled?
When Calvary's love became my hope And all my guilt absolved.
This grand, eternal life is mine, By grace through faith alone,
Since on the cross my Savior bled For all men to atone.

Hence this "So Great Salvation" is Now fully, freely mine,
By virtue of that finished work Which love and grace combine,
Purchased by that priceless blood Which coursed from Jesus' veins,
To wash me now and evermore
From sin's malignant stains.

So now, with Christ forever mine, I never shall be lost. But what shall I then give to Him? Can I repay the cost? To this I hear Him say, "My son, Thou dost not understand. Repay the cost? Of Calvary's love? What hast thou in thine hand?" With tears I see that naught I have Of proper recompense,
My childish prayers, my feeble works, My speech of little sense.
But yes, I have but one small gift--Myself I have to give.
This then I do my Lord, my God, For You I now shall live.

Living then for Thee I find I have not lost but gained. My life has been returned to me With every grace entrained. Hence all is mine that I shall need And serve Him well I will. We'll live the great adventure here And meet on Zion's hill.

Redemption's awesome mystery then Shall have my highest mind. His purpose moves from age to age, His grace to all mankind. The love that flowed from Calvary's mount My single theme shall be For loss, for gain, for life, for death, For all eternity.

by Dave Breese

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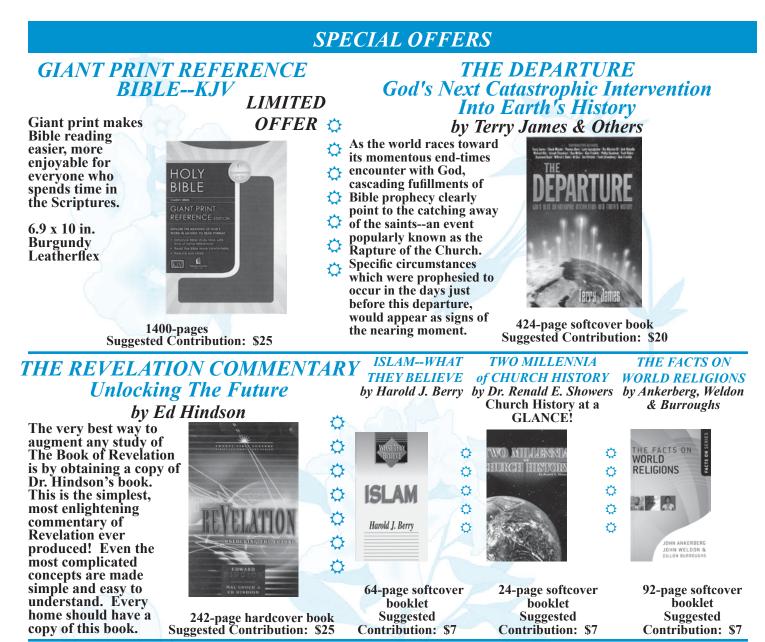
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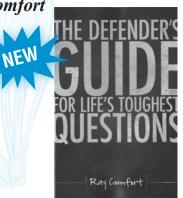
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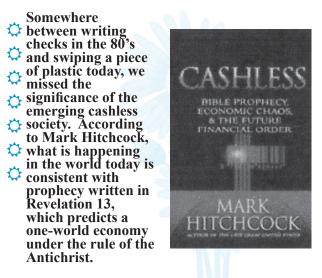


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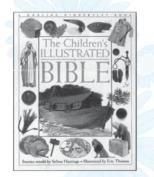
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