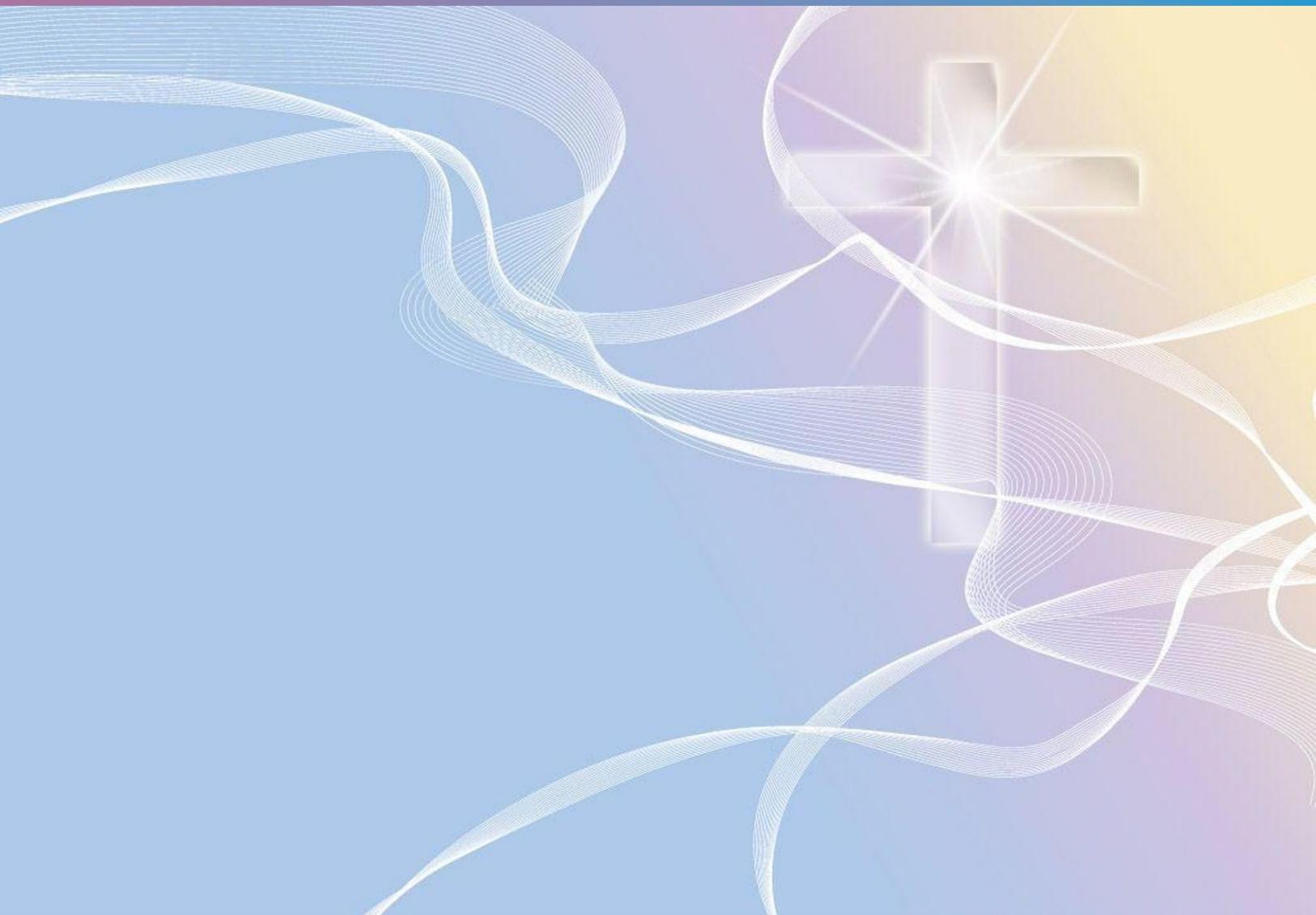


# The Cross



**Dr. Sharon Schuetz**

When Jesus lived in His fleshly body, He was alive to the power of sin and the pain and suffering it caused Him. He could feel the pain and hunger experienced by His flesh, and even the humiliation he encountered when the soldiers beat him and stripped off his clothes, and hung Him on the cross for the world to see. Even Through rejection, deprivation, persecution, and many other dealings with sinful man, sin continually tempted and hurt Him. When He laid down His life on the cross, He utterly died to its power. Sin could no longer cause him pain. Jesus redeemed humanity in this selfless act of love.

We must appreciate the price Jesus paid for our salvation for us to know the value of His sacrifice. The writer of Hebrews reveals, “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22). To purge is to “get rid of whatever is impure or undesirable.” Blood is the only thing that can remove sin. For centuries, God used the blood of animals to teach us the importance of Jesus’ blood.

The Bible shows us that it was necessary to shed blood for man from the very beginning. Immediately after declaring the curse on Adam and Eve, God killed an animal to provide clothing for them. Every significant event in the Old Testament, either preceded or followed animal sacrifice. God didn’t demand this because of His needs. He did it illustrate the importance of Christ’s blood to man’s limited human understanding. It also revealed the immense sacrifice He would make for us.

Old Testament man had only one hope beyond the grave; this was God’s promise to Abraham. God gave Moses the Law while Israel wandered in the desert. It was rigid. There was little flexibility in its demands. It declared “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.”

God promised Abraham a son who would be the source of a great nation. The nation of Israel would one day bring man's Redeemer into the world. Abraham believed God. Even in the Old Testament, faith was the only way the Saints could receive God's promises. In the Garden of Eden, God promised that one day a Redeemer would come. Their hope was a future hope. They hoped that one day their Redeemer would be born of the seed of a woman.

Sin limited what the law could do for us. It could only point out our flaws. It told us how corrupt and evil we were, but we had no power to change. It was like receiving an invitation to an elegant dinner and standing in front of a mirror to get ready. In the glass, you can see a large smudge of dirt on your face and your uncombed hair. You try to wipe the dirt off your face, and you realize that you can't move your arms. Time is passing quickly, but you can't wash your face or comb your hair. You know this is your only chance, and you can never enter unless you are spotless. What can you do?

According to the law, there was nothing you could do except to wait for a promised comb, washcloth, and the freedom to move so you can use them. You were utterly dependent on someone else. Jesus brought the washcloth and the comb and released us to have the freedom to clean up. It all came by His blood. His blood washes and cleanses our hearts, giving us the power over self and Satan to get cleaned-up and stay cleaned-up. Through His death on the cross and His resurrection, we can walk in the freedom God intended for his children.