***Jesus Christ's Bleeding at the Crucifixion
RO29-02***

**© Berean Memorial Church of Irving, Texas, Inc. (1975)**

The book of Romans, we have found, has revealed to us many factors that are involved in God's provision of eternal life for sinners. We have seen that there is the factor of universal sin. There is the factor of divine holiness that is involved. There's the factor of absolute righteousness; the factor of redemption; forgiveness of sins; justification; propitiation; and, faith in Jesus Christ. All of these are elements which are involved in the overall stupendous work of God in the atonement.

**Literal Interpretation of the Scriptures**

One very great area of controversy is the role of the literal blood and of the physical death of Jesus Christ in the atonement for sin. You should consider yourself chosen of God to be here today, because we are now treading on very sacred ground, and perhaps on some of the most significant instruction in the Word of God that you'll ever hear in your life. It is significant, obviously, because the liberal world and the unbelieving world has for many, many decades vigorously assaulted the role of the blood of Christ and his physical death in the matter of the atonement. They have held it in contempt. They have called it a butcher religion. They have despised it. And they have responded to the devil on this issue, because Satan, of all things that he despises, despises above everything else, the blood of Christ, and all that that connotes, and all that that plays in eternal life for us. That's why the devil hates it. That's why his ministers follow his leading in that matter.

I call your attention now to Hebrews 10:29, which says, "Of how much sorer punishment, do you suppose, shall He be thought worthy, who has trodden underfoot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the covenant, with which He was sanctified, an unholy thing, and has done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Here the writer is talking to people who are unbelievers, and he's calling their attention to the danger that they run if they treat the blood of Christ in a contemptuous manner, and if they put under foot the Son of God by counting the blood of His covenant as an unworthy thing.

A verse or two later, the writer makes this declaration on that background. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." And those who hold in contempt the blood of Jesus Christ are going to find indeed, someday in eternity, as they spend forever in the lake of fire, that they have fallen into the hands of a fearful and a wrath of God, which could have been averted only by this thing that they held in contempt – the blood of Christ. This is a major factor in the atonement, and it is a major source of debate today.

The truth of the matter is that it is not only the unbelievers and liberals who hold the blood of Christ as unimportant, and, at lease, as unnecessary. But it is also true of people that we cannot accuse of being liberals, and that we could not accuse of being unbelievers. We must recognize some people as being in our own camp – people who are believers. Nor can we accuse them of being ignorant of the Word of God. Some people, we must recognize, are very knowledgeable of the Word of God. Yet they hold that Jesus Christ did not have to shed His literal blood in the payment for the sins of the world. That's what we're talking about – the literal, actual blood that flowed in the veins of Jesus Christ.

These people argue that Jesus Christ, even though He did bleed in the process of crucifixion, it was but a small and incidental amount. We're going to see just how true that is. But you'll hear a great emphasis on the fact that Jesus Christ did not bleed to death on the cross, and that His bleeding was incidental because it was a very small amount. They argue that He did not die from the loss of blood, as in the case of animal sacrifices. Those animals died from the loss of blood. We're going to look into that. We're going to actually go step-by-step. We probably won't get to it in this session, but we're going to take you through some of the most hideous studies, and through some of the most hideous background material you have ever heard in your life. But it is going to bring this cute little subject of death by crucifixion into stark reality in your mind, because most of us really don't understand what crucifixion was really like.

They say, "Oh, yeah." And they use a cross, and they say, "You put a person on it, and he dies." We're going to start right back at square one with a person who has been condemned to execution by crucifixion, and we're going to see just what's really involved, and what's really involved with His blood in the process.

Others hold that the physical death of Jesus Christ was not necessary to the sacrifice of Himself for the sins of the world. Did Jesus actually have to die physically? When He said, "It is finished," indicating that all payment had been made up to that point on the cross, could He have just come off the cross? Could He never have gone into the grave? Could he have never had to be resurrected as far as salvation is concerned?

Well, the argument is that His physical death is not involved in the atonement. His physical death is viewed as being simply incidental to crucifixion. The payment for sin is said to be only His spiritual death upon the cross. There are some very powerful voices that are telling us that it's only the spiritual death. These are people who are knowledgeable, whom we greatly respect in their understanding and teaching of the Word of God. But is this really the case?

**The Atonement**

The issue we want to pursue is: does the Bible anywhere indicate to us that the physical death of Jesus Christ very definitely was involved in completing the full atonement upon the cross. In meditating upon this this morning, a thought struck me that very definitely, in Scripture, connects the two. We won't get to it this morning. I want to think about it a little more, but I think it will clarify this issue, so that there can't be any debate. If I see what I think I see, the physical death was crucial to our salvation. Without it, atonement could never have been completed.

So, we have been looking at the evidences for the fact that we are seeing that the literal blood of Jesus Christ, and His physical death, our part of our atonement for sin. We pointed out that, first of all, we established this by the fact that the principle of literal interpretation demands that references to the blood of Jesus Christ be understood as His actual blood. If you're going to take a word like the "blood" of Christ (the shedding of His blood) and say, "Well, that does not mean His literal blood. That does not mean His actual shedding of His blood. But that is a symbolic expression for something else, then you have to go to the Bible, and you have to say, "Well, see here. Read this, and you'll see that this is a symbol for something else. It is a symbol for His spiritual death, or it's a symbol for death in general, or it's a symbol for something else.

You cannot do that unless you can clearly indicate from the Scriptures themselves that the Bible is using this term as a symbol. Otherwise, concerning the principle of literal interpretation, which is the only defense we have in securing the real meaning of Scripture (that basic guideline – that basic control, such that we do not veer from what God has really said), we violate that principle, and we therefore bring into question whether we have an understanding of what this word "blood" is really all about.

For example, in 1 Peter 1:18-19, we pointed out to you: "For as much as you know, that you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver and gold, from your vain matter of life received by tradition from your fathers." Is he talking about real actual silver and gold? Yes, he is. Your salvation was not purchased with money. Verse 19: "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Any normative line of interpretation says that verse 18 talks about literal money, so verse 19 must talk about literal blood. That is the only normative way of interpreting.

So, the principle of literal interpretation demands that when he says that our salvation is purchased with "the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," that it is obviously referring to the literal blood. There is no ground by which that can be converted into some kind of a symbol.

You have the same thing in 1 John 1:7. And I'm taking the time to read these again because this is an important subject, and I want you to have it clear in your mind: "If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His son, cleanses us from all sin." Now if you just take that verse for what it says, you have to take that blood literally. The only way you can spiritualize that blood is that you come to some kind of a logical conclusion, on some kind of a logical procedure that you arrive at elsewhere. You take Scripture, and you say, "Here is this logical point, and this logical point, and this logical points. Therefore, that could not be literal.

However, on the basis of this verse right here, where it lies within this book, you could not say that it is not literal. The principle of literal interpretation demands that we take it in that way. In Revelation 5:9, you have again a verse that we can only take literally, in which is made the statement: "For You were slain, and have redeemed to God, by Your blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." Notice that "slain" is put in the proximity with blood here: "You were slain." What does that mean? Well it means that Jesus Christ was killed. And it means that His blood was shed in the process of that killing (and we know how He was killed), and that that blood was the basis of redemption.

How can you spiritualize that verse? And this is what's happening. People who are very knowledgeable and very firm in the principle of literal interpretation of Scripture (they understand that, and they follow it), for some reason, at this point, deviate from that guiding principle, and completely violate it. And you just cannot do that and still come up with the mind of Christ.

Let's look at one more. In Acts 20:28, we have that same stress. Paul says to these pastor-teacher from Ephesians: "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood." Again, we must take that literally. There's no indication we should take it in any other way.

So, what I'm saying is that when, we read these expressions about the blood of Christ, and the shedding of the blood of Christ in Scripture, on the basis of this basic guiding principle of interpretation, we have no reason to say that this is a symbol for life, or physical death, or spiritual death, or for something else. When he says, "Blood, it means literal blood, and it is simply the assumption of the interpreter as a result of some process of logical reasoning that he has established a case elsewhere from the Scripture that gives him the impression that he can justifiably say that this is not literal blood, and that His literal death was not involved in the atonement.

**Animal Sacrifices**

Another principle that indicates that it is literal blood was the fact of the requirement of literal blood in the animal sacrifices. These animal sacrifices were a type of the death of Jesus Christ for sins, and blood is specifically identified as the source of atonement for the soul when these sacrifices were laid out to the people of Israel. Your basic Scripture on that is Leviticus 17:11, which says, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I've given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your sins. For it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul."

Here he is, speaking, of course, about animal blood. But you cannot take that blood as being anything but literal. It is clearly true that the life of a living creature is based upon his blood. The blood is the vehicle of life. The shedding of blood means to drain the blood from the body so that the life leaves. If you drain the blood, the life leaves. The blood is the vehicle. Thus, bleeding is always a critical matter in a living creature. Bleeding is the first thing you want to stop. It brings on shock. It brings on many consequences, and ultimately, if it goes far enough, it brings on death.

Now he says, "When you're going to give up life, we take the blood out of that animal." Thereby the life is clearly given up. The blood is removed to make an atonement for your sins. Then he adds: "And it is the blood that makes an atonement for your souls." That was very clear in the animal sacrifices, which were the picture. Let's get over here to the fulfillment. What might we indeed logically expect? Well, we must logically conclude that Jesus Christ, being the fulfillment of all those picture, animal sacrifices – their literal blood was essential for forgiveness of sins on a temporary time-credit basis. The blood of Jesus Christ literally must also be shed for the permanent forgiveness of sins once and for all. It's a logical connection.

Hebrews 9:22 is the critical New Testament verse that ties this same principle into the New Testament. The literal blood has to be there: "And almost all things, by the Law (under the Mosaic system), purged with blood. And without the shedding of blood is no remission. Here he is reminding us that the Old Testament system said that if you don't actually have real blood pouring out (taking the life of the animal), you do not have atonement for sins.

So, the literal blood of the animals was the type, while a little blood of Jesus Christ is the anti-type which fulfills that picture. We read Hebrews 9:12-14: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered into once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctify it 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?" You see the direct connection here in these verses saying that if the animal blood accomplished a temporary covering of sins, how much more will the blood of Christ provide a permanent covering for sin?

The only logical connection there is little in both cases.

Let's add Hebrews 13:11-12: "For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burned outside the camp. Wherefore, Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people by His own blood, suffered outside the gate." The blood of the animals did the job in their day. The blood of Jesus Christ does the permanent atonement in His day.

So, again, on the basis of the picture that the animals were portraying, the literal blood was critical in that picture. We may conclude that the literal blood is critical also in the fulfillment of that picture by Jesus Christ.

**The Lord's Supper**

We also pointed out to you that we think this has to be a literal blood because of the emphasis in the Lord's Supper on the blood of Christ apart from His body, as that which is given in death. In Matthew 26:26-28, you have this presentation of the Lord's Supper, and you have a distinct emphasis: not only His body being given in death; but His blood is recognized, separate from His body, as playing a part in that atonement. A literal body for salvation would imply literal blood given. That's the only way that body could be given in sacrifice.

**A Sacrifice**

That leads us to the next point: that the death of Jesus Christ on the cross for the sins of the world was in the nature of a sacrifice. We are told in Scripture that the death of Christ is in the nature of a sacrifice. Well, immediately, you know that, if it's going to be a sacrifice, it has to have shedding of literal blood to be a true sacrifice. In Genesis 4:3-5, you read about Cain's problem. Cain's problem was that he was bringing what he called a sacrifice. And God made clear to him, and had already made clear to him previously that it could not be a sacrifice if there was not blood being shed.

So, if Jesus Christ comes as the Lamb of God, whose destiny is to be sacrificed for the sins of the world, it is obvious that logic would demand that it has to be shed blood. It has to be literal blood of Jesus Christ which is shed, or you can't say that He has been sacrificed. Sacrifice requires the shedding of blood. And Jesus Christ, as the anti-type, the fulfillment of the picture of a Passover lamb, must also, to fulfill that picture, be sacrificed for sins.

1 Corinthians 5:7 and Hebrews 10:10 relate Jesus Christ to that Passover lamb. Well, how was the Passover lamb used to make that atonement for sin? Well, his head was pulled back; his throat was cut; and, the blood was permitted to gush out. It could not be a sacrifice if you did not take the blood. Therefore, if Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of that Passover lamb, His blood has to come out of His body in a literal sense. The literal blood has to be involved.

Now the reason for the demand by God for the shedding of little blood to pay for sins is not made entirely clear to us in Scripture. I can say this: as we have already read in Leviticus 17:11, that the life is in the vehicle of the blood, that that would seem to be the best clue that God demands the giving of an innocent life to pay for a guilty right. That's the principle of propitiation and of redemption – the payment of the price for the one who cannot pay for himself.

Therefore, if life is to be given, it would require the shedding of literal blood which is the basis of life. Thus, if a life is to be taken in death as a substitute for someone else, the literal blood must be shed. But even after you've said that, and after we understand that the Bible makes clear that the life vehicle is the blood, it still doesn't tell us everything that we would like to know about it.

**Chafer**

I want to read a comment by Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, in Systematic Theology, volume seven, on pages 52 and 53, that he makes on that very point. He says, "The all-inclusive declaration on this point, which sums up the Old Testament order, and the New, avers that without shedding of blood is no remission (Hebrews 9:22). It is shed blood which has always been required for deliverance, and thus it was in the type and the anti-type, Christ in His crucifixion. The mystery of all that enters into the required blood sacrifice for sin cannot be traced through to its end. It traverses more of unknown realms than it does this realm. The truth of God's requiring a blood sacrifice as the righteous ground for the remission of sin was established beyond all dispute in Old Testament times. Though the many offerings sustained no efficacy in themselves to take away sin, they did speak of the immutable necessity of a ransom, or redemption by blood, as a cure for sin.

"To challenge this fact is not only to overlook the teachings set forth in the types, and the New Testaments direct explanation of Christ's death, but it is to assume that the human valuation of sin may be equivalent to the divine evaluation. What authority indeed has a mortal (a mere creature) to arrogate himself the right to sit in judgment upon God, and declare unnecessary the principle which God has established, and to which He, at infinite cost unto Himself has conformed in all ages. The glorious message is indeed that efficacious blood has been shed, and that men are invited to receive the value of it: that Christ's blood was shed as a sacrifice which God Himself provided to meet His demands against sin; and, that this way of dealing with sin, from Abel's lamb plan to the day of Christ's death, is the only interpretation which fully and rightly construes all that the Bible presents on this, it's central theme of salvation."

I think that's well put, and very clearly put. You may have many questions. Why did it have to be literal? We won't be able to answer all of them, but we can answer this question – that God says that it has to be literal. It was clear from the Old Testament. The connection in the New Testament, therefore, must follow logically and consistently that it must be literal there also.

So, the Old Testament animal sacrifices, remember, represented all that God was doing in the atonement for sin. It was the Old Testament's representation of everything that Jesus Christ was going to do to pay for the sins of the world. Therefore, while we have stressed the fact that actual physical death was necessary and the shedding of blood was necessary, I do want to remind you that all of these animal sacrifices also represented the spiritual death of Christ on the cross. We cannot, therefore, say that the animal sacrifices represented only the physical death nor only the spiritual death they represented the complete atonement. The complete atonement included the spiritual death of Jesus Christ and the physical death upon the cross. That's why Isaiah refers to the fact of His deaths (plural) upon the cross, because He was going to die two ways. And both of those deaths of Christ were involved in salvation – spiritual and physical.

There's not too much debate upon the spiritual death. There is some debate. And I've heard some very foolish talk on the part of some preachers that the spiritual death of Jesus Christ was not represented by the animal sacrifices. That's foolishness. That's an extremism. People who say that only the physical death of Christ is involved in salvation are extremists. People who say that only the spiritual death of Jesus Christ is involved in salvation are extremists. People who say that the animal sacrifices only represented the physical death of Jesus Christ are extremists. People who say that the animal sacrifices represented only the spiritual death of Jesus Christ are extremists. That is by the simple fact that the animal sacrifice represented the totality of what Christ was doing on the cross for our sins. What was the totality? Two things: spiritual death; and, physical death. Therefore, the animal sacrifices represented both.

Obviously, the animal sacrifices very clearly portrayed the physical death. They could not very easily portray a spiritual death, but we can read that back into them because we know the animal sacrifices represented what Jesus did for us, and what He did for us included spiritual death. Therefore, the animal sacrifices must also include representing that. The point is not what they saw. The point is what God saw, when those animals were sacrificed. And when those animals were sacrificed, God saw both. He saw His Son's spiritual death, and He saw His Son's physical death.

So, when you read this expression, "the blood of Christ," it refers to both his physical and spiritual death.

**How Much did Jesus Christ Actually Bleed on the Cross?**

Now, having said all that, just how much did Jesus Christ actually bleed on the cross? Just how much did Jesus Christ actually, physically shed His blood in atonement? Again, some very reputable and knowledgeable and responsible and highly respected Bible teachers (respected by us all) are saying that Jesus Christ did not bleed much on the cross – that in the wounds that were inflicted upon Him, the blood coagulated very quickly, and that He did not lose a great deal of blood. So, on that basis, the statement is made that He didn't bleed to death. This is said in order to serve to diminish the role of His literal blood in the atonement.

Well, let's go back to square one now, and start off, and see just what actually did take place. Before I do that, however, I want to make one thing very clear. What am I talking about? What am I attributing to the literal blood of Jesus Christ – to that chemical matter that we call blood? Well, the literal blood of Jesus Christ, I want you to understand, after all I have said, I am not implying that the literal blood of Jesus Christ, as such had some kind of supernatural power in it other than that of any other human being. When Jesus worked in His father's carpentry shop, and He cut His fingers, if His blood dripped upon some person, no wonderful, miraculous things would have taken place. The blood of Jesus Christ, per se, as a chemical matter, was no different than anybody else's blood, and it had no magical, supernatural powers to it. The blood in the veins of Jesus Christ was not a potential miracle-performing substance.

Roman Catholicism has regularly passed off superstition as Bible doctrine, and they have included in that superstition magical powers to relics which supposedly contain the blood of Christ. It may be a little bit of dirt gathered up from the foot of the cross, or an old piece of cloth that had been dripped on by the blood of Christ in the process of His crucifixion and suffering.

Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse, in his commentary on Romans, volume two, page 127, has an interesting paragraph that I want to read to you. He says, "In Bruges, Belgium, I have witnessed the great celebration of what is called the Feast of the Holy Blood, where, on a certain day, a rag with a few red stains is taken out and paraded around the city. As it passes, the populace prostrates itself to the ground, rubbing the forehead in the dust, and then goes around the rest of the day to the sideshows ... with the mark of dust still visible. I saw this with my own eyes, and it was a horrible and repugnant bit of paganism dragged into a form of Christendom."

I think that I've told you before that, as a boy, I once came upon a Roman Catholic rosary, and I discovered that the back of it would open. And as I opened it, right at the bottom was some red-stained dirt, and there was a little piece of paper with printing on it. And I read the printing, and it said, "This dirt was taken from the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ and contains a portion of His blood." Now, that was a very valuable crucifix. How many people in the city of Chicago had a crucifix that had some of the blood of Jesus Christ inside of it? I did! It said so right inside. Well, you could buy one down at the Roman Catholic bookstore too. It took a monumental amount of the blood of Jesus Christ to make all those crucifixes which had all that little stab of red-stained dirt in it.

That's kind of thing we're talking about. Why was that crucifix presented that way? Because that meant that that crucifix had special magical powers of access to God. I want to tell you that the literal application of the literal blood of Jesus Christ to anything has no spiritual effects at all. But Roman Catholicism has come up with some fantastic, fantastic concepts of the magical powers of the actual, literal, chemical blood of Jesus Christ.

I want to quote again from Dr. Barnhouse, pages 127-128: "Nor could I follow the strange idea of the acolyte in Jerusalem in the Holy Sepulcher – that strange church building with a half-a-dozen different sects possessing competitive altars under the same roof, each pretending to be the exact spot where the cross of Christ had stood. First of all, the church was within the city wall, and I knew that the Bible spoke most clearly of Christ's death outside the city wall. Therefore, I entered the place as a tourist, and in no sense, as a worshiper, except that within the temple of my heart, the Holy Spirit was present to adore the merciful God who had kept me from the follies of superstition and idolatry.

"The acolyte showed me a hole near the altar which was fitted with a glass cover. And he offered to take away the cover, and let me plunge my hand into the office, explaining that this was the very hole in which the cross of Christ had stood. As I peered at the spot, I thought I saw a dim light beneath. I noticed that there was a jagged rent in the rock. I asked the acolyte about it, and he said that the light came from the tomb of Adam. To my incredulous wonder, he explained to me that the rocks had been rent when Jesus died, and that this allowed the blood to drip down through the hole in the rocks to the cave below, where the blood had fallen into the grave of Adam, thus cleansing the race of the original sin of Adam.

"I could hardly believe my ears, but that is what I saw and heard. Now I do not believe for one moment that there was any cleansing value in the actual chemical elements of the blood that flowed from the veins of Christ. The supposed relics of that blood are, of course, a horrible hoax perpetrated upon poor, unfortunate people by those who hold them in their power."

Now this could be multiplied many, many times – this kind of paganistic superstition concerning the actual literal blood of Christ. So, while we say that God the Father said that His Son's literal blood was involved in the atonement, and that His Son's blood is precious, and God warns you not to treat it as a common thing (as we read earlier), and to treat it with contempt, He is not thereby implying that it, per se, has some kind of magical powers to it. That is not the case.

What happened to the blood of Jesus Christ? Some of it undoubtedly did drip on the soldiers beneath the cross. As they pulled him up on the gibbet, it probably dripped on them, and nothing happened. Some of it stained the wood of the cross. Some of it fell into the ground. Some of it smeared on the hands of the soldier as he found the place to drive the nails into the hands of a Christ who was already bleeding. That blood just disappeared. It went back into the elements of the earth, just like your blood will do. That's what happened to it. It is not preserved, as one very fine Bible teacher has been teaching, in a chalice in heaven. Every drop of the blood of Jesus Christ is not now in a cup in heaven as this teacher teaches.

We read about how the tabernacle (the sanctuary) here on earth (the holy of holies) was purged from sin by the high priest going in there with the blood of animals once a year, so our salvation is purged. Our problem of sin is purged out in heaven, and that holy of holies is represented by Jesus Christ taking His literal blood to heaven. That's the conclusion. Jesus entered heaven on the basis of His blood. He did not take His actual, literal (every drop of) blood in a cup to present it before the Father in heaven. That's again a satanic distortion of the truth, trying to make a precious and a real thing look ridiculous and inane.

Since Jesus Christ is the sinless God-man, His blood does have value. It does not have magical power. It was not given for the sins of the world as an instrument of magic. The value of any blood, even in the Old Testament, depended upon what? Upon the animal. That's why the animal was penned and observed – to be sure that this animal was not diseased, and that the animal was not physically defective in any way, in order that they could be sure that this was a suitable source of blood. That was because the value of the blood depended on the value of the animal. And the value of the blood of Christ lies in the fact that it came from the veins of a Man who had never sinned – from the veins of a God-man: one who was not only Man, but who was God, and Who had no old sin nature. That's why He was virgin-born – so He wouldn't have an old sin nature. And He never committed a personal sin. Therefore, He was back to square one where Adam was.

Again, a man came on the scene and lived a life, and demonstrated that he could obey God as Adam could have obey had he elected to do so. And the result was that Jesus Christ was spiritually alive and, therefore, could pay the spiritual and physical deaths requisite for atonement. His blood is of value because of who He was, as the animal's blood was of value because of the perfection of that animal.

So, the atoning value of the blood of Christ does not lie in itself (some magical power that it has), but in the life of Jesus Christ because it is the vehicle of His life.

**Did Jesus Christ Bleed?**

OK, now let's put that aside. I think you understand what we're saying about the actual blood. We're not saying that it was magical. So, don't run around seeing if you can buy some of the blood of Christ, and some dirt in some bookstore crucifix. Bud did He bleed? All right, let's start at the beginning.

Jesus Christ did shed His literal blood. Let's go through it step-by-step. Of course, we recognize right off the bat that He did not have His throat cut as the animal sacrifices had their throats cut. So, he did not bleed in that way. Such a procedure was not the Roman method of execution, but it was the procedure for animal sacrificing. The Romans did not execute by cutting the throats of their victims, but sacrificial animals were executed in this way. But the Romans could execute in a different way, and still shed blood. That's the point. The exact method was not the important point. The critical factor was that the blood was shed. The literal blood of Christ was shed.

**Crucifixion**

The Roman method of execution was a very bloody, bloody technique. It was a blood-letting technique throughout the ordeal, right from the very beginning, as you shall see.

**Sweating Blood**

Now, where did the actual bleeding of Jesus Christ begin? The first of the actual bleeding of Jesus Christ we have recorded in Luke 22:44 in the Garden of Gethsemane, where we read, "And being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground." What is happening here is a medical phenomenon, which is well known, called "bleeding sweat," or to use the medical term: "hematidrosis." "Hematidrosis," or "bleeding sweat" is a known medical phenomena. It's caused by the fact that the tiny little capillary veins in the sweat glands burst open (they're caused to break, for some reason). And the blood coming out of those tiny capillaries then mixes with the perspiration, and comes out of the sweat glands. And it comes out colored red, and the heavier the bleeding, the heavier the content of the blood in that drop of sweat. Perspiration, mixed with blood, then shows up, gathering on the skin.

Hematidrosis is caused by intense emotional strain. It may be caused by other things, but this is one thing that causes it a big way. The Scriptures here make it very clear that Jesus was in agony. He was in a great emotional trauma, for He realized that the moment had come when upon Him were going to be placed the sins of the world. He was going to become sin for the world. He knew that that was upon Him. And unless you can fully appreciate what it is to be God, with the essence of absolute righteousness, and to be a God-man who had always lived a perfect life, not only not having an old sin nature, but never committing a sin (so as to bring about an old sin nature as Adam did), and then suddenly to realize that the time had come now when upon Him was to be place all of the sewage of human sin. That was a traumatic emotional experience for the Lord Jesus Christ. And it reacted upon Him physically in causing Him to sweat blood. He knew the suffering that was before Him. That added to His trauma. He was not unaware of what was going to be done to Him.

You may be unaware of it. The general description of it doesn't seem too bad. But the next couple of sessions, when we go through this step-by-step, you're going to have a whole different view of the crucifixion. You're going to have a whole different view of the atonement. And you're going to be able to enter in, in some degree, with the emotions that Jesus Christ had in Gethsemane as he pondered what was immediately ahead of Him the next morning.

In Mark 10:34, we have the indication that he knew very well what was coming upon Him. And this is what he had in mind in Gethsemane, telling His disciples: "And they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him." That's what's ahead for Him – the worst; the most horrible; the most shocking; and, the most traumatic experiences. That added to the emotion that cause hematidrosis to be taking place in the sweat glands on the body of Jesus Christ. His physical body was reacting to the emotional agony so that the blood was pouring out.

This is the first blood which Jesus Christ shed in the course of the atonement for sin.

**Facial Blows**

The second was the bleeding from the facial blows. A lot of people don't really appreciate how much blood Jesus lost from His face and from His head. Luke 22:63: "And the men that held Jesus mocked Him and smote Him. (They hit Him.) And when they had blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face;" that is, they took their fists (is what this text is saying), and they smashed their fists into His face: "and asked Him, saying, 'Prophesy who is it that smote You?' And they spoke many other things blasphemous against Him."

This was done to Jesus before the Romans ever got their hands on Him. This was done when He was taken into custody by the Jewish authorities, and they were having all those illegal trials, trying to get something pinned on him so that the next morning, they could go to Pontius Pilate and say, "Here is where He has broken Roman law that demands the punishment of execution."

So, they're doing these night trials, and in the process of this, this is the Jews and the Jewish leaders who are bringing a second shedding of blood from the person of Jesus Christ by these wounds on His face.

In Matthew 26:67, we read, "Then they spat in His face, and buffeted Him. And others smote Him with the palms of their hands." Some of them buffeted Him. They smashed their fists. Others of them took the side of their hands, and they smashed Him across the face with the flat of their hands. They were not doing this in a kind of gentle tap to encourage Him to talk. They were doing this in brutal mafia-style torture in order to get Him to break down. This was communist-style torture to get Him to just admit and to confess whatever they wanted Him to say. It was an old, old technique that the communists use with perfection to this day – to so brutalize a person physically that he finally says, "I'll say what you want me to say. I'll sign what you want me to sign." Stalin, in all of his purges during the 1930s, was a magnificent manipulator of human beings by this kind of physical brutality that caused people to get up in a court of law and to say things that were absolutely untrue about themselves. But they did not dare refuse to do so, because they could not stand going back to the physical abuse.

In Mark 14:65, I want you to know that this was very, very severe: "And some began to spit on Him, and to cover His face, and to buffet Him, and to say unto Him, 'Prophesy.' And the guards did strike Him with the palms of their hands." And you can be sure that the guards weren't being very nice and very kind to Him.

The result of these blows upon the face of Jesus Christ was described for us centuries before this event ever happened by the prophet Isaiah. In Isaiah 52:14, we read, "And many were astonished at You. His visage (His face) was so marred, more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men." What this Scripture is saying in describing the sufferings that the Messiah was to experience for the sins of the world was that: His visage (his face) would be so marred (and that means mutilated) more than any man, and His form more than the sense of man. That meant that when you looked at him, He was a bleeding, bruised, torn mass of human flesh so that He didn't even look like a human being. When you looked at His face, you just saw this bloated pulp of torn flesh on His face, and He just didn't look human. You had to look closely at Him to maybe even see His eyes as the skin (the flesh) began to puff around it. And you could hear the heaviness of His breathing through His nose, that perhaps had been struck by a blow, and the swelling that would take place internally.

The translation literally here then of Isaiah 52:14 is: "So marred from the form of man was His aspect that His appearance was not that of a son of man." This was from the facial beatings, because these Jewish leaders were expressing intense hatred. They weren't just indignant at Jesus for having upset some applecart. They hated Him with a vengeance. So, as the Scriptures say, "Without a cause, they hated Him." And what they were doing, they were enjoying.

This resulted in the second (and considerable) loss of blood from the wounds inflicted by the fists of these people.

Then comes a third beating, which was perhaps the most horrible, and the major source of actual, literal bleeding by the person of Jesus Christ. He was bleeding to the extent that it brought Him to the point of shock. And at the moment of crucifixion, it carried Him across so that the body quickly died as shock set in. We'll pick it up there next time.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

[**Back to the Romans index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/romans.htm)

[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)