

## 1 Peter 1 – Part D

I want us to look at one phrase in [1 Peter 1:2](#) related to the blood of Christ.

**1Pe 1:1 (NKJV) Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, <sup>2</sup> elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.**

What does Peter really mean when he makes a connection between “**our obedience**” and “**the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ**”? As we will see later in our study, the specific Greek word for “**obedience**” is “*hypakoe*” and it refers specifically, not to someone’s initial saving obedience to the gospel message, but to the daily obedience of believers to the Word of God.<sup>1</sup> So, how does all of this fit together? V2 is a virtual seminary class on Systematic Theology and talks about what God has done for the believer in salvation. Initially, Peter talks about election, foreknowledge, and sanctification – all topics related to salvation. So the idea of “**obedience**” and “**the sprinkling of the blood**” are also related to a salvation that the believer already has. With election, Peter is addressing God’s predetermined purpose for our lives. There are many people who are what we would call “**elect**”, but at this moment they are not yet saved. For the first 23 years of my life I was lost, but “**elect**” at the same time. However, at the time when God called me, the Holy Spirit brought me into a vital and meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ through the faith that He gave to me. We call it salvation – and rightfully so. That is one reason why we will always continue to preach the gospel message. It is because there are many people who are not yet saved, but they are elect (and we have no idea as to who they are) – and when they hear the gospel message, the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit will draw them to salvation. Then after salvation has occurred, God continues to set us apart through His work of “**sanctification**”, and the evidence that we are responding to that work is “**obedience**”. So, it is evident that this last phrase related to “**the sprinkling of blood of Jesus Christ**” occurs AFTER salvation has occurred. So, what does it mean? What kind of act is Peter talking about that involves “**the sprinkling of blood**” AFTER salvation?

Now, it is important to understand that in Scripture there are only a couple of occasions where actual individuals were sprinkled with blood. On the Day of Atonement no one was sprinkled with blood. During the various kinds of offerings that were made by the people – sin offering, trespass offering, and likewise – no person was actually sprinkled with blood. The altar was sprinkled with the blood of the animals, but not the actual individual who was making the offering. Under the Levitical law, there really were only two occasions where someone was sprinkled by blood. The first was during the symbolic cleansing of a leper in [Leviticus 14](#). The blood of a sacrificial bird was sprinkled on a leper. The second time is mentioned in [Leviticus 8](#) and [Exodus 29](#) where the blood of a sacrificial ram was sprinkled on Aaron and his sons in the initial cleansing and consecration of them into the priesthood. It would be similar to our laying hands on someone who is being ordained into the ministry. So, those are the only two occasions where actual blood was sprinkled on a person. However, and it should be obvious, that neither of those actually fit into our text in [1 Peter 1:2](#).

There is only one other occasion in the Old Testament where blood was actually sprinkled on people and it occurs in [Exodus 24:3-8](#), and this is exactly what Peter is referring to when he refers to **the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ**.

Ex 24:3 (NKJV) **So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the LORD has said we will do."** <sup>4</sup> **And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel.** <sup>5</sup> **Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD.** <sup>6</sup> **And Moses took half the blood and put *it* in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar.** <sup>7</sup> **Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient."** <sup>8</sup> **And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words."**

This is also mentioned in [Hebrews 9:19-22](#) (spec. v19) and [Hebrews 12:24](#),

Heb 9:19 (NKJV) **For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,** <sup>20</sup> **saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you."** <sup>21</sup> **Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.** <sup>22</sup> **And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.**

Heb 12:24 (NKJV) **to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel.**

Now, what we are doing here is trying to find a connection between “**obedience**” and “**the sprinkling of the blood**” on the people. What Moses did in [Exodus 24](#) is that he took the Book of the Covenant and he read it so that the people could hear it. After they heard it, they said in v3 – “**All the words which the Lord has said we will do**”. I.e., we will be “**obedient**” to all that God has asked us to do. So, in v8, Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the altar and then on the people. It was the blood that ratified and confirmed the covenant that the people had made with God and the covenant that God had made with the people (blood sprinkled on the altar). This event was referred to as the **blood of the covenant**.

Here is what happened in these verses. Moses proclaimed God’s Word and the people responded by saying that they would be an obedient people, obedient to His Word. So, Moses wrote the words down and the next morning he built an altar. He then sent some young men to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. After those offerings had been made, he took half of the blood and sprinkled in on the newly built altar. What was left, he put in some bowls. He took the Book of the Covenant that he had written down as a written record as to what he had proclaimed to the people as the will of God, and he read it to the people again in v7, and they proclaimed once again that they would be obedient and do what God wanted them to do (v7). So, what is happening here is that the people were making a covenant with God – a covenant that they would be obedient to Him. Their covenant with God was being made through their personal and public confessions. So, after their confessions, Moses takes the remaining blood and sprinkles it on the people. He first sprinkled it on the altar, and then on the people.

In the Old Testament, the use of blood to make covenants was a normal process. The blood was normally placed on both parties. The purpose of the blood was to consecrate and to obligate both parties to the covenant. A covenant was always between two or more people. In this case, it was a covenant between

the people and God. Spiritually, however, it was much deeper than just a covenant as we would think of it. In reality, God's covenant was a bond between Him and His people. When two people make a promise to one another, it creates a special bond between them. When Brenda and I were married, we made promises and a covenant to each other that we would be faithful to each other for the rest of our lives – and that covenant, that promise that we made to each other created a special bond between us that we do not share with anyone else. We ratified that covenant by giving each other a ring, and that ring serves as a constant reminder of the promises and the covenant that we made to each other on that day. Since we were married, I have never taken my ring off of my finger except for when I was being operated on and they required that I take it off.

So, what were the people promising to do? The people were promising God that they would keep His Word, that they would be obedient to His will. By allowing the sacrificial blood to be sprinkled on them was their way of saying, *“Yes, we will keep this covenant, and we are sealing that covenant by the sprinkling of the blood.”* So, we have two parts to this covenant – God's part and the people's part. The people's part was that they would be obedient, and God's part was - well, we will see that in just a moment. Now, I believe that this **“sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ”** is exactly what Peter had in mind as he wrote here in [1 Peter 1:2](#). He fully understood the Old Testament and he understood how these particular events in Scripture related to obedience and blood, and that is why he chose this particular language. It was full of meaning to him.

Now, when you were saved, God brought you into His kingdom through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, and the covenant of salvation that you were brought into had been sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ. In [Matthew 26:26-28](#), Jesus said it this way,

**Mt 26:26 (NKJV) And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." 27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.**

I want to submit to you that in the death of Jesus Christ, and what He called at the Lord's Supper **“the new covenant”** in His blood, that within the new covenant representing salvation there was also a covenant of obedience. Whenever someone is drawn to God and receive His salvation by accepting the death of Christ on their behalf, they are not just accepting the benefits of His death for their salvation, but they are also covenanting with God that they will be obedient to Him. The very nature of what is taking place in salvation involves a commitment on our part to obedience. Can you imagine someone saying *“Yes, I accept you as my Savior and Lord, but I'm still going to live how I want to live. I may or may not be obedient to you based on what I want to do”*? No one can call Christ their Lord, but still have an attitude of utter disobedience to and disregard for His Word. Obviously, we live in a culture that has redefined all of this. We live in a Christian culture that has so watered down the idea of meaningful obedience to Christ that it is almost non-existent in many churches. Obedience is seen as optional. People live in open sin, willingly and knowingly disobedient to the Word of God in their life, and for some reason think that they are the exception to obedience. They think that their personal preferences as to their lifestyle are justified and warranted. Personally, I have no idea as to why many believers have developed such a worthless and meaningless perspective on the Christian life.

Now, in practical terms, it would be incredibly irreverent for someone to take the Lord's Supper today, yet have no intention of living for Christ tomorrow. If that is someone's attitude, or the direction of their life, then I would suggest that they simply let the bread and the cup just pass by them. In [1 Corinthians 11:27-34](#) all of us are told to first examine ourselves and our lives before we take the Lord's Supper. I hope that we all understand and appreciate that the Lord's Supper is a sacred event. In [Luke 22:20](#), Jesus spoke these words to His disciples at the Last Supper,

Lk 22:20 (NKJV) **Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.**

To believe in a salvation that ignores our part of the covenant is to create a false covenant and a meaningless salvation. In the Exodus covenant, the sprinkling of the blood presupposed that there was actual shedding of blood. In fact, in many various covenants that people would make, the individuals would actually cut themselves and the covenant would be made with their own blood. In the new covenant that Jesus was making with His disciples at the Last Supper, it was presupposed that there would be the shedding of blood – and specifically, the shedding of the blood of Christ. We can look at it like this. Jesus was offering His blood so that God could make a covenant with us. **Without Christ's blood, there could be no covenant.** There had to be blood. [Hebrews 9:22](#) says,

Heb 9:22 (NKJV) **And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission (forgiveness).**

In the Old Testament covenant, there had to be an animal that was sacrificed to secure the blood that was necessary for the covenant to be ratified. In the "new covenant", God had to also have blood to ratify the covenant that He was making, but in this case it was NOT the blood of an animal, but the very blood of Jesus Christ. So, the "new covenant" is a covenant of sacrifice for Christ and a covenant of obedience for us. In Peter's introduction here, He is concluding that when we were set apart by the Holy Spirit in v2 - **in sanctification of the Spirit**, it meant that we were being set apart to God for a life of obedience, and that work of God in us had been sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ. [Acts 5:30-32](#) says,

Ac 5:30 (NKJV) **The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. <sup>31</sup> Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. <sup>32</sup> And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."**

Living very carefully. Obedience is an inherent attribute of our salvation, and an inherent attribute of the new covenant. It would be foolish to think that we can be followers of Christ and not follow Him. It would be foolish to think that we can call Him Lord and not be obedient to Him. So, there were two parts involved – Christ's part and our part. Christ's part was to sacrifice His life and our part is to be fully committed to a life of obedience. When we truly and sincerely take the Lord's Supper, it is supposed to be saying that we fully recognize what Christ has done for us and that we will be obedient to Him. It is saying that we will remember what He has done for us and that we will honor His sacrifice for our life with obedience. [Romans 6:17-18](#) says,

Ro 6:17 (NKJV) **But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. <sup>18</sup> And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.**

We cannot talk about salvation without talking about obedience. Our part is obedience.

So what is God's part in this covenant – and this is absolutely the most thrilling part of all of this. Remember that there were three parts to a covenant – God's part, the sacrifice's part (Christ), and the individual's part. In [Exodus 24](#), the blood was sprinkled on the altar. Whereas the blood being sprinkled on the people symbolized their commitment to obedience to God, the blood being sprinkled on the altar symbolized – LVC – it symbolized God's commitment to forgive them when they did not obey. They promised to obey, and God promised to forgive them when they did not obey. The blood of Jesus Christ was always for forgiveness – always. Without the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ, there can be no forgiveness. So, when God sees you, He actually sees Christ and God the Father has fully accepted Christ's sacrifice so that we have an everlasting forgiveness. What a covenant, what a God. It is utterly critical that we understand that God will be faithful forever to His covenant to forgive us of all of our sins. The blood of Christ is the guarantee of God's eternal faithfulness to forgiveness. Certainly, we may not always be faithful to God in our life, but God will always be faithful to us – even when we have been disobedient to Him. In Exodus, the blood being sprinkled on the altar represented God's covenant to the people that He would be completely faithful to them – which He was and is and forever more will be. In the “**new covenant**”, God promises to be faithful to us, even when we are not faithful to Him.

What we as believers do not want to do is to somehow demean the Lord's Supper when we take it because we may have no intention of actually being obedient to Christ. If that were the case, and I hope that it is not, then we should not take the Lord's Supper. When someone comes to Christ, in essence they are saying – “*God, I give my life to you. I want to live for you, and as best as I know how, I want to obey you fully so that you can be glorified in my life.*” The blood of Christ that was shed on the cross sealed God's part of this covenant to keep you cleansed and pure and holy in His sight when you fail. Even when we are disobedient, the blood of Jesus Christ continually and eternally cleanses us from that sin. This “**new covenant**” is the security of our election and the security of God calling us into His kingdom. We can be assured that God will always keep His part of the covenant even when we do not. What a covenant, what a truth, what a great God.

## ENDNOTES

---

<sup>1</sup> Grudem, 52.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

Grudem, Wayne. *1 Peter: Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988.