

# Jesus, Our Sacrifice and Salvation



**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Hebrews 9 and 10.**

**MEMORY VERSE:** “With one sacrifice, then, he [Jesus] has made perfect forever those [people] who are purified [cleansed] from sin” (Hebrews 10:14, TEV).

**IMPORTANT THOUGHT:** Voluntarily,<sup>1</sup> Jesus became the greatest Sacrifice in order to save us. His sacrifice made all other sacrifices to become nothing.

**“JESUS BEGAN HIS MINISTRY (WORK) BY BEING HUNGRY (MATTHEW 4:1-11).** But He is the Bread of Life (John 6:32, 33; John 7:37-39). Jesus ended His earthly ministry (work) by being thirsty (John 19:28). But He is the Living Water (Luke 4:10, 11). Jesus was weary (Matthew 8:23, 24). But He is our rest (Matthew 11:28-30). Jesus paid taxes to rulers (Luke 20:19-25). But He is the King. Jesus was accused of having a demon (Matthew 12:22-24). But He cast out demons. Jesus wept (John 11:35). But He wipes away our tears. Jesus was sold for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 27:3-5). But He saved the world. Jesus was brought as a lamb to be killed (Isaiah 53:7). But He is the Good Shepherd (Luke 15:4-7). Jesus died. But by His death He destroyed the power of death.”—Adapted from Gregory of Nazianzus, A.D. 381, (article, “Jesus” from [www.sermonillustrations.com](http://www.sermonillustrations.com), retrieved December 28, 2000).

In past lessons, we already have pointed to Jesus’ sacrifice. But we need to take a closer look at some important ideas in Hebrews about His sacrifice.

**THE WEEK AT A GLANCE:** What part does blood play in Hebrews? What did Jesus succeed in doing with His death? Why does Hebrews point to the once-and-for-all nature of Jesus’ death? How are we cleansed from sin?

\*Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, September 6.

<sup>1</sup>voluntarily—to do something without being forced to do it.

**SUN THE IMPORTANCE OF BLOOD.**

**“For the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4, TEV).**

**Why do you think the blood of animals was not able to “take away” sins?**

The Greek word for “blood” appears 21 times in Hebrews. Most of these times are in Hebrews 9. Read Hebrews 9. Notice especially Hebrews 9:22 and the words “shedding [flowing] of blood.”

**What point do the following verses make? Hebrews 9:7, 18-22; Hebrews 10:29; Hebrews 12:24; Hebrews 13:20.**

The old covenant (agreement) and the new covenant were made legal by blood. “The blood of the covenant” in Hebrews 9 points to the old covenant. But Hebrews 10–13 focuses on the blood of Jesus and the new covenant.

Hebrews 9:7, 18, 22 have the word *without*. The high priest of the old covenant entered the Most Holy Place not without blood. The old covenant was not started without blood. There is no forgiveness without the shedding of blood. So blood is very important.

Hebrews 9:7-14, 25 shows the difference between the use of animal blood and the use of Jesus’ blood. This difference shows the limits of the old covenant. Hebrews 9:18-21 points to why blood is important for the cov-

enant and the Old Testament sanctuary. Hebrews 9:22 teaches that forgiveness of sin is possible only by the shedding of the blood of Jesus. Jesus’ blood alone has the full power to cleanse us from sin.

**Read Hebrews 9:22. Why can there be no forgiveness of sins without the shedding of blood? Whose blood? Read Leviticus 17:11.**

**MON THE EFFECTS OF JESUS’ SHED BLOOD.**

We often think of blood negatively. Blood reminds us of violence, death, and war. But in the book of Hebrews, blood means something good.

**What did Jesus do by His blood?**

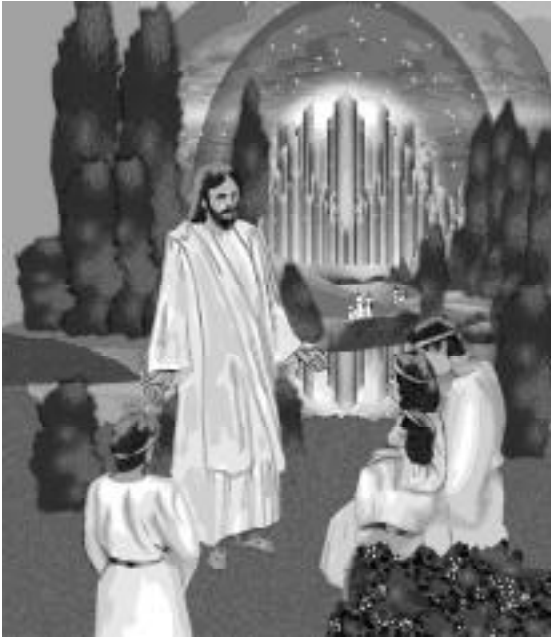
Hebrews 9:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Hebrews 10:19 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Hebrews 13:12 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Jesus' blood gives us eternal salvation.

**Now summarize what Jesus' blood has done. How has Jesus' blood helped you?**

"The blood of Jesus gives life and hope. It rescues us from sin. . . . No book of the New Testament so glorifies the place of the Cross as Hebrews does. Hebrews bases its message on the completeness of Jesus' blood sacrifice by contrasting<sup>2</sup> Jesus' blood sacrifice to the Old Testament sanctuary that every believer may find full confidence (faith)." —Adapted from Johnsson, *In Absolute Confidence*, pp. 112, 114.

**Read Hebrews 10:29. How would**

**you explain Hebrews 10:29 in light of all the hope given in Hebrews?**

Jesus' blood cleanses the sinner and the sanctuary (Hebrews 9:14, 23) and brings salvation to all people who accept His blood. But people who reject His blood must face eternal<sup>3</sup> destruction. Jesus does not want us to fall away from Him, the Giver of eternal life. Hebrews is a warning to stay faithful.

**TUE JESUS' SACRIFICE (Hebrews 10:12).**

Blood is a powerful symbol in Hebrews 9. But the words *sacrifice*, *offering*, and *to offer* are powerful symbols in Hebrews 10. The first part of Hebrews 10 discusses how weak the sacrifices of the old covenant (agreement) were. Starting with Hebrews 10:10, the once-and-for-all sacrifice of Jesus is judged to be so much better than the services in the old sanctuary (read Hebrews 10:10-18). Jesus' sacrifice did not need to be done over and over, as the sacrifices in the Old Testament sanctuary.

**Why do you think Hebrews points to the fact that Jesus had to die only once? Why is it not necessary for Jesus' sacrifice to be repeated? Why is Jesus' once-and-for-all sacrifice**

<sup>2</sup>contrasting—showing how things are different.

<sup>3</sup>eternal—forever; without beginning or end; lasting forever.

**better than the Old Testament sacrifices? Keep in mind the general theme of Hebrews as you think about your answers. Read also Hebrews 10:18.**

Jesus offered Himself once and for all. He took upon Himself the punishment we deserved for our sins. He was sacrificed for our sake. Sin brings death.<sup>4</sup> But out of His love for us, Jesus faced that death in our place. He accepted the punishment we deserve. This is the point of His sacrifice.



Jesus faced death for us.

People forced Jesus to be crucified on the cross (Hebrews 9:28). But other verses show that Jesus Himself offered to be sacrificed. Read Hebrews 9:14; Hebrews 10:12.

Jesus' sacrifice covers everything. It is one sacrifice offered once for all people. The results of Jesus' sacrifice are that people are made righteous (holy) and experience forgiveness (Hebrews 10:10, 14, 18).

**Is it fair that Jesus, being innocent, should suffer and die for guilty sinners? But do we really want fairness? Fairness is getting what we deserve. If we got what we deserved, what would we get?**

### **WED THE IDEA OF PURIFICATION (CLEANSING) (Hebrews 10:22).**

There are different ways to describe God's saving work. The Bible uses different symbols and words such as *justification*,<sup>5</sup> *redemption* (salvation), *atonement*,<sup>6</sup> *ransom*,<sup>7</sup> and being in *Christ [Jesus]* to describe the result of God's saving work. Another word used to describe God's saving work is *purification*. Purification means to be made clean. This idea is used much in Hebrews.

**How do the following verses show the idea of defilement and purification? Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 9:13, 14, 22, 23; Hebrews 10:2, 22. What things are defiled (made dirty)? What things need to be purified, or cleansed? How do you understand what this cleansing means?**

<sup>4</sup>death—eternal separation from God.

<sup>5</sup>justification—forgiveness of sins; being made righteous (holy) when God forgives our sins.

<sup>6</sup>atonement—cleansing; Jesus dying on the cross in our place.

<sup>7</sup>ransom—price paid for a person's freedom; Jesus' death paid the ransom for our freedom from sin.



Jesus keeps our world going.

Justification shows a method in which someone is being made righteous (holy). Redemption is a word picture explaining how something is being “bought back” or “freed.” Forgiveness gives the idea that a debt is cancelled. But purification suggests that uncleanness<sup>8</sup> is being removed. Hebrews teaches that all people need purification.

The first use of the idea of “cleanse, purify” shows up in the introduction of Hebrews. Jesus has been introduced as the Creator. Then His actions are listed. The first action is that He “purged [cleansed] our sins” (Hebrews 1:3). So the idea of cleansing is set for the rest of the letter. Jesus has made purification for sins.

“By His sacrifice, Christ (Jesus) did both (1) the cleansing of general sin (the work

made possible by the sacrifice on the cross and which will cleanse the universe of sin), and (2) the cleansing of the individual person from sin. This second work, also made possible by the Cross, is still continuing and will not be finished till the last person is saved.”—Adapted from *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 397.

“If a person has sinned, he or she must be made clean. The stain of sin must be taken away. And Paul argues that the method of that cleansing is the blood of Jesus Himself. His blood is the only way of cleansing.”—Adapted from William Johnsson, *Issues in the Book of Hebrews* (Silver Spring, Md.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1989), p. 89.



Jesus' blood removes the stain of sin from our lives.

**Hebrews 9:13, 14 tells us that through Jesus' blood even our conscience<sup>9</sup> can be made clean. How can**

<sup>8</sup>uncleanness—not being clean.

<sup>9</sup>conscience—a knowledge or sense of right and wrong with an urge to do right.

**our conscience be made clean through Jesus' blood? We know that Jesus paid the full price for all our sins and that we can stand without fault in front of God. How can this knowledge help "cleanse" us from "dead works"?**

**THU JESUS, OUR AUTHOR AND FINISHER (PERFECTER).**

Read Hebrews 12:1-4. Hebrews 11 gives a list of God's faithful followers who lived by faith. Hebrews 12 begins by going back to those people as examples for the Hebrews to follow.

**In Hebrews 12:1, Paul talks about the Christian life as a "race." How do you understand the meaning of the word *race* when you think about living by faith?**

Paul pointed his readers first to different heroes of the Bible. Then he pointed them to Jesus. He calls Jesus the "author and finisher of our faith." The word for "author" also can mean "originator" (starter), "founder," "pioneer." *Finisher* also means "perfecter." This tells us that everything we need for salvation, for faith, for hope, and for personal holiness comes from Jesus. Jesus began our salvation, and He will end it. Salvation depends on Him. The work He has

done *for* us, He will finish *in* us. Jesus is our salvation. In Him, our redemption (salvation) is complete. Our part is to live by faith and to continue in His strength. He then can work in us.

**Paul is pointing us to Jesus and telling us to focus on a special part of Jesus' life and ministry (work). What part is that? What is the point Paul is trying to make in Hebrews 12:1-4?**

**FRI ADDITIONAL STUDY:** Look up the words *save*, *salvation*, and *savior* in a concordance<sup>10</sup> and study some of the verses you find for each word. Or study the topic of salvation in Romans 5:9, 10; Romans 8:24; Romans 9:27; Romans 10:9, 13; Romans 11:14, 26.

"Our Savior is in the sanctuary. . . . He is our High Priest working with God for us. He is making a cleansing sacrifice for us. He is working to make His blood work for us. Parents should try to show this Savior to their children to establish in their minds the plan of salvation. . . . They should help their children focus on the fact that Jesus gave His life because of our sin. Jesus died to satisfy justice and to clear the honor of God's law. . . . Jesus suffered so our sins may be forgiven through faith in Him. He became our Substitute.<sup>11</sup> He accepted our punishment so that we who deserved

<sup>10</sup>concordance—a book with all the words of the Bible that tells you what verses each word is in.

<sup>11</sup>substitute—someone who takes another person's place. Jesus took our place on the cross.

to be punished might be free, and return to God. . . . Jesus is our only hope of salvation. . . . We repent<sup>12</sup> and become contrite<sup>13</sup> in heart. We believe in Jesus as our cleansing sacrifice. We realize that we are restored (brought back) to God.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals [Basics] of Christian Education*, p. 369.

#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Read Hebrews 2:10; Hebrews 5:7, 9; and Hebrews 9:28. How do these verses show the work of both God and Jesus in the plan of salvation?
2. Hebrews talks about us being made pure or cleansed from sin. How do we experience this cleansing in our lives? God does not make us pure without our cooperation. What must we do to let God make us pure from sin?
3. What is Paul saying in Hebrews 12:4 about the battle against sin? What do his words suggest about the struggle involved in that battle?

**SUMMARY:** Someone has written: “If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us a teacher. If our greatest need had been technology (industry and science), God would have sent us a scientist. If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us a banker. If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an actor. But our greatest need was forgiveness, so God sent us a Savior.”—Adapted; author unknown from [www.sermonillustrations.com](http://www.sermonillustrations.com), retrieved December 28, 2000. The book of Hebrews points us to the once-and-for-all sacrifice of Jesus. In this way, Hebrews gives us a wonderful picture of just what our Savior has done for us.

<sup>12</sup>repent—to be sorry for our sins and to want to stop sinning.

<sup>13</sup>contrite—to be sorry for our sins and to want to stop sinning.