



Cleansing and Acquittal



A New Beginning (Part 4)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, as we continue with our theme for this week: A New Beginning.

In my previous talks I've established two facts of vital importance for every one of us. First, we all need a new beginning. Second, God has made it possible for each of us to experience a new beginning through entering into the new creation in Christ. If any person is in Christ, the new creation has taken place. That's what Paul says. It's that life changing encounter with Christ that marks the transition from the old world to the new creation.

In my talk yesterday, I illustrated the necessity of the new birth from the experience of King David, as he himself portrays it in Psalm 51. In this situation, he was confronted for the first time with the truth about his own inner being. He saw what really was inside him. He saw his need of four

things. And I want briefly to recapitulate those four things which he saw he needed.

The first was washing or cleansing. And in Psalm 51 verse 2, he says, "Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin," and in verse 7, "cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow."

Second, he saw his need for the record of his sin to be expunged, for it to be blotted out. And in verse one he says, "Have mercy on me, O God,...blot out my transgressions." And in verse nine, "Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity." Notice that phrase, "blot out all my iniquity".

Third, he saw his need of a creative act of God, that he could not bring about by his own effort. In verse 10 he said, "Create in me a pure heart, O God."

And fourth, he saw his need of reconciliation with God. He saw that he'd been a rebel by nature, even apart from any actual rebellious acts that he had committed. In verse five, he says, "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful [or rebellious] from the time my mother conceived me."

In my talk today, I'm going to share how God has made provision for the first two of these four needs that is the need of cleansing and the need of expunging the record. To be a

little more brief, instead of saying, "expunging the record" I'm going to say "acquittal" releasing him from all guilt.

Let's look now at how the New Testament reveals that these needs that David cried out for in Psalm 51 were fully and finally and eternally met through the death of Jesus on the cross. It's very interesting to note how many prayers David prayed in the book of Psalms, which were actually finally answered through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Let's look now at God's provision of cleansing, and this is through the blood of Jesus shed on the cross. There is no other medium in heaven or on earth that can cleanse us from our sins, but the blood of Jesus. In Hebrews 9:13 and 14 the writer says this:

"For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

(NASB)

So there's a contrast between the blood of bulls and goats that was offered under the old covenant but could never do this, it could only provide external sanctification and the blood of Christ which cleanses the conscience from dead works. And it says there that it was through the eternal Spirit that Christ on the cross offered Himself the last great sin offering without blemish to God. I want to emphasize that word, "eternal" through the eternal Spirit. Eternal is that which is not subject to the limitations of time. It's outside the realm of time. It comprehends all time and goes both before and beyond time. And because it was through the eternal Spirit, Christ's sacrifice comprehended the sins and the spiritual needs of all men those who had gone before and those who would follow after. It's not limited to His own age or generation, but it spans all ages and all generations. The blood of Jesus Christ is God's eternal cleansing agent for sin.

David had prophetically had a glimpse of this, because in Psalm 51 verse 7 he had said, "Cleanse me with hyssop." Now under the ordinances of the Passover in the Old Testament, it was the hyssop and nothing else but hyssop that could be used to sprinkle the blood of the Passover lamb on every Jewish home. And so when David cried out in Psalm 51, "Cleanse me with hyssop," his mind or his spirit I would say was feeling after the need of blood for cleansing. That need was finally met through the blood of Jesus shed on the cross. The blood of Jesus, who John the Baptist declared is, "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world". And this

is stated again in very beautiful words by the Apostle John in his first epistle chapter 1 verses 7 through 9:

"But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship one with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. [That tense there, 'cleanses us', is a continuing present tense grammatically. There's a continual cleansing as we continually walk in the light. We are continually cleansed and kept clean from the contamination of sin. Then John goes on in verse 8...] If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (NASB)

What does God primarily require? That we confess our sins. I've said it this way many times. The blood of Jesus cleanses in the light. To confess is to bring it to the light. To walk in the light is to stay in the light. And as we are in the light, we have the continual, all sufficient cleansing from sin of the blood of Jesus.

The second great personal need with which David found himself confronted was that of acquittal or of the expunging of the record of his sin. This was promised to God's people already in the Old Testament. For instance, in Isaiah chapter 43 verse 25, the Lord is speaking and this is what He promises:

"I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."

(NIV)

Notice, God says he will blot out the record and He will expunge it from His memory. I'd like to tell you this, God does not have a bad memory, but He has the ability to forget. And those are two very different things. God remembers everything, except that which is blotted out by His own act. And this promise is renewed in the New Testament in Acts chapter 3 verse 19 the Apostle Peter said to the Jewish people in Jerusalem:

"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, [the record expunged. You may be acquitted.]" (NIV)

And I want to explain in this connection a difference between the old covenant made at Sinai and the new covenant made through the blood of Jesus. It's important. Each covenant

takes note of sin. Each covenant makes some provision for sin, but the provision is very different. The old covenant takes note of sin and temporarily covers it. But it's only the new covenant in the blood of Jesus that finally expunges the record of sin. Let me read you two passages that bring out this contrast. First of all in Hebrews chapter 10 verses 1 through 4:

“The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” (NIV)

Notice that phrase, the sacrifices of the old covenant were an annual reminder of sins, and when Israel were reminded of their sins and took the action that God required them, God covered their sins for one more year. But one year later there was a further reminder and a further temporary covering. But the New Testament, in the blood of Jesus, is different. Hebrews 10:15 through 18 the Holy Spirit, in this epistle quoting from the prophecy of Jeremiah, says this:

“This is the covenant I will make with them after that time,’ says the Lord. ‘I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.’ Then he adds: ‘Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more. And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.” (NIV)

That's the key phrase there about the new covenant, “Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.” That's the fulfillment of the promise that God gave through Isaiah that we've already quoted. I'll read it once more, Isaiah 43:25:

“I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.”
(NIV)

Through the new covenant in the blood of Jesus, our sins can be blotted out the very memory of them can be expunged from the eternal mind of God.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. In my talk tomorrow I'll explain how God

has made provision also for the other two needs that David saw: re-creation and reconciliation.

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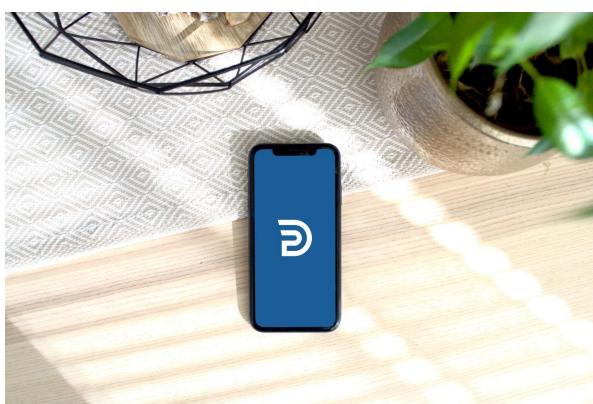
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