

Heavenly Joy Through the Blood

by Andrew Murray

The blood of Jesus Christ gives us the right to heaven, makes us fit for heaven, and provides subject matter for the song of heaven.

Scripture: Revelation 7:9

Topics: "The Power of the Blood", "Heavenly Joy"

Description

Andrew Murray emphasizes the profound significance of the blood of the Lamb in granting believers access to heavenly joy. He explains that the blood not only provides the right to enter heaven but also prepares believers to enjoy its blessings and inspires the eternal song of praise in heaven. The sermon highlights that the redeemed, who have washed their robes in the blood, are eternally grateful for their salvation and the love of Christ that it represents. Murray encourages believers to embrace the cleansing power of the blood, which transforms their lives on earth into a reflection of heavenly joy. Ultimately, he calls for a deeper understanding and appreciation of the blood of Jesus as the foundation of their faith and hope.

Transcript

"After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number . . . which stood before the throne, and before the Lamb. . . and they cried with a loud voice saying, g Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.' These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb "-Rev. vii. 9-z4.

These words occur in the well-known vision of the great multitude in heavenly glory, which no man could number. In spirit, the Apostle saw them standing before the throne of God, and of the Lamb, clothed with long white robes, and with palms in their hands; and they sang with a loud voice, " Salvation to our God which sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb." All the angels answered this song by falling down on their faces before the throne, to worship God, and to offer eternal praise and glory to Him.

Then one of the Elders, pointing out the great multitude, and the clothing which distinguished them, put the question to John, " What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?" John replied, " Sir, thou knowest." Then the Elder said, " These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple."

This explanation, given by one of the Elders who stood round the throne, concerning the state of the redeemed in their heavenly glory, is of great value.

It reveals to us the fact that not only in this world of sin and strife is the blood of Jesus the one hope of the sinner, but that in heaven when every enemy has been subdued that precious blood will be recognised for ever as the ground of our salvation. And we learn that the blood must exercise its power with God in heaven, not only as long as sin has still to be dealt with here beneath, but that through all eternity each one of the redeemed to the praise and glory of the blood will bear the sign of how the blood has availed for him and that he owes his salvation entirely to it.

If we have a clear insight into this we shall understand better what a true and vital connection there is between " the sprinkling of the blood " and the joys of heaven ; and that a true intimate connection with the blood on earth, will enable the believer while still on earth to share the joy and glory of heaven.

JOY IN HEAVEN THROUGH THE BLOOD, is because it is the blood that:

I. BESTOWS THE RIGHT TO A PLACE IN HEAVEN.

II. MAKES US FIT FOR THE PLEASURES OF HEAVEN.

III. THAT PROVIDES SUBJECT - MATTER FOR THE SONG OF HEAVEN.

I. IT IS THE BLOOD THAT BESTOWS ON US THE RIGHT TO A PLACE IN HEAVEN.

It is clear that this is the leading thought in the text. In the question, " What are these which are arrayed in white robes and whence come they ? " the Elder desires to awaken attention and inquiry as to who these favoured persons really are, who stand thus before the throne, and before the Lamb, with palms in their hands. And, as he himself gives the reply, we expect that he will surely mention what might be thought to be the most remarkable thing in their appearance. He replies to the question-" Whence come they?" by saying that "they come out of the great tribulation." To the question, "Who are these ? " he replies, that they have washed their long white robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

That is the one thing to which, as their distinguishing mark, he draws attention. This alone, gives them the right to the place which they occupy in glory. This becomes plainly evident, if we notice the words which immediately follow: " therefore are they before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." " Therefore "-it is because of that blood that they are before the throne. They owe it to the blood of the Lamb, that they occupy that place so high in glory. The blood gives the right to heaven.

RIGHT to heaven 1 Can such a thing be spoken of in connection with a condemned sinner ? Would it not be better to glory in the mercy of God only, who, by free grace, admits a sinner to heaven, than to speak of a RIGHT to heaven ? No 1 it would not be better -for then we should not understand the value of the blood, or why it had to be shed. We should also entertain false conceptions both of our sin and of God's grace, and remain unfit for the full enjoyment of the glorious Redemption which the Saviour has accomplished for us.

We have already spoken of "the casting out of Satan from heaven," and have shown from this incident, that a holy God acts always according to law. Just as the devil was not " cast out " otherwise than according to law and right, so the sinner cannot be admitted in any other way. The Prophet said, " Zion

shall be redeemed with judgment and her converts with righteousness " (Isa. i. 27). St. Paul tells us that " grace reigns THROUGH RIGHTEOUSNESS " (Rom. v. 21 This was the purpose for which God sent His Son into the world. Instead of being afraid that speaking of having a RIGHT to enter heaven might belittle grace, it will be seen that the highest glory of grace consists in bestowing that RIGHT.

The lack of this insight is sometimes found in the church where it might be least expected. Recently I asked a man who spoke of the hope he had of going to heaven when he died, on what ground he rested his hope. He was not by any means a careless man, nor did he trust to his own righteousness, and yet he replied, " Well, I think that I strive my best to seek the Lord, and to do His will." When I told him that this was no ground on which to stand before the judgment seat of a holy God, he appealed to the mercy of God. When I told him, again, that he needed more than mercy-it appeared to him to be something new to hear that it was the righteousness of God, only, that could grant him entrance into heaven. It is to be feared that there are many who listen to the preaching of " Justification by faith," but who have no idea that they cannot have a share in eternal blessedness save by being declared legally righteous.

Entirely different was the testimony of a certain lad who had not the full use of his intellectual faculties, but whose heart the Spirit of God had enlightened to understand the meaning of the crucifixion of Jesus.

When on his death-bed he was asked about his hope, he intimated that there was a great book, on one of the pages of which his many sins, very many, had been written. Then with the finger of his right hand he pointed to the palm of his left hand, indicating the print of the nail there. Taking, as it were, something from the pierced hand-he was thinking of the blood that marked it-he showed how all that was written on that page was now blotted out. The blood of the Lamb was the ground of his hope.

The blood of the Lamb gives the believing sinner a RIGHT to heaven. " Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." By shedding His blood He really bore the punishment of sin. He gave Himself up to death really in our place. He gave His life as a ransom for many. Now that the punishment is borne, and our Lord's blood has really been shed as a ransom, and appears before the throne of God in heaven, now the righteousness of God declares that as the sinner's Surety had fulfilled all the requirements of the law, both as regards punishment and obedience, God pronounces the sinner who believes in Christ to be righteous. Faith is just the recognition that Christ has really done everything for me ; that God's declaration of righteousness is just His declaration that, according to the law and right, I have a title to salvation. God's grace bestows on me the RIGHT to heaven. The blood of the Lamb is the evidence of this RIGHT. If I have been cleansed by that blood, I can meet death with full confidence-I have a RIGHT to heaven.

You desire and hope to get to heaven. Listen then to the answer given to the question-Who are they who will find a place before the throne of God ? " They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." That washing takes place, not in heaven, and not at death, but here, during our life on earth. Do not deceive yourselves by a hope of heaven, if you have not been cleansed, really cleansed, by that precious blood. Do not dare to meet death without knowing that Jesus Himself has cleansed you by His blood.

II. THE BLOOD ALSO BESTOWS THE MEETNESS FOR HEAVEN.

It is of little use for men to have a right to anything unless they are fitted to enjoy it. However costly the gift, it is of little use if the inner disposition necessary to the enjoyment of it is wanting. To bestow t;... right to heaven on those who are not at the sari me time prepared for it, would give them no pleasure, but would

be in conflict with the perfection of all God's; works.

The power of the blood of Jesus not only sets open the door of heaven for the sinner but it operates on him in such a divine way that, as he enters heaven, it will appear that the blessedness of heaven and he have been really fitted for each other.

What constitutes the blessedness of heaven, and what the disposition is that is fitted for it, we are told by words connected with our text. "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more; neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Nearness to and fellowship with God and the Lamb, constitute the blessedness of heaven. To be before the throne of God, and to see His face; to serve Him day and night in His temple; to be overshadowed by Him who sits upon the throne; to be fed and led by the Lamb; all these expressions point out how little the blessedness of heaven depends on anything else than on GOD AND THE LAMB. To see them, to have intercourse with them, to be acknowledged, loved, cared for by them—that is blessedness.

What preparation is needed for having such intercourse with God and the Lamb? It consists in two things :--

i. Inner agreement in mind and will, and

ii. Delight in His nearness and fellowship and both are purchased by the blood.

i. There can be no thought of fitness for heaven apart from oneness with God's will. How could two dwell together unless they agreed? And because God is the holy One, the sinner must be cleansed from his sin, and sanctified, otherwise he remains utterly unfit for what constitutes the happiness of heaven. "Without holiness no man can see the Lord." Man's entire nature must be renewed, so that he may think, and desire, and will, and do, what pleases God; not as a matter of mere obedience, in keeping a commandment, but from natural pleasure, and because he cannot do or will otherwise. Holiness must become his nature.

Is not this just what we have seen that the blood of the Lamb does? "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Where reconciliation and pardon are applied by the Holy Spirit, and are retained by a living faith, there the blood operates with a divine power, killing sinful lusts and desires; the blood exercises constantly a wonderful cleansing power. In the blood, the power of the death of Jesus operates; we died with Him to sin; through a believing intercourse with the blood, the power of the death of Jesus presses into the innermost parts of our hidden life. The blood breaks the power of sin, and cleanses from all sin.

The blood sanctifies also. We have seen, that cleansing is but one part of salvation, the taking away of sin. The blood does more than this; it takes possession of us for God, and inwardly bestows the very same disposition which was in Jesus when He shed His blood. In shedding that blood, He sanctified Himself for us, that we also should be sanctified by the truth. As we delight and lose ourselves in that holy blood, the power of entire surrender to God's will and glory; the power to sacrifice everything, to abide in God's love., which inspired the Lord Jesus, is efficacious in us.

The blood sanctifies us for the emptying and surrender of ourselves, so that God may take possession of us, and fill us with Himself. This is true holiness; to be possessed by, and filled with God. This is wrought out by the blood of the Lamb, and so we are prepared here on earth to meet God in heaven with unspeakable joy.

ii. In addition to having one will with God, we said that fitness for heaven consisted in the desire and capacity for enjoying fellowship with, God. In this, also, the blood bestows, here, on earth, the true preparation for heaven. We have seen how the blood brings us near to God; leading to a priestlike approach, yea, we have liberty, by the blood, to enter into " The Holiest " of God's presence, and to make our dwelling place there. We have seen that God attaches to the blood such incomprehensible value, that where the blood is sprinkled, there is His throne of grace. When a heart places itself under the full operation of the blood, there God dwells, and there His salvation is experienced. **THE BLOOD MAKES POSSIBLE THE PRACTICE OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD**, and not less with the Lamb-with the Lord Jesus Himself. Have we forgotten His word : " he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him ? " The full blessing of the power of the blood, in its highest effect, is **FULL ABIDING UNION WITH JESUS**. It is only our unbelief that separates the work from the person; and the blood from the Lord Jesus. It is **I-3E, HIMSELF**, who cleanses by His blood, and brings us near, and causes us to drink. It is only through the blood that we are fitted for full fellowship with Jesus in heaven, just as with the Father.

Ye who are redeemed 3 Here you can see what is needed to mould you for heaven; to make you, even here, heavenly minded. See that the blood, which always has a place at the throne of grace above, manifests its power, always, also in your hearts ; and your lives will become an unbroken fellowship with God and the Lamb : the foretaste of life in eternal glory. Let the thought enter deeply into your soul the blood bestows already in the heart, here on earth, the blessedness of heaven. The precious blood makes life on earth and life in heaven one.

III. THE BLOOD PROVIDES SUBJECT MATTER FOR THE SONG OF HEAVEN.

What we have hitherto said has been taken from what the Elder stated about the redeemed. But how far is this their experience and testimony ? Have we anything out of their own mouths concerning this ? Yes, they themselves bear witness. In the song, contained in our text, they were heard to cry with loud voice, " Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." It is as the slain Lamb, that the Lord Jesus is in the midst of the throne, as a Lamb whose blood had been shed. As such, He is the object of the worship of the redeemed.

This appears still more clearly in the new song that they sing, " Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou hast redeemed us **TO God BY THY BLOOD**, out of every kindred, and tongue, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests " (Rev. v. 9 and 10).

Or in words somewhat different, used by the Apostle in the beginning of the book, where he, under the impression of all that he had seen and heard in heaven concerning the place which the Lamb occupied, at the first mention of the name of the Lord Jesus, cried out, " Unto him that loved us and **WASHED US FROM OUR SINS IN HIS OWN BLOOD**, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever, Amen." (Rev. i. 5 and 6).

Without ceasing, the blood of the Lamb continues to be the power to awaken the saved, to their song of joy and thanksgiving ; because in the death of the Cross the sacrifice took place in which He gave Himself

for them, and won them for Himself; because, also, the blood is the eternal seal of what He did, and of the love which moved Him to do it, it remains also the inexhaustible, overflowing fountain of heavenly bliss.

That we may the better understand this, notice the expression: " Him that loved us and washed us from our sins IN HIS OWN BLOOD." In all our consideration about the blood of Jesus, we have had till now no occasion intentionally to stop there. And of all the glorious things which the blood means, this is one of the most glorious-His blood is the sign, the measure, yes, the impartation of His love. Each application of His blood, each time that He causes the soul to experience its power, is a fresh outflowing of His wonderful love. The full experience of the power of the blood in eternity will be nothing else than the full revelation of how He gave Himself up for us, and gives Himself to us, in a love eternal, unending, incomprehensible-as God Himself.

"Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood." This love is indeed incomprehensible. What has not that love moved Him to do ? He gave Himself for us; He became sin for us; He was made a curse for us. Who would dare to use such language, who could ever have dared to think such a thing if God had not revealed it to us by His Spirit ? That He really gave Himself up for us, not because it was laid upon Him to do so, but by the impulse of a love that really longed for us, that we might for ever be identified with Him. Because it is such a divine wonder, therefore we feel it so little. But, blessed be the Lord ! there is a time coming when we shall feel it, when under the ceaseless and immediate love-sharing of the heavenly life, we shall be filled and satisfied with that love. Yes, praised be the Lord ! even here on earth there is hope that through a better knowledge of, and more perfect trust in the blood, the Spirit will more powerfully shed abroad "the love of God in our hearts." There is nothing to prevent our hearts being filled with the love of the Lamb, and our mouths with His praise here on earth, by faith, as is done in heaven by sight. Each experience of the power of the blood will become increasingly an experience of the love of Jesus.

It has been said that it is not desirable to lay too much emphasis on the word " blood " ; that it sounds coarse, and the thought expressed by it can be conveyed in a way more in accordance with our modern habit of speaking or thinking.

I must acknowledge that I do not share in this view. I receive that word as coming, not just from John, but from the Lord Himself. I am deeply convinced that the word chosen by the Spirit of God, and by Him made living and filled with the power of that eternal life whence the song containing it comes to us, carries in itself a power of blessing surpassing our understanding. Changing the expression into our way of thinking has all the imperfection of a human translation. He who desires to know and experience " what the Spirit says unto the churches " will accept the word by faith, as having come from heaven, as the word in which the joy and power of eternal life is enfolded in a most peculiar manner. Those expressions, " THY BLOOD," and " THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB " will make " THE HOLIEST," the place of God's glory, resound eternally with the joyful notes of " The New Song."

Heavenly joy through THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB: that will be the portion of all, here on earth, who with undivided heart yield to its power; and of all above, in heaven, who have become worthy to take a place among the multitude around the throne.

My Comrades in Redemption! we have learned what those in heaven say, and how they sing about the blood. Let us pray earnestly that these tidings may have the effect on us, which our Lord intended. We have seen that to live a real heavenly life it is necessary to abide in the full power of the blood. The blood

bestows the right to enter heaven.

As the blood of RECONCILIATION it works out in the soul the full, living consciousness which belongs to those who are at home in heaven. It brings us really into " THE HOLIEST," near to God. It makes us fit for heaven.

As the CLEANSING BLOOD it delivers from the lust and power of sin, and preserves us in the fellowship of the light and life of the Holy God. The blood inspires the song of praise in heaven. As the blood of the Lamb " who loved us and gave himself for us " it speaks not only of WHAT He has done for us, but chiefly of HIM who has done all. In the blood, we have the most perfect impartation of Himself. He who by faith gives himself up to experience, to the full, what the blood is able to do, will soon find an entrance into a life of happy singing of praise, and love, that heaven itself, alone, can surpass.

My Comrades in Redemption ! this life is for you and me. May THE BLOOD BE ALL OUR GLORY, not only at the Cross with its awful wonders, but also at the Throne. Let us plunge deep, and ever deeper, into the living fountain of the blood of the Lamb. Let us open our hearts wide, and ever wider, for its operation. Let us firmly, and ever more firmly, believe in the ceaseless CLEANSING by which the Great Eternal Priest Himself will apply that blood to us. Let us pray with burning, and ever more burning, desire that nothing, yes, nothing, may be in our heart that does not experience the power of the blood. Let us unite joyfully, and ever more joyfully, in the song of the great multitude, who know of nothing so glorious as this-" Thou hast redeemed us to God, by thy blood."

May our life on earth become what it ought to be, O OUR BELOVED LORD I one ceaseless song to x` Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood " " and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father."

"To him be the glory and dominion for ever and ever." Amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/andrew-murray/heavenly-joy-through-the-blood/>

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