

**ONE PERFECT HOLY SACRIFICE**  
**Series: The Holiness of God**  
**Maundy Thursday Communion –April 2, 2015 –Hebrews 9: 19-28**  
**The Church of the Covenant**

According to the gospel writer John, when Jesus breathed His last on the cross it is about the 6<sup>th</sup> hour, the light has failed, the creation has killed its Creator, and darkness has fallen upon the entire land, *“and the curtain of the temple was torn in two”*. (John 23: 45) Jesus dies and the veil separating the Holy of Holies, the very place where it was believed the Holy, Holy, Holy God dwelt, was ripped asunder. Why is that?

Jesus has traveled the Highway of Holiness and it has brought Him to the Holy City, Jerusalem, and on Palm Sunday, it has brought Him into the outer courts of the Temple. But on Good Friday, Calvary's cross brings Him into the innermost sanctums of the presence of the One, True and Living God. On the Day of Atonement in Old Testament times, the Holy of Holies was so HOLY that only the High Priest could enter and that only on one specified day. The High Priest would enter to offer sacrifice on behalf of the people. On Passover, the paschal lamb, the lamb without blemish, would be sacrificed, and its blood would be sprinkled on the lintels and doorposts, that the Angel of Death would literally pass over the people of Israel. So Good Friday and Calvary's cross and Jesus' suffering and death are the spiritual amalgam and combination of BOTH the Day of Atonement AND the Passover. The veil of the Temple parts so that Jesus as High Priest may enter in and offer sacrifice on behalf of us, His people. And He Himself is the sacrifice He offers up on the cross; HE is the paschal lamb, the lamb without blemish, the one sinless life ever lived, the one perfect life that ever walked the face of this earth, the LAMB OF GOD, who taketh away the sins of the world, is killed, His blood an offering for us, to forgive our sin, to wash us clean, to make us holy, to reconcile us to God, to make atonement with the HOLY, HOLY, HOLY God, to allow us as sinful, fallen, unholy and imperfect people to stand in the presence of a HOLY, HOLY, HOLY God. What all the sacrificing of lambs and goats over thousands of years could not take away, the blood of the Lamb of God took away in an instant. As our scripture says, *“Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins”*. (Hebrews 9: 22) This is an exact quote in Hebrews in the New Testament from the Holiness Code in Leviticus in the Old Testament. The just requirements of the law are fulfilled by what Jesus does on the cross. The wrath of God is satisfied by the death of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the ONE PERFECT HOLY SACRIFICE that could do this. And as the New Testament book of Hebrews declares, *“But as it is, He (Jesus) has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”* (Hebrews 9: 26) It is *ONCE FOR ALL*; no more repeated sacrifices; *IT IS FINISHED*, as Jesus shouts from the cross; it is done and it is over. Jesus has done what we in our fallen sinful state could never do; HE has opened the veil of the HOLY of Holiness, permitted us to stand in the presence of a Holy God, in a once and for all Day of Atonement HE has washed us clean and forgiven our sin, and permitted us, as Hebrews again says, that *WE CAN DRAW NIGH TO GOD* and can *“have confidence to enter the sanctuary (The Temple and the Holy of Holies) by the blood of Jesus”* through the *“new and living way”* that Jesus has provided for us, we have access to stand in the presence of a Holy God. (Hebrews 10: 19) Indeed, Easter and eternal life is the Passover of Gladness where even death is no more because of the POWER in the blood of the Lamb. How do we stand in the presence of a HOLY, HOLY, HOLY God? --through the blood of Jesus His only begotten Son...

I once had a long and involved conversation with a man who chose not to believe any of this. He stated that he could not worship a God who asked His only begotten Son to do such a thing. It was inhuman and barbaric. The man said he could not conceive of offering his own son, an only child, whom he loved, as he said, *“more than life itself”*, for anyone, let alone for the riff raff of the world.

His son was too precious to him to throw away for a fallen world. How could God say He loved us if He treated His only begotten Son in such a horrific way? Yes, God would have to love us, who have rejected Him, who do not live for Him, who choose to go our own way rather than to follow Him, who continue in our pride and ego and self-will, even though we know the terrible COST our Savior paid for us. Yes, God would have to love us, and Jesus would have to love us, a great deal in order to do this for us. Why would a loving God do such a thing to His only begotten Son? I have pondered this for more than 30 years. My conclusion is --We cannot ever comprehend this nor ever hope to answer it. It is enough to say that the only explanation is the HOLINESS of GOD --God does something set apart, separate from, radically different from our world, completely inconceivable to us...a people who do not ever truly live up to the gift we have been given. We have been made HOLY and acceptable to God, but we cannot ever truly understand why God would ever do this for us. It is a deep mystery of the Holiness of God.

So the HOLY, HOLY, HOLY God has entered into this sanctuary this NIGHT and seeks to enter into OUR HEART, a temple not made with hands this NIGHT as well. Jesus' blood makes a way for us where there had been no way under the law. It is a "new and living way". Jesus is the way and the truth and the life. Jesus is praying for us; Jesus is sweating blood and tears for us; He is about to carry His cross to dark Calvary for us; He is Messiah and King; He is High Priest and sacrifice; His blood, the blood of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, is about to be shed and spread upon the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies in the Temple of Jerusalem and in the heavenly temple of His Father in heaven. There is no forgiveness of sin, no satisfaction of the just requirements of the law, no atonement, no entry into God's HOLY presence, "*without the shedding of blood*".

Dear Jesus, why would you do such a thing for me? Savior, Master, Friend, why would you seek to save someone like me? Why would you die so terrible a death that I might be forgiven and live? Why, Jesus, WHY???????

There is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood. And JESUS is the ONE PERFECT HOLY SACRIFICE, acceptable to a thrice HOLY God. "This cup is the cup of the new covenant shed in my blood for the remission of sin." Drink ye ALL...if it. And Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, PA  
IF THIS SERMON HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*