

The Efficacy of the Blood of Christ.

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Christian Friend, vol. 8, 1881, p. 46 etc.

It is of the first importance, beloved readers, that every one should understand the light in which God regards the precious blood of Christ. The one lesson written on almost every page of Scripture, and told out in symbol, type, and fact, is, that "without shedding of blood is no remission" (see Heb. 9: 22); i.e. no remission of sins. The reason of this is plain. Man is a sinner. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3: 23), and hence all men as sinners are under the sentence and condemnation of death. (Rom. 5: 12.) Now blood represents the life. As we read in Scripture, "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." (Lev. 17: 11.) Inasmuch, therefore, as man is a sinner, and is under the penalty of death, he can find no escape except through the shedding of blood, the rendering up to God of a life in the stead of his own. Failing to find such a method of deliverance, he himself must bear the doom of his sin, for "the soul that sinneth it must die." Now the blood of Christ is God's own way of saving the sinner; for the blood of Christ signifies the offering up of His life to God, in death upon the cross, as an atonement for sin. Hence He Himself says, "The Son of man came . . . to give His life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20: 28.)

The aspects, however, in which the blood of Christ is presented are many, and it is only by a consideration of these that we can obtain any conception of its unspeakable preciousness and value — its preciousness and value before God — and its efficacy on our behalf.

Let us then examine a little together into what the Scripture teaches on this subject. One remark, however, must first be made. Even the blood of Christ, we shall find, would have no value apart from what He was. It is the truth of His person that imparts to it its efficacy. Had He only been man, His death could not have availed for all; had He only been God, He could not have died; but being what He was, "very God and very Man," He not only was qualified as the spotless Man to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin, but His divinity added such efficacy to His precious blood that it suffices for the need of all who believe in His name. Understand it well, then, that it is not the blood of Christ apart from Himself that avails before God; it is Christ Himself rather in the efficacy of His blood. It is on this account, for example, that the apostle speaks after this manner, "*In whom* we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." (Eph. 1: 7.)

As a general remark it may be said that the blood of the sacrifices in the old dispensation, and therefore the blood of Christ which this typified, was wholly for God. That is, while, as we shall see, there are blessed applications to, and efficacies for, the believer, the blood was offered before all to vindicate the glory and to meet the claims of God on the sinner. Accordingly the first aspect of the value of the blood of Christ is that of PROPITIATION. The meaning and truth of this may be gathered from the action of Aaron with the blood of the sin-offering on the day of atonement. It is said, "And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his

finger upon the mercy-seat eastward," etc. In like manner he was to act with the blood of the goat of the sin-offering. (Lev. 16: 14, 15.) In addition to this, the blood was to be sprinkled *before* the mercy-seat, and here seven times because it was for the eye of man. Once was enough for the eye of God. That this spoke of the blood of Christ is shown from the statement of the apostle. He says, "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth a propitiation (a *mercy-seat*) through faith in His blood." (Rom. 3: 24, 25.) What, then, did the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy-seat accomplish? To answer this question it must be borne in mind that the mercy-seat in the tabernacle in the wilderness represented God's throne — the throne of Jehovah in the midst of Israel. Hence He was said to dwell between the cherubim. (Ps. 80: 1, etc.) The blood put upon the mercy-seat met, therefore, the claims of God's throne upon the sinner. It answered all the claims of a holy God (we speak now of the blood of Christ) upon guilty sinners. It was the vindication of His holy government, and inasmuch as it both satisfied His righteous claims upon man as a sinner, and glorified Him in every attribute of His character, it laid the ground on which He could righteously pardon every sinner that approached Him trusting in the value of the sprinkled blood. This was propitiation — the propitiation which is the foundation on which God can now deal in grace with the whole world, and thus send out, through His ambassadors, the entreating message to all - the vilest and the guiltiest — to be reconciled to Him. (2 Cor. 5: 20, 21.) Hence, too, John, speaking of Christ, says, "And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, *but also for the whole world.*" (1 John 2: 2.)

Such was the unspeakable value of the blood of Christ before God. It answered all His governmental claims upon a guilty world, so that He has been publicly vindicated, yea, glorified, concerning the question of sin, and in the very place where we had publicly dishonoured His name by our sin and rebellion. And let it never be forgotten that He Himself in His wondrous love provided the propitiation. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us" (as believers can say), "and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4: 10.) If thus His holiness demanded, His love furnished the propitiation; and hence He can now be proclaimed throughout the whole world as the God of grace; for He now sits as it were on the mercy-seat, waiting to receive, to pardon, and to save every poor sinner who comes through faith in the blood of Christ.

Propitiation having been made, God was free both in grace and righteousness to bless the sinner. Hence the apostle speaks of "*being now JUSTIFIED by His blood*" — the blood of Christ. (Rom. 5: 9.) Every one, indeed, who approaches God through faith in Christ is justified. For in virtue of that blood which met all God's claims, all the claims of His holy government - upon the sinner on account of his sin, all the claims of His outraged majesty, and all the claims of His glory, He is able righteously to justify every believing soul. This is distinctly shown in Romans 3. "By the deeds of the law" it is conclusively proved, no flesh can be justified before God. Strive as a man may, and live as upright and moral a life as he may, he can never answer the claims of a holy God. Whoever is on, or takes, the ground of works as a means of salvation is hopelessly lost. Man cannot in any shape or form save himself; and should he seek to obtain righteousness by putting himself under the law, he will only find that "by the law is the knowledge of sin." What, then, we ask, is man's resource when it is demonstrated that he is a helpless, guilty sinner? *It is in the righteousness of God*, which, "without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of

Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3: 21-23.)

But how, it may further be enquired, can God's righteousness be possessed? The answer is given in the same scripture. The apostle proceeds, "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth a propitiation (mercy-seat) through faith in His blood . . . to declare at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (vv. 24-26.) Can anything be more divinely simple? The blood of Christ is the foundation. It is through its virtue, through its value before God as making propitiation, that He can be just, that He can act in perfect harmony with all that He is, in perfect consistency with His holy being, and justify, righteously justify, every one "which believeth in Jesus." We are therefore justified by, through the virtue of, the blood of Christ. We are also "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;" for it was God, acting from His own heart, in the exercise of pure, sovereign, and blessed grace, who provided the sacrifice whose precious blood made atonement for sin, so adequate and complete, that God could come out of His place, seek and bring back the sinner to Himself, pardon his sins, and righteously justify him on the exercise of faith in the blood of Christ. Hence it is only believers who are justified. But the moment a soul receives God's testimony to the value of the blood, His testimony to His own appreciation of it, and, trusting in it, comes into His presence, that soul is justified, justified in the righteousness of God, even as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. (Rom. 4: 3.)

Scripture likewise teaches that believers are SANCTIFIED through the blood of Christ. "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." (Heb. 13: 12; see also Heb. 10: 29.) These passages doubtless have a special application, but beyond this they teach a most precious truth. The sanctification of which they speak is neither practical nor progressive, this being effected by the Holy Ghost through the Word, but indicates the setting apart of believers to God as His people on the earth. That is, every one who comes through faith under the shelter of the blood of Christ, is thereby separated from all the world, and set apart to God. The nature of this sanctification may be illustrated by the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the office of the priesthood. We read that Moses took of the blood of the ram of consecration, and "put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot" (Ex. 29: 20.) Thereby they were set apart to hear, to act, and to walk for God according to the perfection of the blood of Christ. It is so with believers now; and the blood in this aspect sets forth privilege and responsibility rather than actual blessing received, reminding the believer that he belongs to God, according to the value of the blood under which he is sheltered.

Another illustration of this may be gathered from Exodus 24. When Moses had read to the people the covenant which was made by the Lord at Sinai, he sprinkled half of the blood of the sacrifices upon the people (having sprinkled the other half upon the altar), saying, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning these words." (v. 8.) This will explain the words in Hebrews concerning an apostate, who is said to have "counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing." (Heb. 10: 29.) The blood sprinkled upon the people, while it set forth death as the penal sanction of the law, brought them

thereby under the obligation of obedience. It was for this they were set apart. (Compare 1 Peter 1: 2.) So to the eye of God all His people now on the earth are seen, as it were, sprinkled under the value of the blood of Christ, and thus set apart to Him for His service. They are sanctified through the blood.

Another aspect of the blood of Christ is, that it **CLEANSSES FROM SIN**. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all" (or every) "sin." (1 John 1: 7.) In like manner John, giving a voice to the adoration of the whole Church, cries, "Unto Him that loved" (or rather *loveth*) "us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood," etc. (Rev. 1: 5.) The same idea, speaking generally, is conveyed when forgiveness, or remission of sins, is spoken of as procured by the blood of Christ. The difference is, that in this case it is God who has been wronged by our sins, who forgives, and absolutely forgives, whereas in the latter it is a question of the sinner being cleansed from his guilt, and made meet for His presence. Two or three specific statements will explain how this process of cleansing is effected.

As before stated, God sees every believer as sprinkled with, under the value of, the blood of Christ. When the priests were consecrated, and when the leper was cleansed, this truth was symbolized by their being sprinkled with blood. Both alike were first washed with water, figure of the new birth through the water (the Word) and the Spirit, sprinkled with blood, typical of cleansing from guilt; and then, lastly, anointed with oil to set forth the anointing of believers of this dispensation with the Holy Ghost. It need scarcely be said that sinners now are not actually sprinkled; but on faith in Christ, in His atoning sacrifice, there is the application to them of all the cleansing value of the blood. Their guilt, therefore, is gone according to the efficacy of the blood of Christ before God.

It will thus be perceived that God sees no guilt where He sees the value of the blood, and He sees it on every believer. The blood has made propitiation for their sins. The effect, therefore, of the application of the blood of Christ to the soul — and let it be repeated that it is applied to all who believe — is, that they are without spot or stain. Borrowing the figurative language of the Apocalypse, they have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7.)

"White in His blood most precious,

Till not a spot remains."

So white, indeed, that they are spotless in purity before the all-searching eye of a holy God.

It should be added that Scripture knows nothing of a re-application of the blood of Christ to the believer. Once cleansed, he is cleansed for ever. This is the whole point of the argument in Hebrews 10: 1-14. The efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ abides *for ever* in contrast with the necessity for repeated sacrifices under the law, and hence the blood, once shed and presented before God, is ever there in all its value for our souls, so that the question of guilt can never more be raised against us.

"Though the restless foe accuses,

Sins recounting, like a flood,
Every charge our God refuses;
Christ hath answered with His blood."

The believer may sin, as, alas! he does, and contract defilement; but guilt, in virtue of the precious blood, under the value of which he stands, is never imputed. If he does not judge himself and confess his sin, God will deal with and chasten him; for He loves His people too well to allow them to go on in sin; and in His grace He has made provision for cleansing these defilements by the washing of water by the Word. (Eph. 5; John 13.) But while this is true, and should never be forgotten, we must never lose hold of the precious and momentous truth, that once cleansed by the precious blood of Christ, we are cleansed once and for all — made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, eternally fit for the presence of God.

There is a further and slightly different aspect of the application of the blood in cleansing, and that is in its effect on the soul itself: It gives a PURGED CONSCIENCE. The difference between the two things may be thus represented: Cleansing me from guilt makes me fit to stand before God; purging my conscience makes me happy in His presence. There are several allusions to the purged conscience in the epistle to the Hebrews. "If," says the apostle, "the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, *purge your conscience* from dead works to serve the living God? (Heb. 9: 13, 14.) Again, in contrasting the worshippers of the old economy with those of the present time, he says, "The worshippers once purged" (which the Jew never was, while the Christian always is) "should have had no more conscience of sins" (Heb. 10: 2); and yet further, he speaks of "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." (Heb. 10: 22.)

Two questions then may be put to elicit the truth. First, What is it to have a purged conscience, or no more conscience of sins? and secondly, How is it to be obtained and enjoyed? A purged conscience is knowing that our sins are for ever put away from before God, so that we can be in His presence happy in the consciousness that we are without spot or stain, in the light as He is in the light, in the confidence that, since Christ, who bore our sins on the cross, is seated at God's right hand, the question of our sins can never more be reopened. As another has said, "We have the purification not only of sins but of the conscience, so that we can use this access to God in full liberty and joy; presenting ourselves before Him who so loved us." This may even yet be simplified, if the reader is reminded that this purged conscience is in no way interfered with by the fact of indwelling sin. This we shall carry about with us until the Lord comes, or until death; but if we enter into the full character of the abiding efficacy of the precious blood of Christ, we may still enjoy uninterruptedly a perfect conscience, having no more conscience of sins, if we apprehend the truth, that by one offering Christ has perfected for ever them that are sanctified. We would earnestly caution our readers not to confound these two things — the assurance of guilt being cleansed away for ever, and the sense of sin because of our evil nature. They are entirely distinct; and through the wondrous grace of our God He has made provision, through the one sacrifice of Christ, to enable us, spite of the fact that we carry the old nature about with us, to be always happy in His presence, in the full consciousness that no cloud can

ever more come between His face and our souls through the guilt of our sins. We have our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and that sprinkling can never be repeated any more than Christ can leave His glory and come down to earth, and die a second time on the cross.

How then is this purged conscience to be obtained? Simply by the hearty reception of God's testimony to the value of the blood of Christ. Hence the first part of Heb. 10 is taken up with showing on several distinct grounds — the will of God, the work of Christ, and the witness of the Holy Ghost — that the sins and iniquities of God's people will be remembered no more, because they are for ever put away by the one offering of Christ. Whosoever reads this Scripture, and from his heart believes what God there testifies, will enjoy the priceless possession of a purged conscience. He will be able then to sing -

"How bright, there above, is the mercy of God!

And void of all guilt, and clear of all sin,

Is my conscience and heart, through my Saviour's blood -

'Not a cloud above' — 'not a spot within.'"

How is it, do you ask, that this truth is so little known? Because the teaching of almost the whole of Christendom ignores, nay, contradicts it. The consequence is that souls, instead of rejoicing in the sense of God's love, are everywhere; in bondage, and remain, as to experience, at a distance from God. Then listen to the opinions and thoughts of men no more, but come directly to the infallible word of God, and give Him honour by bowing to His own testimony to the everlasting efficacy of the one sacrifice of Christ.

In connection with this blessed truth, and indeed flowing from it, there is another; viz., that **ACCESS INTO GOD'S PRESENCE IS ENJOYED THROUGH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.** We read, as soon as it has been demonstrated that the sins of the believers have been put away once and for all, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest *by the blood of Jesus,*" etc. (Heb. 10: 19.) In the previous chapter we are taught that Christ Himself has entered by His own blood into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. (Heb. 9: 12.) His own place therefore, at the right hand of God, is the result of the *efficacy* of His sacrifice. He was charged with our sins in His death; He bore them in His own body on the tree. If, then, He is now in the immediate presence of God, it is a plain and unanswerable proof that He has accomplished full and complete expiation; for if our sins were not gone, He could not sit in the glory of God. It was accordingly in the virtue of His own blood that He has entered into the holy place on our behalf. And this will help us to understand how it is that we have boldness also to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus. Cleansed, made whiter than snow, we have the qualification for access, having no more conscience of sins, knowing that every question concerning them has been finally settled; and filled with the sense of the love and the grace from which so great blessings have flowed, we advance with boldness, with holy liberty and joy, inside the rent veil; we stand there in the full light of the blazing holiness of God's throne without doubt or fear, and, prostrating ourselves before Him, our hearts find a blessed relief as we meditate upon that wondrous death, which has opened the way for us into God's presence, in thanksgiving, adoration, and praise.

We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and God would have us there. It is the delight of His heart to have us there in His own presence. It is the only place of our worship. Let us then be satisfied with no other, and let us for the glory of God refuse any teaching that would limit the efficacy of the precious blood of Christ. For this privilege of entering into the holiest is no heritage of a chosen few; it belongs without exception to all believers. The address is to the "brethren," to all the people of God. We must not, therefore, on any account, allow this truth to be frittered away. Nay, in the presence of the claims of a human sacerdotalism on every hand, claims which are being pressed with ever-increasing energy, we must contend for this holy privilege of all God's saints. The whole truth of Christianity, as well as the efficacy of the atoning sacrifice, is bound up with it. To give it up in ever so small a degree is to go back to Judaism; to maintain it is to proclaim the virtue of the precious blood of Christ, the eternal efficacy of His one atoning sacrifice.

We are also REDEEMED BY THE BLOOD of CHRIST. This is repeatedly set forth in the word of God. "In whom we have redemption through His blood," etc. (Eph. 1: 7.) "Forasmuch as ye know," says Peter, "that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Peter 1: 18, 19.) The Lord Himself expresses the same truth when He says, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life [for the life is in the blood] a ransom for many." (Matt. 20: 28.) The meaning of "ransom" is, a price paid for redemption, while redemption signifies the buying back, and consequently deliverance from a state of captivity or bondage. Redemption, therefore, effects a complete change of state, and thus we are reminded of what we were, and of what through grace, in the provision of the precious blood of Christ, we have become. This truth may be illustrated by the redemption (whatever the difference of its character) of the children of Israel out of Egypt. They were under the iron yoke of Pharaoh; their lives made "bitter with hard bondage" — type of the natural condition of man. But God interposed on behalf of His people, and He smote the land of Egypt with plague after plague. At last judgment was pronounced upon all the first-born, whether of man or of beast, in the land. The question of sin having been raised, Israel was as liable to the judgment as Egypt. How then could God righteously screen His people while smiting the Egyptians? The answer was found in *the blood of the lamb*, type of the blood of Christ, which by God's own command was sprinkled upon their houses. "I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." (Ex. 12: 12, 13.)

But this was not all. The blood which on this eventful night screened them from judgment, secured everything. God, who was against His people on account of their sin, became henceforward for them on account of the blood. He therefore led them out with a high hand and an outstretched arm; and when they were terrified, as they saw the Egyptians pursuing after them, He bade them, by the mouth of Moses, to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. (Ex. 14: 13.) Accordingly He parted the Red Sea, led His people through in safety, while Pharaoh and all his host sunk like lead in the mighty waters which had been a wall of protection, on the right hand and the left, to the children of Israel. Through the Red Sea they were redeemed, and the blood was the foundation of all. They were redeemed out of Egypt; redeemed from death and

judgment, and from Satan's power; and on the other side of the Red Sea, having sung for the first time the song of redemption, they commenced their journey through the wilderness, as strangers and pilgrims, God's ransomed host; and finally, as such, they were brought through the Jordan into the promised land.

Believers also have been redeemed. Once they, like the Israelites, were in bondage — "the servants of sin" (Rom. 5: 17), under the blinding influence and power of the god of this world (2 Cor. 4: 4), and taken captive by him at his will. (2 Tim. 2: 26.) It was for them, in this condition, that the Son of man gave His life as a ransom, His blood being the price paid for their redemption. Hence it is that we read, that "by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained *eternal redemption*." (Heb. 9: 12.) Silver was used as a type of the price of redemption in days of old (Ex. 30: 11-16), and on one occasion gold was given in the place of silver (Num. 31: 48-54), these being the two most precious metals, and employed therefore to signify that the redemption of the soul is precious; that is, beyond price. For "they that trust themselves in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him . . . that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption." (Ps. 49: 6-9.) It is on this account that Peter contrasts typical redemption by silver and gold with the precious blood of Christ. For how precious must that be which secured redemption for all believers, so precious as to exceed all finite estimate. God only could provide such a ransom; for He only knew what was needed to effect the deliverance of His people. How, then, should it fill our souls with adoring gratitude as we think upon the unspeakable value of the blood of Christ, with gratitude to Him who gave the Lamb for the sacrifice, and also to Him who, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God?

It is then by the blood of Christ that we are redeemed. But what, it may be inquired, is secured for us in redemption? Already we are brought out of Egypt, out of our condition as sinners in the world; we have been brought through our Red Sea, through death and judgment, and delivered from Satan's power, in the death and resurrection of Christ, and our death and resurrection in Him. As to our souls, therefore, we are now redeemed; but we wait for further blessings. We shall be carried safely through the wilderness; and, finally, redemption, which has been secured by blood, will be consummated by power in the changing into, or the resurrection of our bodies in, the likeness of the glorified body of our blessed Lord at His return; for when He gave His life a ransom for us, He acquired rights over us; He made us absolutely His own, purchasing us with the price of His own blood (1 Cor. 5: 19, 20), and in the authority of His rights He commences, continues, and completes the whole work of our salvation, never resting until He has brought us into the place where He is, and conformed to His own image, that we may be with Him for ever. This is the redemption which has been procured for us by the infinite worth of the precious blood of Christ.

The New Covenant is founded and ratified in the blood of Christ. "This is my blood of the New Testament" (or covenant), said our Lord to His disciples as He gave to them the passover cup (Matt. 26: 28); and we read also in the Hebrews of "the blood of the everlasting covenant." (Heb. 13: 20.) The force of these expressions will be best understood by a reference once again to the old covenant. Moses; when he had sprinkled the blood upon the people, said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words." (Ex. 24:

6-8; Heb. 9: 18-20.) God thus confirmed His covenant with Israel at Sinai by blood — the blood of animals; but He has founded and made the new covenant immutably secure in the blood of Christ. By confirming the new covenant with the blood of Christ, God has declared not only its everlasting and unchangeable character, but also the priceless nature of the blessings which He has thereby secured to His people. How stable a foundation, moreover, God has thus laid for the confidence of His saints! In the olden time He often encouraged them to rest in the certainty of His word and promise; and in writing to the Hebrews the apostle speaks of the two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie — His oath and His promise — which afforded strong consolation to them who had fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before them; but even beyond these certainties He has sealed His truth as it were by the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son.

It is in the fulfilment of this new covenant, so ratified, that Israel's hopes of future blessing rest. (Heb. 8: 6-13.) At Sinai they rashly entered into the engagement of obedience to procure the blessings promised; but having failed and lost everything, God, acting in grace in pursuance of His purposes, and in virtue of the blood of Christ, will yet bring them into the enjoyment of all that He has promised. The new covenant, as such, is made, not with believers now, but with Israel. But all its spiritual blessings are ministered to us through the Spirit. Hence the apostle speaks of himself and his fellow-labourers as being "able ministers of the new covenant." (2 Cor. 4: 6.) As another has said, "This, then, constitutes Paul's ministry of the new covenant, its present *ministration* to the Church before it is yet made; viz., that of the Holy Ghost and of divine righteousness in immeasurable and unending glory from a glorified Christ on high; liberty in the presence of the Holy Ghost, and no veil either on our hearts or on the face of Christ, beholding whom we are transformed by that same Spirit practically into His image from glory to glory. In the higher character it has to us, it evidently reaches to the reproduction of a glorified Christ in His saints on the earth; that is to say, not our standing before God in glory, but the direct effect of the glory upon our state here." We enjoy these blessings now, blessings of a higher character than those promised to Israel, but in a future day God will cause them to enjoy every blessing specified in His word; but both we and they alike will owe everything to the precious blood of Christ.

In this connection, it should be pointed out that **THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST HIMSELF, AS THE GREAT SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP**, is through the blood of the everlasting covenant. (Heb. 12: 20.) This indeed was God's public testimony to its value — His declaration that the blood shed in the death of Christ had made a full, adequate, and everlasting atonement for sin. Therefore He brought again from the dead the Mediator of the "better covenant," that all the objects thereof might be accomplished. Hence it is that as the Great Shepherd He will seek out and gather together the sheep from every land, in accordance with His own words to the Jews — "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock [not "fold"], and one Shepherd." (John 10: 16.) Thus the covenant, sealed by His blood, has been certified in His resurrection; the value of the blood securing all, and, finally, its entire and complete accomplishment.

There is another effect of the blood of Christ, similar to that of propitiation; but as it is in connection with the reconciliation of all things, it seems more fitting to introduce it here. We read, "And, **HAVING MADE PEACE BY THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS**, by Him to reconcile

all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated," etc. (Col. 1: 20, 21.) The peace thus made, it must be carefully observed, is not the peace which those who are justified by faith have with God. (Rom. 5: 1.) It is the peace of God's throne, the satisfaction of the claims of God's holy government, which has been made by the blood of Christ. Just as on the ground of propitiation God is able righteously to receive everyone that comes to Him trusting in it, so on, the foundation of this peace He will bring back into order and harmonious relationships with Himself both things on earth and things in heaven. It is not *persons*, but *things* — created things — which will share in the blessings of reconciliation as well as saints. This reconciliation, as another has observed, "is not yet accomplished. Peace is indeed made, but power has not yet come in to bring back the whole into actual relationship with God according to the value of that blood." For this we wait; but the blood has been shed, and He who alone knows its value declares that peace has been made. Believers are already reconciled — reconciled in the body of his flesh through death (the death of Christ); but the reconciliation of all things will not be fully accomplished until the introduction of the new heavens and the new earth. It is doubtless in virtue of the blood of His cross that the Lord Jesus will assume His power, and reign from the river unto the ends of the earth, when creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God (Rom. 8: 21); but glorious as His reign will be, and great as will be the blessings which this creation will at that time enjoy, evil will still exist, and, breaking forth under the leadership of Satan, will blight and darken the close of the thousand years. On this account judgments end all God's ways with this poor weary earth and with man; but thereon arises another scene, as perfect as God Himself can make it, wherein righteousness will for ever dwell, "and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things have passed away." (Rev. 21: 4.) It is here that we behold all things reconciled, and the full and all-pervading efficacy of the precious blood of Christ; for all things are made new, and God is all in all.

We have thus traced some of the manifold effects of the blood of Christ. Space fails for the enumeration of all the aspects of its efficacy. We, Gentile believers, are *made nigh* by it. (Eph. 2: 13.) The Church is said to have been "*purchased with His own blood*," or rather, as it may be translated, "with the blood of His own; i.e. with the blood of Christ. (Acts 20: 28.) The saints of a later day will *wash their robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb* (Rev. 7: 14), redemption being then as now through that precious blood. (See Rev. 5: 9, 10; correct reading.) When Satan, moreover, seeks to compass the destruction of the saints of that day by accusing them before God, they are said to *overcome him by the blood of the Lamb*, and by the word of their testimony. (Rev. 12: 10, 11.) All these things, yea, all that God in His grace has made us, all that we shall be when we are for ever with the Lord, all the glories of Christ Himself which we shall share with Him as His joint-heirs, as well as the perfectness of the new creation, which will find its outward expression in the new heavens and the new earth, all these blessings and glories will flow from the efficacy of the blood of Christ. God Himself is the eternal source of all; but the blood of Christ was His own appointed way of fulfilling and establishing His own thoughts and purposes of love.

Surely, then, as these things pass before our minds, our hearts will be bowed afresh before God in adoration for the gift of His well-beloved Son. And as the blood of Christ ever awakens

our highest praise while we wait for His return, so we find that the "Lamb as it had been slain" will be the object of worship in heaven. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for *thou wast slain, and hast redeemed to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made them unto our God kings and priests and they shall reign on the earth.*"*

*These variations from the authorised version are now generally accepted as the true reading.

"Of the vast universe of bliss,
The centre Thou, and Sun:
The eternal theme of praise is this,
To heaven's beloved One
Worthy, O Lamb of God, art Thou,
That every knee to Thee should bow."

And what of you, beloved reader? Are you under the shelter and infinite value of this precious blood? Let there be, we entreat you, no uncertainty on this point. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and *drink His blood*, ye have no life in you." (John 6: 53.) It is only they who "wash their robes" (as it should be read) that "have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (Rev. 22: 14.)

May God, in His infinite grace, grant that every one who reads these pages may believe, and rest upon His testimony to the unspeakable efficacy of the precious blood of Christ. Amen.
E.D.

Note on Propitiation.

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Christian Friend, vol. 8, 1881, p. 112.

To remove all doubt as to the truth of propitiation, it should be distinctly stated that while it is true that God did not need to be reconciled to us (2 Cor. 5: 18, 19), and that while He in His grace and love provided all that was necessary in the propitiation to meet His holy claims on the sinner (Rom. 3: 25, 1 John 4: 10), yet that He absolutely required the propitiation as the alone ground on which He could righteously meet and justify the sinner. (Rom. 3: — 5: 1.) Moreover, while God has Himself provided the propitiation, He meets the sinner in His perfect and blessed grace in Christ's upon the ground of his being guilty so as to need it, so that his conscience should be exercised according to God's estimate of his state.

When it is sometimes said that God did not need to be propitiated, it should be understood as meaning that He did not need to be moved or disposed to act in grace toward us; for, indeed, He "commended His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5: 8.) The truth is, God could not, consistently with all that He is, receive and justify the sinner until propitiation had been made; for it was that alone which met His claims upon guilty men, and this propitiation was made only by the blood of Christ. To ignore or deny this would be to undermine, as far as man could do it, the very foundations of God's holy throne. THE EDITOR.