

引言 INTRODUCTION

Let me begin with a question: there is something that the more you wash it, the dirtier it becomes. What is it? Yes, it is water itself. The point is that, new things will get old soon after you start using it. A brand-new car will depreciate in its value even if it is sitting in your garage unmoved. Besides old cars, there are old clothes and even old age. Once I called my brother soon after I came to the U.S. I teased him: “Hey man, are you thirty already?” Laugh no more when I came to that age. Soon after that, I did not enjoy celebrating my birthday much. Our physical age will only get older. In comparison, our spiritual age in Jesus always stays young. The more we experience Jesus in our new life, the more mature we will become. There will be more peace and joy, and more sweetness and contentment. Christians can live differently because their sins have been washed away by the blood of Jesus. He is the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of mankind. Jesus is the superior sacrifice. His cleansing power is so effective that He only had to offer Himself once and for all on the cross. All of our sins – past, present and future – have been removed the moment we received Jesus into our hearts. Christians should know that in theory. But do you believe that wholeheartedly? If so, then your attitude toward sin should be very different. In Jesus there is no more sin, and with Jesus we should sin no more.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 罪的提醒 Reminder of Sins

The author continues his comparison between the animal sacrificial system and Jesus’ sacrificial death in this passage. Offering animal is not an effective way to atone for sins. Worse still, the system becomes a reminder of sins. Let me read from **verse 1-4**. Animal sacrifice cannot cleanse people of their sins because it is but a shadow. It looks like the real thing but it is just a copy of it. Some people follow a vegetarian diet for health or religious reasons. There are some vegetarian restaurants that serve vegan chicken, pork and beef. Those food look like meat but they are not meat. Patrons are happy to eat some meat-like dishes without violating their dietary restriction. I would rather eat vegetable and tofu at home and save some money if I am a vegetarian! Imitations are incomparable to the real things. The animal sacrificial system is supposed to remove sins. But it proves to be ineffective by the mere fact that it has to be repeated. The author says in verse 4 that animal blood is “impossible” to take away sins. The system is not only inferior, it is simply useless! Verse 11 adds that: **And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.** We see another strong negative word here: “never!” The procedure just does not work. At that time, the priests had to present daily offerings according to the Law. In addition, they sacrificed more animals on major festivals. Besides, the priests presented sin offering for people upon request. You can imagine that the priests were very busy all the time. The general idea is that animals’ death make up for people’s violation of God’s holiness. But why did God ask for animal sacrifice if it could not remove sin anyway? Rather to say that the ceremony covers people’s sins, a better understanding is that God withholds His judgment temporarily because animals die for sinners. In fact, the ritual actually reminds people of their sins. Every time they think of the

altar, hear the screaming of animals under the knife, see them burning on fire and smell the aroma, they are reminded of their sins. There is little joy in animal sacrifice, because people understand that they are prone to sin and so they will come back later for more offering. Rather than excitement, the ritual causes other emotions. First, it leads to fear toward God. People see Him as a mean judge who always demands a penalty for sins. There are only rules but no grace. Second, people feel helpless. They can never be perfect and overcome temptations. Why bother to try to do good? Third, there may even be complacency. People can take it easy since there is a remedy for sin. There is no need to keep clothes clean since there is detergent. Moreover, you can always buy new ones. Similarly, it is okay to tell a small lie as long as it does not cause serious harm to others. You just make a confession later. Relationship with God becomes a paid service. People exchange an animal for God's forgiveness. The system is full of drawbacks. There is actually a contemporary version of it. It is the practices of the Catholic church. Christian and Catholic beliefs share some similarities. They both believe in the Trinity God, that the Bible is the truth, and that Jesus died on the cross but rose on the third day, etc. But they differ in their views on salvation. Christians understand that we are saved by God's grace through faith. Salvation is an instant change from sinners to saints. However, the Catholic church teaches that salvation is a process. They claim that besides faith, baptism, good works and participation of sacraments are all required to save a person. Catholics observe the communion every time they have a mass, because they believe the ceremony can atone for people's sins and strengthen their faith. Christians see the communion as a remembrance of the death of Jesus. However, the Catholic church teaches that after a priest blesses the bread and cup, they will be transformed into the real body and real blood of Jesus, respectively. They find Biblical support in that Jesus told His disciples "this is My body" when He broke the bread and "this is my blood" as He passed the cup. As Catholic believers go through the communion, they once again shed Jesus' blood so as to claim His forgiving grace. Let us be clear, we should respect people no matter what religious beliefs they hold. However, we have to objectively evaluate if any practice is based on the Bible. We have been redeemed by Jesus. Salvation is an instant result. We used to be like orphans but we are now adopted into the family of God. We are God's children, although we will continue to grow in our relationship with God. To the Catholics, salvation is closer to dating a lover of your dream. You are not sure if you will marry the person eventually. You make effort to win the heart of the person. Hopefully, the person will finally consider you good enough. According to the Bible, no one can attain God's standard of perfection. But Jesus reaches across the chasm of sin for us. He died for us once and for all. One simple way to tell if a church is Christian or Catholic is to look at the cross. In any Christian church, the cross is empty, just like Jesus' tomb was empty. But in all Catholic churches, the body of Jesus is still hanging up there. Our focus should no longer be a dead body, but the risen Lord who lives in us. The cross is no longer a reminder of our sins. It has become a reminder of God's grace. Our hearts should be filled with joy and thankfulness when we think of Jesus. There is no more guilt.

2. 罪的救贖 Redeemer for Sins

Animal sacrifice system is a reminder of sins. It is unable to remove sins. In comparison, Jesus is the redeemer for sins. In verse 5-7, he author quotes from Psalm 40 and shows that Jesus has fulfilled what the psalmist said. We will read the interpretation of the psalm in [verse 8-10](#). Jesus abolished the old way of animal sacrifice using His blood and established a new way for sin removal. Why does God dislike animal offering even though He asks for it in the Law? Perhaps

God was not pleased with people's attitude. Like we said above, some people took the ceremony lightly. God sees our hearts more important than our work. There is a story in 1 Samuel 15 about animal sacrifice. God asked king Saul of Israel to completely eliminate the Amalekites to judge them for their wickedness. It was a test of Saul's obedience. He killed all those people, but he spared their king. He slaughtered all the animals except saving the best flock for himself. Saul even lied twice when prophet Samuel confronted him. Saul said emphatically that he had followed God's commands. He told Samuel that those animals would be used as offerings for God. The prophet rebukes Saul in verse 22 of the passage, saying: **"Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams."** Right motions done with a wrong motive and the result will still be wrong. God is the Creator of all things. It is not like He needs some animals to feed His stomach. That is the belief in traditional Chinese religions. You send clothes, house and car to people in the other world by burning some paper-made items. God does not need our stuff. He wants our hearts. He looks for our obedience, and not our offerings. That is the point the author of Hebrews wants to address. Jesus set up an example for us. He submitted to God's and said: **"Behold, I have come to do your will."** (v. 7, 9) Jesus willingly chose the will of the Father. Jesus set aside His glory and honor, and came into the world as a man. Being a human, He could not be in two places at one time. He felt tired, hungry and lonely as we do. He was not just an innocent man who suffered and died in the hands of some wicked people. He die for us intentionally. Animals being sacrificed on the altar have no choice. They are ignorant about what is going on. Some of you raised chickens or ducks in your home before. They are quite cute when they were little. Your kids treat them like pets. However, they become your dinner when they grow to a certain size. Your children cannot understand how you can be so cruel. But you may be thinking about which recipe to use for the next bird. People exercise authority over the animals they keep. Only Jesus voluntarily gave up His rights to save us. As our Redeemer, Jesus brings us two blessings. First, He makes us holy. Verse 10 states: **And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** Just like Jesus' death, our sanctification is once and for all. The Father has deleted the sin records of His children from His database. In verse 17, the author quotes from Jeremiah 31, in which God declares: **... "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more."** God is not absent-minded like us. He deliberately chooses not to hold people accountable whose sins have been covered by Jesus. Think about a time when you forgave someone from your heart. Perhaps the person sincerely apologized to you, or you showed your grace. Regardless, you overlooked the past offense because you valued the relationship more than your loss. This holy God who has the full right to pour down judgment on us tells us: "I forgive you because my Son had substituted for your penalty." This freedom from the punishment is just the beginning of our new life in Jesus. His death also unlocked a second blessing for us. Look at verse 16: **"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds."** This verse is also quoted from Jeremiah 31. Jesus had fulfilled this prophecy. The covenant God made with the Israelites at mount Sinai was ineffective. People were rebellious, and so they did not abide by God's Law. God foretold that He would make a new and better covenant with His people. It is not etched on clay tablets but it will be ingrained onto our brains. God will remove our heart of stones and replace it with a heart of flesh. Before we received Jesus, we were held in bondage by sins. We did not know God and we could not follow His will. Our problem is not a lack of knowledge. Jesus is more a great teacher who shows us how to do good work. Nowadays, you can attend a class and learn how to

repair cars or play golf. Our problem is not a lack of desire. Jesus is not just a role-model who inspires us. Perhaps you read in the news that a wealthy person gave a million dollars to help people suffering in a natural disaster. You said to yourself: "I don't have that much money. But at least I can donate a few can-food to a food pantry." Our problem is a lack of will. Jesus empowers us to surrender our will to the Father. Salvation is a transition from a self-centered life to a God-centered life. The Holy Spirit now lives in us and helps us make decisions that please God. We will fall to sin if we still rely on ourselves. Our hearts will be full of guilt. We feel that Christian life is more miserable than living in a monastery because God forces us to do what we do not want. We need help from the Holy Spirit to override our circuit so that we will love God more than ourselves. People in a dating relationship will do whatever it takes to make their lovers happy. Parents sacrifice their money, time and possessions for their children. We are willing to run an extra mile, jump through hoops and let down our faces for the people we love. Jesus gave up everything for us. We call Him our Lord. Should we not put Him on the top of our priority and love Him back wholeheartedly?

結論 CONCLUSION

In Jesus there is no more sin, and with Jesus we should sin no more. The old way of animal sacrifice is deficient. Only Jesus is sufficient to make us holy. There was no chair in the tabernacle because the priests went there to work, not to rest. In contrast, Jesus is now sitting on the right hand of the Father. He had completed the salvation work. We must fully trust Him. An old story was told about a senior farmer who was on his way to the market. He carried a bamboo stick on his shoulders with two heavy loads of produce on both ends. A man in his truck drove by and saw the farmer. He stopped and said: "Hop on mister. I'll give you a ride." He put the old man and his goods at the back of his car. They continued their way on the bumpy road. Suddenly, as the driver looked at his mirror, he was surprised to see that the farmer was standing the whole time bearing the weight of his belongings. He then pulled over, went to the back and questioned the old person. The farmer responded: "Young man, I'm so grateful that you save me a lot of walking. I can carry the vegetables by myself." We laugh at such a silly idea. But do we not often count on ourselves to live a Christian life? We thank Jesus for saving us. However, we prefer to go independent in this life journey, thinking that we are capable to live a victorious life. Lean on Jesus. Only by His power can we overcome sin and temptation and even our stubbornness and rebellion and obey God's will.

引言 INTRODUCTION

讓我問大家一個問題：有什麼東西你越去洗它，它反而會變得更髒？沒錯，就是水本身。重點是，當你開始用一件新東西時，它就會變舊。停在車庫不動的新車也會不斷貶值。車子和衣服會變舊，人也會變老。我剛來美國不久後有一次打電話給我哥哥，我笑他說：「嘿，大哥，你已經三十歲了嗎？」當我到了那個年紀就笑不出來了。從此，我也不太喜歡慶祝生日。我們的年齡只會增長。相比之下，我們在耶穌裡的屬靈生命會永遠保持年輕。我們越去經歷耶穌裡的新生命，我們就會變得越成熟。我們會享受更多的平安和喜樂，更多的甜蜜和滿足。基督徒有一種不一樣的生命，因為他們的罪已經被耶穌的寶血洗淨。祂是神的羔羊，除去世人的罪孽。耶穌是超越的祭物。耶穌潔淨的能力是如此有效，祂只需要在十字架上一次獻上自己。我們過去、現在和將來所有的罪都在接受耶穌的那一刻被除去。基督徒應該在理論上知道這一點。但是你真的相信嗎？如果是這樣，那麼你對罪的態度應該是非常不同的。在耶穌裡我們不再有罪，靠著耶穌我們可以不再犯罪。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 罪的提醒 Reminder of Sins

作者在這段經文中繼續比較獻動物為祭和耶穌的救贖。獻動物不是贖罪的有效方法。更糟糕的是，這個儀式提醒人的罪。讓我讀 **1-4 節**。獻動物為祭無法洗淨人的罪，因為它只是一個影子。它看起來像真實的東西，但它只是一個複印本。有些人出於健康或宗教原因吃素。有一些素食的餐廳供應素的雞肉、豬肉和牛肉。這些食物看起來像肉，但它們不是肉。顧客能滿足吃肉的感覺，但是又不會違反飲食的限制。如果我是吃素的話，我寧願在家裡吃蔬菜和豆腐省錢！仿製品比不上真的東西。獻動物為祭的本意是除掉罪。但事實證明它是無效的，因此它必須不斷重複。作者在第 4 節中說，動物的血「斷不能」除去罪。整個系統不單效率低，根本是沒用的！第 11 節補充說：**凡祭司天天站著事奉神，屢次獻上一樣的祭物，這祭物永不能除罪。**這裡再次強調獻動物「不能」清除罪。那時，祭司必須按照律法每日獻祭，他們在某些節期也要獻額外的動物。此外，祭司們還應要求為人們獻上贖罪祭。你可以想像，祭師的職務很繁忙。獻祭的用意是以動物的死彌補人冒犯神。但是，如果這些儀式根本沒有用，為什麼神要求人要獻上呢？與其說儀式遮蓋人的罪，更好的理解是因為

動物為人而死，神暫時不追究責任。這些儀式實際上是提醒人的罪。每當他們想到祭壇，聽到動物被宰殺的叫聲，看到它們在火上燒，聞到香氣，就會想起自己的罪。獻動物為祭不會帶給人喜樂，因為人們明白他們容易犯罪，稍後會回來再次獻祭。儀式反而會引起其他負面情緒。首先，它使人對神產生恐懼。人們認為祂是一個嚴厲的法官，總是要求罪的懲罰。祂要按規矩辦事，毫無人情。第二，人們感到無能為力。他們永遠不可能達到完美，也無法勝過試探。為什麼要努力去做好事？第三，人們甚至可能會自滿。隨隨便便就可以了，反正有罪的補救辦法。就像有了洗衣精便不用注意保持衣服清潔，甚至可以隨時買新的。於是，只要不會對他人造成嚴重傷害，撒個小謊是無傷大雅的。事後再向神懺悔便搞定。這樣與神的關係便變成買賣的服務。人們用動物交換神的饒恕。這個制度充滿了缺點。它實際上有一個現代版本，就是天主教會的做法。基督信仰和天主教有一些共通點。它們都相信三位一體的神、聖經是真理、耶穌死在十字架上、第三天後復活等等。但它們獲得救恩的方法不同。基督徒明白，我們是因信心而得救，一切都是神的恩典。救恩是從罪人到聖徒的瞬間轉變。然而，天主教會教導救贖是一個過程。他們聲稱，除了信心，洗禮、做好事和參與聖禮都是得救必要條件。天主教徒每次舉行彌撒時都會守聖餐，因為他們相信儀式可以贖罪並增加人的信心。基督徒的聖餐是紀念耶穌的死。然而，天主教會教導說，在神父祝福餅和杯之後，它們便變成了耶穌的肉和血。他們的聖經根據是當耶穌在分餅時告訴門徒：「這是我的身體」，當祂把杯子遞給門徒時說：「這是我的血」。因此當天主教信徒守聖餐時，他們再次讓耶穌流血，藉此得到祂的赦免。我們要明白一點，我們應該尊重任何人的宗教信仰。但是，我們必須客觀地評估一些做法是否符合聖經。我們已經被耶穌救贖，得救是立時的結果。我們曾經像孤兒，但現在我們被收養到神的家中。我們已經是神的孩子，儘管我們與神的關係仍然繼續成長。對天主教徒來說，救恩比較像追求你的夢中情人。你不確定你最終是否會跟他結婚。你只能努力討好對方，希望最終他認為你做得足夠。根據聖經，沒有人能達到神完美的標準。耶穌為我們而死，跨越罪的鴻溝。辨別一個教堂是基督信仰還是天主教的一個簡單方法是看它的十字架。基督教會的十字架都是空的，正如耶穌的墳墓是空的一樣。但是在所有的天主教堂裡，耶穌的身體仍然掛在十字架上。我們的焦點不應該再是一個遺體，而是住在我們裡面的復活主。十字架不再提醒我們的罪，它是提醒我們神的恩典。當我們想到耶穌時，我們的心應該充滿喜樂和感恩。不再後任何罪惡感。

2. 罪的救贖 Redeemer for Sins

獻動物為祭提醒人的罪，它不能除去罪。相比之下，耶穌成為罪的救贖。在第5-7節中，作者引用了詩篇40篇來表明耶穌已經應驗了詩人所說的話。我們看

8-10 節對於這篇詩的解釋。耶穌廢除了獻祭的舊方式，用祂的血建立一個新的除罪方式。為什麼神不喜悅獻祭，雖然祂在律法中有所要求？也許神不喜歡人們錯誤的心態。就像我們上面說的，有些人輕看這個儀式，只做表面功夫。神看重我們的心過於我們的行為。撒母耳記上 15 章有一個關於獻祭的故事。神要求以色列王掃羅徹底消滅亞瑪力人，以審判他們的邪惡行為。這也是對掃羅順服的考驗。他殺了所有的人，但他留下他們的王。他屠殺了所有的動物，卻為自己保留最好的牲畜。當先知撒母耳指摘掃羅時，掃羅甚至兩次撒謊。他強調自己已經遵守了神的命令。他告訴撒母耳，那些動物是用來獻給神的。先知在第 22 節斥責掃羅說：「耶和華喜悅燔祭和平安祭，豈如喜悅人聽從他的話呢？聽命勝於獻祭；順從勝於公羊的脂油。」以錯誤的動機做出正確的事情，結果仍然是錯的。神是萬物的創造主，不需要人用動物來供奉祂。那是中國傳統宗教信仰的做法。人們燒一些紙製品的衣服、房子和汽車給先人。神不需要我們的東西，祂要的是我們的心。祂要求我們的順服，而不是我們的奉獻。這就是希伯來書作者要強調的重點。耶穌順服神的旨意，為我們樹立了榜樣，祂說：「我來了為要照你的旨意行」（第 7、9 節）耶穌選擇天父的旨意。耶穌放下祂的榮耀和權柄，以人的身份來到世上。作為一個人，祂不能同時出現在兩個地方。祂和我們一樣會感到疲倦、飢餓和孤獨。祂不僅是一個無辜的人，在一些惡人的手中受苦並死去。祂甘願地為我們而死。相比之下，在祭壇上被獻的動物別無選擇。我們當中有些人以前在家裡養過雞或鴨。他們小的時候很可愛。你的孩子把牠們當寵物。然而，牠們長大後卻成為你的晚餐。你的孩子無法理解你怎麼可以那麼殘忍。但是你想到的可能是下一隻要如何泡製。人有權力主宰他們飼養的動物。唯有耶穌為了拯救我們放棄自己的權柄。作為我們的救贖主，耶穌帶給我們兩方面的祝福。首先，祂使我們成為聖潔。第 10 節說：我們憑這旨意，靠耶穌基督，只一次獻上他的身體，就得以成聖。就像耶穌的死一樣，我們一次過成為聖潔的。天父已經從祂的記錄中刪除了祂兒女的犯罪記錄。在第 17 節中，作者引用了耶利米書 31 章，其中神宣告：...「我不再記念他們的罪愆和他們的過犯。」神不會像我們那樣的健忘。祂是選擇不追究那些已經被耶穌遮蓋的罪人。回想你曾經原諒別人。也許那個人真誠地向你道歉，或是你向他施予恩典。無論如何，你不再記念過去的罪，因為你重視彼此間的關係而不是你的損失。這位有權利審判我們的聖潔的神告訴我們：「我饒恕你，因為我的兒子代替了你受懲罰。」從罪中被釋放只是我們在耶穌裡新生命的開始。祂的死為我們開啟了第二個祝福。請看第 16 節：主說：「那些日子以後，我與他們所立的約乃是這樣：我要將我的律法寫在他們心上，又要放在他們的裡面。」這節經文也是引用自耶利米書 31 章。耶穌應驗了這個預言。神在西奈山與以色列人所立的約已經被廢棄了。人是悖逆的，所以沒有遵守神的律法。神預言祂會與祂的子民訂立一個新的更好的約。它不是刻在泥板上，而是

印在我們的心中。神會除去我們的石心，賜給我們一個肉心。在我們接受耶穌之前，我們被罪所束縛。我們不認識神，也無法遵行祂的旨意。我們的問題不在於缺乏知識。耶穌不只是一位偉大的老師，教導我們如何做好事。如今，你可以去學習如何修理汽車或打高爾夫球。我們的問題不是缺乏熱情。耶穌不僅是激勵我們的好榜樣。也許你從新聞看到一些富翁捐一百萬美元來幫助受自然災害的人。你對自己說：「我沒有那麼多錢。但至少我可以捐一些罐頭食品。」我們的問題是缺乏意志。耶穌給我們能力，使我們能順服天父的旨意。救恩是從自我中心改變成為以神為中心。聖靈住在我們裡面，幫助我們做討神喜悅的決定。如果我們仍然依靠自己，我們就會在罪中跌倒，我們也會充滿罪惡感。我們便覺得做基督徒比住在修道院裡更難受，彷彿神強迫我們做我們不想做的事。我們需要聖靈幫助我們勝過自己，這樣我們就會愛神過於愛自己。在談戀愛的人會想盡辦法使他們的喜歡的人開心。父母為了孩子犧牲自己的金錢、時間和財物。我們願意為我們所愛的人多跑一英里、越過困難，放下面子。耶穌為我們捨棄一切。我們稱祂為主。我們豈不應該把祂放在生命的首位，全心全意地愛祂嗎？

結論 CONCLUSION

在耶穌裡我們不再有罪，靠著耶穌我們可以不再犯罪。獻動物為祭的方式是有缺陷的。唯有耶穌能使我們成為聖潔。會幕裡沒有椅子，因為祭司是去那裡工作，而不是休息。但是耶穌現今坐在天父的右邊，因為祂已經完成了救恩工作。我們必須全心依靠祂。有一個故事是關於一位正在去市場路上的農夫。他扛著一根竹桿，兩頭放著沉重的蔬菜。一個人開著貨車經過，他看到了農夫，於是便停下來說：「老伯伯，請你上來吧。讓我送你一程。」他把老人和他的東西放在車子後面，然後繼續在崎嶇不平的路上開車。忽然，司機看著鏡子，驚訝地發現農夫一直站著，而且背著他的貨物。於是他把車停下來，走到後面詢問老人。農夫回答說：「年輕人，我很感激你省了我很多走路的时间。我可以自己扛蔬菜的。」我們會覺得他的想法很可笑。但我們不是常常靠自己過基督徒生活嗎？我們感謝耶穌救了我們。然而，我們寧願在人生的旅途中獨來獨往，以為自己有能力過得勝的生活。我們必須倚靠耶穌。唯有靠著祂的能力，我們才能勝過罪和試探，並且克服我們的頑固和悖逆，使我們順服神的旨意。