

• *The tabernacle – a shadowy temporary picture of what Jesus did on the cross*

• *The sprinkling of blood explained*

The sprinkling of the utensils with blood also has spiritual significance

• *For our redemption, consciences and pathway towards a heavenly inheritance*

Why is the cross of Christ called 'sacrifices'?

• *Actually contains many sacrifices*

• *Also there are many applications of the blood of Christ*

What exactly is 'heaven'?

• *The sky; the larger part of the universe; where the stars are; God's dwelling place*

Our writer is arguing that the tabernacle was only a shadowy and temporary picture of what Jesus did upon the cross. There were symbolic pieces of furniture ^{☞1} and symbolic rituals^{☞2}. We have seen the meaning of the two compartments^{☞3} and how the high priest's arrival in the inner compartment fulfils Jesus' arrival into the heavenly tent and his taking of blood into heaven^{☞4}. Jesus inaugurated a new covenant^{☞5}, just as the first covenant was inaugurated by blood^{☞6}. Then we need to know about the sprinkling of blood on the utensils of the old covenant^{☞7}. ²³*It was necessary therefore for the copies of the heavenly things to be cleansed with these ceremonies...* The utensils and compartments and rituals of the tabernacle were copies of heavenly things. There were times when the items of furniture were sprinkled with blood.

The sprinkling of the utensils with blood also has spiritual significance. It was necessary for the copies to be cleansed with these ceremonies, says the letter, *but the heavenly things themselves need better sacrifices than these.* Hebrews 9:23 is a profound and mysterious verse of Scripture. But our author wrote it and he meant that we should understand it! In some mysterious way the blood of Christ was applied not only for our redemption^{☞1} and for the cleansing of our consciences ^{☞2} and for the enabling of our pathway in faith towards heavenly inheritance^{☞3}; the blood of Christ was applied even to heaven and to everything that is to be found there. We may look at this matter in the light of some questions.

Why is the cross of Christ called 'sacrifices'? It refers to the one-and-only sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. But the one-and-only death of the Lord Jesus Christ actually contains many 'sacrifices'. Jesus sacrificed his body, his reputation, his dignity, his self-esteem, his reputation as a miracle-worker. Actually Jesus gave up everything he had and every aspect of his reputation. The cross of Christ was itself 'sacrifices'.

But also there are many applications of the blood of Christ. It is applied to God (symbolized by sprinkling the altar); it is applied to our consciences (symbolized by the sprinkling of blood upon the people), to the whole covenant-relationship (symbolized by the sprinkling of the book of the covenant), and to the entire way of approaching God (symbolized by the sprinkling of the tabernacle and all of its parts). So the blood of Christ may be called 'sacrifices'.

What exactly is 'heaven'? The word is used in different ways. Sometimes it means the 'sky'. The 'birds of heaven' means 'the birds who are to be seen flying in the sky'. Sometimes 'heaven' means the larger part of the universe, the rest of the universe other than the earth. The 'heavens and the earth' refers to our world and everything apart from our world. The 'heavens' in this sense is the place where the stars are to be found. But when we think of 'heaven' we are normally thinking of the dwelling place

☞1 9:1-5

☞2 9:6-10

☞3 9:8

☞4 9:11-14

☞5 9:15-17

☞6 9:18-20

☞7 9:21-23

☞1 9:12

☞2 9:14

☞3 9:15

• *Picture language to help us*

Why does the Bible use the word 'blood' so often

• *Stress the punishment of sin*

Why should heaven need sprinkling with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ?

(i) Protecting heaven from Satan

(ii) Preparation of the heavenly home for His people

(iii) Heaven had in some way become defiled

(iv) The entire universe was redeemed by the blood of Christ and is put under the protection of His blood

of God. It is not necessarily a long way away. We must not think of it geographically as if it is a place among the stars millions of light-years away! It is true that we think of heaven as 'up'. Jesus was 'carried up' into heaven^{☞1☞2} and the disciples looked up into the sky as he went^{☞3}. But this is just a way in which God helps us to think in picture language. Heaven is God's dwelling place^{☞4} but it is not necessary for us to think that spatially it is a long way away. However, the Bible encourages us to think of heaven in picture-language.

Why does the Bible use the word 'blood' so often, when referring to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross? It stresses the violent punishment of sin. Of the 362 passages in which the Hebrew word for 'blood' occurs in the Old Testament, 203 refer to death with violence. Blood stresses the punishment of sin that was involved in the death of Christ.

Why should heaven need sprinkling with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ? (i) It has something to do with protecting heaven from Satan. The blood of Christ overcomes Satan^{☞1}. (ii) The blood of Christ bought our heavenly home. In some way it seems that the first thing the risen Christ had to do was to go to heaven to prepare the heavenly home for his people. There is a connection between John 14:2-3 and Hebrews 9:23. (iii) If heaven needed cleansing, then in some way it was defiled. God had been associating with sinners even before Jesus died (which is the point of Romans 3:25 – 'in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins'). Sinners had been sending their prayers to heaven for centuries, even before Jesus died (if we may be allowed to picture these things in a rather spatial and up-and-down way of thinking). The angels had been caring for God's sinful people. They too had been relating to sinners. Job 15:15 says, 'the heavens are not pure in his sight' – after having just mentioned the angels. (iv) The entire universe was redeemed by the blood of Christ – the earth, the sky, the place where the stars are to be found, and even the inaccessible dwelling place of God. Through Jesus, God reconciled to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross^{☞2}. The entire universe is put under the protection of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

☞1 Luke 24:51
☞2 see also Acts 1:2,9
☞3 Acts 1:10-11
☞4 1 Kings 8:30, 39

☞1 see Revelation 12:11

☞2 Colossians 1:20



slices.org.uk

Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His *Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)* books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.



These specially reformatted chapters "Slices of Bread" produced by Sovereign World Trust are available in three categories as set out below

Slices for the Nations	Slices for Sponsors	Slices for Everyone / Slice of the Week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For pastors, libraries and colleges in those parts of the world where resources are scarce and unaffordable In the fullness of time the whole series will be made available free of charge Weekly emailings of 3 - 4 Slices or available to download from the Slices web site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those in more prosperous circumstances who can afford to contribute to the development of this material and its distribution with a small monthly donation The same material as Slices for the Nations Weekly emailings of 3 - 4 Slices or by download from the Slices web site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those who wish to sample the material or dip into it from time to time, a proportion of the PTTB series is available free of charge Slices for Everyone (as a download) or Slice of the Week (attached to a weekly email) The remainder of the PTTB material is available to Sponsors and those eligible to receive Slices for the Nations

To subscribe please contact: slicesofbread@sovereignworldtrust.org.uk stating which category fits your situation. Further details are at www.slices.org.uk
Details of the availability of *Preaching Through The Bible* books and how they may be purchased can be found on www.ibtr.org.uk