

NEWSLETTER

November - 2023

Sunday Bible Study: 9:45 a.m.

Sunday Service: 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study:

7:00 p.m.

SPEAKERS

**November 5: Ken Storm,
*Holy Communion***

**November 12: Paul
Copenen**

November 19: Ken Storm

**November 26: Nathan
Ruonavarran, *Potluck meal
following the service***

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TAPIOLA APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Blood of the Testament

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission"-Hebrews 9:22

The Holy Bible contains two testaments: Old and New. In either testament God used sacrificial blood as a token of His forgiveness. For example, God forgave Adam and Eve after He called to them and after they answered that call by confessing their sin to Him. God then gave them a token of His forgiveness when He shed the blood of an innocent animal and used its hide to cover their nakedness. Many centuries later it was also token animal blood marked upon the doorways of houses that spared its occupants from death: *"And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you..."* (Ex 12:13). Today, Jesus' blood, when connected with the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins, remains God's sole token to all believers who are spared from the second death.

In the Old Testament, it was a priest standing at the door of the tabernacle who would sprinkle sacrificial blood as a token of God's forgiveness on any penitent soul who voluntarily confessed his sin. No one was forced to confess their sin to a priest but it was the preaching of God's Word that awakened a person who was dead in his trespasses and sins to come forth and openly confess his sin, as happened with Adam and Eve. However, God warned those who found it more convenient to go elsewhere to sacrifice an animal and to confess their sin rather than going to the tabernacle that He would not forgive their sin no matter how sincere their motives were. Whoever would not bring his sacrifice *"...unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the Lord...that man shall be cut off from among his people"* (Lev 17:4). In other words, sin was not forgiven if someone found another way to answer the call of God to repent.

In the New Testament, the situation did not change: confession today is still voluntary and it is to be done in front of a believer who is *"... a chosen generation, a royal priesthood"* (1 Peter 2:9). Thus, we are encouraged to *"Confess your faults one to another..."* (James 5:16). Further, Jesus gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven to all believers to whom He has given the gift of the Holy Ghost for this very reason; *"Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them..."* (John 20:23). And it is not the believer who forgives the sin; he merely proclaims it, while God's grace provides the faith to believe that the confessed sin has been forgiven: *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God"* (Eph 2:8). As with Adam and Eve, it is vital that an awakened soul confess his sin according to God's command and not according to his desire: *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9).

So, in both testaments, God has ordained only one way to be reconciled to Him. And in both testaments, sacrificial blood is a sign of God's forgiveness but it has no effect unless it is believed by the confessor, and then only by the grace of God. It is important to note that in the case of the first Passover, if the

sacrificial blood was not placed on the door posts the first born of that household would die, as God promised. And so it remains the same way today, unless our hearts are sprinkled with the blood of Christ we will all likewise perish in our unforgiven sin.

Dear reader, Jesus has not forgotten His promise to return. He is still calling all people to repent of their sins and to hear the gospel message proclaimed to them by a fellow believer, "*Thy sins are forgiven*" (Luke 7:48)—will you answer His call before it is too late?

God's Peace,

Charles Korhonen