

Jesus' Blood of Redemption

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Ephesians

1:7 In union with him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our offenses, according to the riches of God's grace [International Standard Version]

Throughout human history, the devil has always made desperate attempts to keep people away from understanding the importance of the redemption accomplished through the blood of Jesus. For example, the Divine Principle which is the textbook used by the Unification Church makes no mention at all about the blood of Jesus. The word 'blood' does not appear even once.

Let us look at what is written in the Quran, which is the religious text of Islam. It is written that Jesus did not die on the cross and no blood was shed. However, it is clearly stated in our Bible.

Hebrews

9:22 In fact, under the Law almost everything is cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of the blood there is no forgiveness.

Mark

10:45 because even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people.

This was the very purpose Jesus came for. Rather than to teach as many things as possible, he came here to sacrifice himself. Jesus gave up his own life as the price for our redemption. Peter repeatedly emphasized this very fact.

1 Peter

2:24 "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the tree, so that we might die to those sins and live righteously. "By his wounds you have been healed."

3:18 For the Messiah also suffered for sins once for all, an innocent person for the guilty, so that he could bring you to God. He was put to death in a mortal body but was brought to life by the Spirit.

Paul wrote so many things about the same fact, especially in the Epistle to the Romans.

Romans

5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus the Messiah.

Romans

4:24 but also for us. Our faith will be regarded in the same way, if we believe in the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.

4:25 He was sentenced to death because of our sins and raised to life to justify us.

Romans

5:10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life!

2 Corinthians

5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in the Messiah, he is a new creation. Old things have disappeared, and—look!—all things have become new!

5:18 All of this comes from God, who has reconciled us to himself through the Messiah and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 5:19 for through the Messiah, God was reconciling the world to himself by not counting their sins against them. He has committed his message of reconciliation to us.

5:20 Therefore, we are the Messiah's representatives, as though God were pleading through us. We plead on the Messiah's behalf: "Be reconciled to God!"

5:21 God made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that God's righteousness would be produced in us.

When Jesus was crucified, he was no longer treated as the eternal God or beloved Son of God but rather, he became an embodiment of sin. This is the immovable fact and the absolute truth regardless of whether we accept it or not. It is a fact that the forgiveness of sin is accomplished through nothing but the blood of the Lord Jesus.

The glorious victory over sins is brought by the blood of Jesus. The problem of sins could never be solved without the blood of Jesus. By the blood of Jesus, not only were our sins forgiven and the victory over sins brought to us, but a new life in the future to come was guaranteed to us. This new life is mentioned in many parts of the Bible. Let us look at one such verse.

Revelation

21:5 The one sitting on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new!"

This is the declaration from the Lord God toward those who are sinking into eternal destruction, those who are crushed by their sins and debts. And this promise was fulfilled by the death of Jesus on the

cross. In here, we see the fact that all believers are renewed.

Jesus has paid the debts of human beings by his own blood. Therefore, the forgiveness of sins was actually accomplished. And Jesus has redeemed us from the slavery of sin and given us perfect freedom.

Inside Jesus, we can see the liberation from the bondage of the devil and sin and the victory over both. However, Jesus has accomplished something even greater. Jesus is the one who gives a new life by his blood. Those who were saved by the grace of Jesus were given the forgiveness of their sins and victory over sins was brought to them. However, unless they receive the new life, they would have to remain in the same status at best, or they might sink to a worse state.

It is because the salvation by Jesus' blood lasts forever and is capable of changing all aspects of our daily lives that we can be renewed. Jesus said, "See, I am making all things new!" This was what he has promised to us humans.

Jesus, who can make all things new, has reaffirmed that he is willing to make all things new. We all want to change and be renewed. I guess all of us somewhat desire to begin a new life and become new people, don't we?

I believe people who are gathered here also desire the same thing. This must be one of the deepest desires of all human beings. We all have to admit that we have been striving hard to become new persons but such efforts have never been successful. Nobody can be transformed or begin a new life by their own efforts.

The only thing we can do is to surrender ourselves to Jesus and ask him to recreate us. We all should have some spiritual experience and begin to live such a life that pleases Jesus.

Jesus is willing to recreate us into new persons and he is the only one who can do so. If we sincerely wish to become brand new persons, we have to give up our old self and leave our old life to enter the new one.

We all understand very well that we have the old and innate nature of man since we were born. The basic nature of man always makes us concentrate on ourselves and be self-centered. Some people may not realize this nature inside themselves, but they must have seen this self-centered nature in many other people.

The old men referred to in the Bible are those who can't help but concentrate on themselves, those who are controlled by their own ego and those who

always like to dominate other people. The old men are characterized by their self-determination and self-governance.

How can we be liberated from our old nature? To this question, religions have prescribed various cures based on so-called asceticism or legalism. However, in actuality, that kind of legalistic prescription very often ends up making people even more self-centered than before.

People begin to behave in an even more self-centered manner than before. Jesus knows a far better way to liberate people from such old nature. According to the Bible, the Crucifixion was not merely a death of a single person, who was Jesus himself, but had to do with the death of the entire human race and thus, it was even connected to the death of ourselves at the same time. Jesus sacrificed himself to save us and gave up his life. The Bible says that at this time, our old natures were crucified with him.

Romans

6:6 We know that our old natures were crucified with him so that our sin-laden bodies might be rendered powerless and we might no longer be slaves to sin.

Let us look at the words "no longer", which are important in here. It is wonderful that it is so stated in the Bible. We used to be slaves to sin but it is over now. We are "no longer" slaves. Most people seem to live without understanding the profound meaning of this very truth. It is clearly stated in the verse 6 that Jesus was crucified with our old natures a long time ago.

We can begin a new life with an awareness of and gratitude to the fact that we will never have to yield to the demand of our old natures anymore. As Paul has said in his testimony, "I have been crucified with the Messiah. I no longer live, but the Messiah lives in me."

When we testify this way, for the first time in our lives, we will be liberated from our sin and obtain true freedom. And those who have been crucified with Jesus have resurrected with Jesus. Jesus is willing, not only that we share in his death, but that we share in his life too.

It is only Jesus, who is able to wipe our ego away. This is indeed the gift from Jesus. This new nature of ours appears outwardly as the consequence of the new life that Jesus gave us. Jesus was the only person who could say, "I am the life itself."

True life, the eternal life, exists nowhere but inside Jesus. Furthermore, Jesus does not want to hold it for himself alone, but is willing to come down to the

earth to give his life to us. Chapter 10, verse 10 of John explains the importance of acquiring this life; "I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly." Jesus desires that we have life abundantly.

John

10:28 I give them eternal life, they will never be lost, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

This is a wonderful promise. To let us have a new life, Jesus had to give up his own life. It was for this very reason that Jesus had to die. And he actually has accomplished this mission. The life of Jesus was in his blood and when his blood was shed, Jesus gave us his own life.

John

10:18 No one is taking it from me; I lay it down of my own free will. I have the authority to lay it down, and I have the authority to take it back again. This is what my Father has commanded me.

Jesus gave up his own life so that we could receive it. The cross is where the fountain of life begins to flow. Anyone can receive it only if they are willing to.

Revelation

22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" Let everyone who hears this say, "Come!" Let everyone who is thirsty come! Let anyone who wants the water of life take it as a gift!

When people accept the crucified Lord Jesus as their own savior, as their Lord, not only will they receive the forgiveness of sins and the liberation from the control of sins, they will receive a new life too. The Bible clearly states that those who have the Son, Lord Jesus, have an eternal life. The eternal life is a brand new life that is prepared for you. It is in this way that Jesus renews us.

Romans

6:4 Therefore, through baptism we were buried with him into his death so that, just as the Messiah was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too may live an entirely new life.

This exactly is the new creation. There are so many people who are desperately willing to have a new life, but very few of them truly repent and will be regenerated. New life can be obtained only when you are regenerated.

When a leading theologian, Nicodemus asked Jesus about regeneration, what did he say? Jesus clearly answered to him, "We all have to be born from above. Your wisdom and knowledge are absolutely useless. Unless you are regenerated, you will never

be able to enter heaven." Many people believe that because they live an ethical and honest life, the Lord God will justify them and accept them in the Kingdom of God. They consider that, because of their many good deeds, they will enter heaven.

How does the Bible answer to such a belief? The Bible tells us that humans' thoughts and the judgment of the Lord God are fundamentally different. Let us open the Gospel According to John, chapter 3, verse 3 and see what Jesus said to this man;

John

3:3 Jesus replied to him, "Truly, I tell you emphatically, unless a person is born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God."

In other words, he would never be saved. Let us say I drive a car in Germany on the left hand side of roads as I do in Japan. I will crash head-on into some other car in less than five minutes. In the court, I will insist that people drive on the left hand side of roads in Japan, so I did the same in Germany, but no judge will listen to such an allegation.

In Germany, where cars are regulated to drive on the right hand side of the roads, rules we obey in Japan will not apply. Likewise, when we appear in front of the Lord, he will judge us, not based on our human thoughts or rules, but according to the laws of the God.

The Bible is the only book where the intention of the Lord God is revealed to us. This Bible definitely states that there is only one door to the salvation and that is Jesus himself. For our debts to be paid and for our sins to be canceled, this precious sacrifice was absolutely necessary, which was the blood of Jesus.

The new and eternal life can be obtained by nothing but spiritual conversion; in other words, by being regenerated. If you truly ask for an eternal life, you will never fail to receive it. Jesus shed his own blood to give humans new life and if we sincerely seek the new life, we will absolutely receive it.

However, it is not a very easy thing to do. For those who have accumulated life experiences of several decades, it is very unpleasant and difficult to restart their lives from the beginning like a little child.

To be more precise, they want to avoid such a task. Indeed, the life they lived without knowing Jesus has been so sad and meaningless. However, it is never too late to do so. It is a wonderful blessing for you to receive the grace of Jesus now at this very moment.

It is by itself a blessing to start your life over again. All our past deeds are forgiven and forgotten by the

blood of the Lord Jesus. This has brought us the perfect freedom. Right after people are regenerated, they are very much like newborn babies in that they have no dark past.

Finally, let us look at one of such people who were recreated by Jesus.

Mark

10:46 Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus, his disciples, and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus (the son of Timaeus) was sitting by the road.

10:47 When he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was there, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

10:48 Many people sternly told him to be quiet, but he started shouting even louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

10:49 So Jesus stopped and said, "Call him!" So they called the blind man and told him, "Have courage! Get up. He's calling you."

10:50 He threw off his coat, jumped up, and went to Jesus.

10:51 Then Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man told him, "Rabbouni, I want to see again."

10:52 Jesus told him, "Go. Your faith has made you well." At once the man could see again, and he began to follow Jesus down the road.

This blind beggar, Bartimaeus was given perfect peace and true joy. Jesus called him and said, "Rejoice. Stand up. I am concerned about you. Do not worry anymore." This voice of invitation is, of course, directed to us too. In our human relationships, we often encourage or cheer up each other, saying, "Don't let it get you down. Snap out of it!" However, these words neither actually provide new possibilities nor give true strength.

The sympathy of men may provide temporary solace, but it will never solve their problems fundamentally. However, there is a man who not only is concerned about our pains, but provides us with a fundamental solution to our problem. This is what is called the gospel.

Needless to say, it is nobody but Jesus. In actuality, there are an uncountable number of people who are totally blind and are struggling for their lives just like Bartimaeus. We certainly have eyes and might be physically in good shape, but do we have true peace and everlasting joy at the bottom of our hearts?

Those who do not have Jesus are blind in the eyes of their hearts. They crawl around in the darkness and try to grasp something with no result. They are not aware that they are heading toward death hopelessly. However, under any circumstances, even when you seem to have lost all courage, Jesus is still

calling your name.

You do not need to sink down to the bottom of darkness. However, you absolutely need to be aware of the facts mentioned today, because otherwise you will not seek the light of truth. Bartimaeus was completely healed by the encounter with Jesus. His attitude was instantly changed. He could begin to lead a forward-looking life in a true sense.

It is written that Bartimaeus threw off his coat. Just like he did when he ran up to Jesus, let us also abandon all unnecessary properties and come to Jesus. Let us throw away all false sincerity, all efforts to look faithful, all depreciation as well as self-justification.

Jesus also talks to us just like he talked to Bartimaeus. What did he actually say?

What do you want? Do you want your eyes open? Are you not willing to receive the salvation I accomplished on the cross rather than rewards for your own efforts? Do you not want your sins cleansed by the blood I shed?

Do you want your life to be totally controlled by my spirit? Do you not want to believe in the fact that I have accomplished the perfect salvation for you? Or, do you want to die the death in your sin, to which you are heading toward? Do you really want to reject me? Do you refuse to believe in the fact that I have redeemed you with a matchless price?

Do you surely not want to accept this wonderful gift of the eternal life?

Jesus is still asking these questions to us. "Have courage! Get up. He's calling you."

Isaiah

42:16 I'll help the blind walk, even on a road they do not know; I'll guide them in directions they do not know. I'll turn the dark places into light in front of them, and the rough places into level ground. These are the things I will do, and I won't abandon them.

It is such a wonderful promise, isn't it? I want to finish this sermon with this verse.

John

8:12 Later on, Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

End