

KIMANUG AWØØM

(Sacrifice Teaching)

Dedicated to Jesus Christ, the Lord God's Holy Son.
In Him I am free.

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WHAT IS SACRIFICE?

We all know that sacrifice in our traditional beliefs means to kill an animal and offer blood, or grain or pito to some spirit. Why have we been doing this? We have two reasons:

1) We want to offer the blood to a spirit to have a good relationship with that spirit. We want that spirit to be happy with us and to bless us.

2) We want to get some power to help us with a problem that we have. Perhaps we are sick and need health. Perhaps we are afraid of enemies and need protection. Perhaps we need to gain some money or other thing. We make a sacrifice to a spirit to give us these things.

These are the two reasons we have been making sacrifices. We either want to please a spirit to have friendship with the spirit, or we are trying to gain some power.

TRADITIONAL SACRIFICES

Now let us think about the many different ways we have been making these sacrifices to different spirits in our homes.

Sacrifices to our Grandfathers - People have the belief that our dead grandfathers and grandmothers are still able to be with us. It is believed that they can help us have safe journeys or can help us have healthy babies. People believe the dead grandfathers can give many blessings. It is believed we must feed our grandfathers or they will be angry with us and then they will bring problems to us. Some believe that if we do not give proper funerals, with proper sacrifices to the dead person, then the person's spirit will cause us problems. Therefore, some people believe if we keep our grandfathers happy with sacrifices we will have few problems in this life.

Sacrifices to Personal gods - At certain times a soothsayer will advise that it is time for a child to have his own idol. At that time the soothsayer will find a special stone and make an idol. He will enter in a room and make many noises and take a soothsayer's stone. He will mold an idol and put the stone inside of the molded dirt. Then the soothsayer will say that the spirit for the child has come to the idol. The soothsayer now says that the idol needs blood and that the idol owner always needs to be feeding it. Therefore the owner, for all his life, will have to give many sacrifices to that idol.

Sacrifices for Medicine - We know certain plants and trees have power to give healing. Some leaves help cure malaria. Some roots stop diarrhea. Some plants will heal stomach pains. There are many kinds

of medicine the Lord God has put into plants and trees.

But some people say that they can add more spiritual power to the leaves or roots. They say that they can make a sacrifice to add more power to the plants. These people make sacrifices to get medicine to heal their bodies. They say that if we give them money they can make these sacrifices for us. These people believe they can add more power to the plant than the Lord God's healing power.

Some people say they can add other powers to plants, dead animal flesh and other things. These people try to sell medicine to solve any problem at all. Some people sell medicine to make arrows find the enemy. Some people sell medicine to make a smock stronger than bullets. Other medicine is to help us find a wife, protect our farms, call the rain, protect our children and kill our enemies. Some people will try to sell medicine to protect us from witches or discover a person who is a witch. Many times sacrifices have to be made to get these medicines. We see that for every problem we have in life somebody will always be happy to collect our money to give us some special spiritual medicine. These people all say they know how to add more power to the plant or dead animal than the Lord God.

Sacrifices to Luwal Idols - Some people have special idols called luwal. They say that these idols have many great powers to solve problems. They say that if our children have measles the idol can bring healing. They say that if we need money the idol can bring the money to us. They say that if very strong witches are going to capture us they can give us protection. Some very wicked luwal offer blessings to a person if they will kill their child. Luwal idol owners say they can help us but a sacrifice always has to be made. The idol always wants blood before it will help a person.

Sacrifices to Captured Spirits - Some people say they have the power to catch spirits in the bush. They say that they can catch these spirits and lock them up in a bag. These spirits then can bless the owner if sacrifices are made to that spirit.

Sacrifices to Land Gods - Our elders have been making sacrifices to market gods, village gods and land gods for many years. They believe that these sacrifices must be made or trouble will come to the people. We know that many sacrifices have been made to spirits in rivers, rocks, hills and trees so that these spirits will bring protection and blessings.

Sacrifices for Chieftaincies - In Ghana our chiefs are making many sacrifices to protect and bless their kingdoms. They believe that unless these sacrifices are made to different spirits, they can not have a successful reign.

We have thought about the many different sacrifices we have been making. We see that there are so many sacrifices that we will not be able to count all of them. Also, we will not be able to count all the problems these sacrifices are trying to solve. In fact, we see that there will never be an end to making sacrifices in these ways. As soon as a new problem comes to us, somebody tells us we should make another sacrifice. In addition, people will always be happy to collect our money to do these sacrifices.

WHAT THE LORD GOD SAYS ABOUT THESE SACRIFICES

We have thought about many sacrifices and what people have said about them. People say these sacrifices are to our grandfathers or other spirits so that we will have blessings and protection. These are the teachings we have been hearing from our grandfathers.

Are there any other teachings about these many sacrifices? Yes, there is. These sacrifices and sacrifices like these are not new and they did not begin with the people living in Ghana. For many thousands of years people have been making sacrifices to different idols and spirits. For all these years the Lord God, Who created heaven and earth, has not been happy about these sacrifices. For many years the Lord God has been trying to warn people that all these sacrifices are useless and are in truth very evil. Over 3000 years ago God's true prophets wrote books to teach the truth about the Lord God and about these many different sacrifices. What are these teachings from the Lord God?

1) In the Beginning God Created Humans and All Things Holy

God's Word teaches that God created all things. In the beginning all humans, animals and land were good and holy.

God's Word says:

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. Genesis 1:31

In the beginning there was no death, no illness and no hatred. Everything was full of goodness and love without any suffering. Human beings loved each other perfectly and loved God perfectly. There were no problems or troubles at all.

At that time, in the new and perfect earth, the Lord God gave the first people only one command. Man was not supposed to eat of one special tree. The tree was called the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

God's Word says:

And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." Genesis 2:16,17

But Satan did not want the people to live such a happy life free from problems. Satan was an angel who rebelled from God and became very evil. Satan wanted the people to suffer punishment and fire like he was forced to suffer by the Lord God. Satan made himself to look like a snake and came to the first man and first woman and told them lies. Satan said,

"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:3,4

The first man and first woman listened to Satan's lies and followed Satan and forgot about God's Word. They ate the fruit from the tree the Lord God had commanded not to eat. These first people turned against the Lord God who created them. Instead they listened to Satan's lies against the Lord God. The people thought they were doing a good thing by looking to another power besides the Lord God, but instead they only got problems, suffering and death. In truth, the first people only received troubles by following Satan. They did not receive any blessings at all.

God's Word says:

To the woman God said,

"I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

To Adam God said,

“Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.” Genesis 3:16-19

The first man and the first woman followed Satan's lies and instead of receiving blessings they received suffering and death.

2) Now All People Have Sin, Believe Satan's Lies
and Are Greatly Confused About Spiritual Teachings

Since Satan first fooled people and the people sinned against God, Satan continues to fool all people. Satan continues to lie to people to follow their own ideas and never to listen to God's Word. All people have lost God's Word and do not know God's true teachings. All people... black people, white people, Arab people, Chinese people...all people lost God's Word and lost His holiness.

God's Word says:

The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one. Psalm 14:2,3

Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit. Psalm 5:9

There is no fear of God before their eyes. Psalm 36:1

There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 3:22,23

Human beings followed Satan's ways so that all people have become evil like Satan. All people have sinned against God and we have become God's enemies.

God's Word says:

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. Colossians 1:21

Satan is very happy that we have become God's enemies. Satan is very happy that all people have received sufferings and death because we follow Satan's evil ways. He continues to tell lies to people so that the people will not listen to God's Word. Jesus Christ, God's Holy Son, said,

Satan was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:44

Jesus Christ also said:

As soon as some people hear God's Word Satan comes and takes away the word that was put into them. Mark 4:15

Satan wants us to hear his lies and believe them. He wants us to turn away from the truth of God's Word and believe in evil lies. God's Word says Satan is like a lion trying to destroy all people.

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 1 Peter 5:8

Satan wants to murder and destroy all people's souls and bodies. He wants people to believe his lies and turn away from the Lord God and God's Word. Satan wants us to remain blind to God's teachings. Satan lies to all people. Satan tells no truth. Satan wants people to turn away from life to go into death.

In addition, God's Word teaches that the thinking of all people is utterly confused. There is no understanding about God and no one is truly trying to seek the Lord God.

We then must consider all the traditional teachings about the sacrifices that our people have been making. Are the sacrifices truly to the grandfather? Are the sacrifices truly to a spirit who will help us? Are the sacrifices for medicine truly going to help us? All these teachings about sacrifices are in truth lies from Satan. Satan has fooled thousands and thousands of people for many years about the true teachings about of these sacrifices.

Satan has been telling lies that these sacrifices are good and powerful and people have been believing these lies. But God's Word teaches that people who make idols are really making nothing at all. They believe the idol has power, but in fact, the idol is nothing.

God's Word has very clear teaching about all these idols and their sacrifices.

God's Word says:

Wood is man's fuel for burning; some of it he takes and warms himself, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. But he also fashions a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it. Half of the wood he burns in the fire; over it he prepares his meal, he roasts his meat and eats his fill. He also warms himself and says, "Ah! I am warm; I see the fire." From the rest he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships. He prays to it and says, "Save me; you are my god."

They know nothing, they understand nothing; their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see, and their minds closed so they cannot understand. No one stops to think, no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, "Half of it I used for fuel; I even baked bread over its coals, I roasted meat and I ate. Shall I make a detestable thing from what is left? Shall I bow down to a block of wood?" He feeds on ashes, a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, "Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?" Isaiah 44:15-20

The people living at the time of Isaiah's life were making idols out of wood and calling them gods. Isaiah writes that making such wood gods is completely foolish, useless and evil. Our people also have also been making such idols out of wood, dirt and stones.

Our soothsayers, idol owners, fetish priests and medicine men have been saying that they know the correct sacrifices for every problem. They say that they can call the correct spirits to solve all our problems. They say that they can make us idols. They say that they can capture spirits for us to worship. They say that we can feed our grandfathers' idols. They say that they can lead us to make sacrifices to spirits in trees, rocks and water for blessings. But even the traditions admit that soothsayers' advice cannot be trusted and the advice are called lies even while making the sacrifice.

God's Word says that all people's thinking is spoiled and do not know the truth. Nobody is looking to the true God. The truth is that the Lord God calls all these sacrifices to idols and spirits utterly evil. God wants all people to clearly see that all these idols have no power. The sacrifices are useless. People should stop these sacrifices to idols and believe and worship the only true God.

3. Our Grandfathers Have Known Some Truth about Sacrifices

In truth, our grandfathers have known that all these sacrifices are against the Lord God. They knew that it was the Lord God Who has created all things. They knew He alone deserves all honor. Therefore before making sacrifices they have often said, "Excuse me, Lord God."

The Lord God has given all people the knowledge that He is the only true God and all people should worship Him. Our grandfathers also knew that the Lord God has the true power. But Satan has lied to us that we should worship our grandfathers and other spirits. We have believed Satan's lies and therefore we have been giving sacrifices to many false gods.

God's Word says:

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities-- his eternal power and divine nature-- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Romans 1:18-23

God's Word teaches that even though people can plainly see that there is an Almighty Lord God who made all things, they still refuse to worship Him. Instead, they worship many different animals, spirits and idols. If a person tries to excuse himself before God, the Lord God Himself says, "men are without excuse."

All people who make sacrifices and worship false gods are in great danger. If these people do not stop worshipping and serving false gods, the Lord God will bring down a mighty punishment upon them and completely condemn them for time without end. The Lord God will judge these people and they will suffer punishment in terrible fire for time without end.

God's Word says:

But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars-- their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death. Revelation 21:8

THE LORD GOD'S TRUE AND HOLY SACRIFICE

The Lord God truly loves all people and does not want Satan to deceive people and go into the eternal fire.

The Lord God says:

Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign Lord. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live? Ezekiel 18:23

But the Lord God knows that all people are complete sinners. He knows our thinking is completely confused. We do not know what is right and what is wrong. We do not know how to make any true and holy sacrifice. In fact, God's Word says that even when we try to do any good work, even that good work is full of sin.

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. Isaiah 64:6

The Lord God knows all people need help to be saved. We are sinners. We are listening to Satan's lies and do not know the truth. We are blind and walking the road that leads to eternal punishment and fire.

But God loves all people and wants to save us. Therefore, even from the very beginning time when the first man and woman sinned, God had a plan how to save us. God's plan was to make a sacrifice Himself to wash away all our evil sins. God's plan was to defeat Satan so that Satan would have no more power over people.

No person can make any sacrifice to get blessings and protection because all people are sinful and believe Satan's lies. Any person who says that can make any sacrifice to help us is only repeating lies from Satan.

Only the Lord God is holy and knows a true and holy sacrifice. The Lord God chose to make His Own Son to be the Holy Sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sin. His Son was born on the earth to do this holy sacrifice work. His Son was born from the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. This man's name is Jesus Christ. Jesus means "Savior." Christ means "the one chosen by God."

God's Word says:

But now Jesus Christ has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people Hebrews 9:26-28

Jesus Christ was a holy man who did no evil thing in His whole life. Jesus taught God's Word and did many powerful miracles proving that He was God's Son. The other religious leaders were jealous of Jesus' true teaching and power from God and had Jesus put to death. Jesus died a painful death on the cross. But His death on the cross was God's plan to make a holy and saving sacrifice for all people.

The reason that Jesus Christ came to earth was to die a sacrifice death. John the Baptizer, a prophet of the Lord God who lived during Jesus' lifetime, clearly prophesied that Jesus was the Lord God's Sacrifice.

God's Word says:

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29

A lamb was one of the sacrifice animals the Lord God had told the Jewish people to use when making sacrifices to Him. But no animal sacrifice could truly take away sins. These animal sacrifices were only to be made for some years until the Lord God's, true and holy Son came to make the Holy Sacrifice with His own body.

God's Word says:

Jesus Himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. 1 Peter 2:24

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ's own body and blood was the most powerful and holy sacrifice to save all people. His holy sacrifice work was the end of all sacrifices. No other sacrifices are needed anymore. Jesus knew that His own death was God's holy sacrifice for all people. Jesus said, "It is finished!" before he died. (John 19:30) Jesus' last words meant that no more sacrifices were needed to save people. The Lord God's

saving work was done.

God's Word says:

The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, purifies us from every sin. 1 John 1:7

Only the Lord God had the wisdom to know how to save people. All people were always making sacrifices that were polluted with sin. Therefore the Lord God Himself had to choose the correct, holy sacrifice. The sacrifice was His Own Son, Jesus Christ. Now that Jesus has died all our sins are forgiven and no other sacrifices are needed.

THE THREE GREAT VICTORIES OF JESUS' SACRIFICE DEATH

Jesus' sacrifice death gives us victory over our three great enemies. These three enemies are sin, Satan and death.

1) VICTORY OVER SIN

Sin is a great enemy to all people. We read in God's Word before that all people are complete sinners and no one can do anything to make himself holy. Sin completely controls people's minds and spirits. Sin is the master of all people.

The Lord God knew that sin was our master and He wanted to free us from the power of sin. But our sin had to be punished and also washed away from all people. The Lord God chose a holy sacrifice to do this work. The Lord God chose Jesus to make the sacrifice with Jesus' own life.

God's prophet Isaiah wrote about Jesus' sacrifice death:

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. Isaiah 53:4,5,6

Jesus was the true Son of God and had no sin. But when Jesus died on the cross God put all the sins of all people on Jesus so that Jesus carried all sins and punishment. This is why Isaiah wrote,

“he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.”

We deserved God's punishment, but instead God punished Jesus. We deserved to be killed for our sins against God, but Jesus Christ was killed instead of us.

The Lord God also does another wonderful thing for everybody who believes in Jesus Christ. **GOD ALSO GIVES THE HOLINESS OF JESUS TO ALL WHO BELIEVE.**

God's Word says,

God made Jesus who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Jesus we might become the holiness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21

For all who believe in Jesus a great exchange happens. All our sins go onto Jesus and all His holiness comes to us. Therefore, all believers in Jesus are washed from sins and are holy before the Lord God. We

call this “**Jesus' Exchange Sacrifice.**”

Whoever believes in Jesus' Exchange Sacrifice has been washed clean from sins and has victory over sin. The Lord God gives every believer in Jesus' Exchange Sacrifice the most perfect holiness of His true Son, Jesus Christ. Every disciple of Jesus Christ has complete forgiveness and the Lord God's total holiness.

2) VICTORY OVER SATAN

Without God's help, Satan is the master of all people. We have read before in God's Word that Satan lies to people, confuses people's thinking and tricks people to refuse God's Word. When people are confused in such a way, they look to many kinds of sacrifices and medicines for protection and blessings. All ideas about these sacrifices and medicines are Satan's tricks to make people refuse the Lord God.

But the Lord God is not happy that Satan has been the master of people. The Lord God wants to break Satan and save us.

God's Word says:

The reason the Son of God came to earth was to destroy Satan's work. 1 John 3:8

Jesus Christ said that when He died on the cross Satan would be defeated. Jesus said:

Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.
John 12:31

Jesus Christ has complete victory over Satan. Jesus gives victory over Satan to all who believe in Him. Jesus said that all Satan's evil powers and spirits can not defeat anybody who believes in Him. Not Satan, no evil power, no evil medicine, no spirits, no witches, no dead ancestors, no evil human being can truly harm a Christian. Jesus Christ completely controls all powers, both good and evil, in earth and in heaven. Jesus Christ has complete power to protect His people.

God's Word says that Jesus Christ

disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. Colossians 2:15

Jesus' victory over all evil powers and spirits is complete. The meaning of these words from the book of Colossians in the disciple Paul's native language is:

When Jesus Christ died on the cross He completely took away all the weapons of all evil powers. Jesus stripped the evil powers naked and insulted them in front of all people. When Jesus died on the cross He made a successful holy sacrifice to save all people and all the powers of Satan are broken.

God's Word says:

For God has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves Colossians 1:13

Satan wants all people to follow him so they will go into his kingdom of death, fire and punishment. The Lord God did not agree. The Lord God sent Jesus Christ to completely defeat Satan to bring us in to God's house of love, forgiveness and everlasting life.

3) VICTORY OVER DEATH

When the first man and woman disobeyed the Lord God they became sinners. Also many sufferings came to them. The Lord God told Adam:

By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return. Genesis 3:19

The final punishment was that all people must die. People's bodies would rot in the grave and go back to the soil. But the Lord God had a plan so that people's bodies would not die forever.

When Jesus Christ died his sacrifice death on the cross He did not stay dead. *AFTER BEING BURIED THREE DAYS IN A GRAVE, JESUS CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD!*

The disciple Paul wrote:

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me 1 Corinthians 15:3-8

No other religious leader ever rose from the dead. Many prophets have come and taught many things. Our grandfathers have taught many things, but nobody has ever risen from the dead. The soothsayers and fetish priests say they have many powers, but they can not make any person's body rise from the dead. Only Jesus Christ died and rose again from the dead. Only Jesus Christ has victory over death.

God's Word says:

Jesus was declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead. Romans 1:4

Jesus has complete victory over sin and Satan. He also has complete victory over our enemy death. There is no more death for Jesus Christ, only life. There is also no more death for all who believe in Jesus Christ.

God Word says:

For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

Jesus Christ said:

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. John 11:25,26

All who believe in Jesus Christ have eternal life waiting for them. Death for believers in Jesus Christ is only the door to eternal life in the Lord God's house.

Jesus promised:

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. John 14:1-3

For all who believe in Jesus Christ, Jesus is preparing special rooms in God's house to live forever. Death

on earth is only a little suffering that the believer will not even remember when he lives in God's house.

The disciple Paul wrote:

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. Romans 8:18

In the Lord God's house there will be complete joy and all suffering will end. The Lord God gave the disciple John a vision of God's beautiful house.

The disciple John wrote:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." Revelation 21:1-4

These are the three victories Jesus Christ gives to all who believe in Him:

- 1) Victory over Sin - Jesus gives us complete forgiveness of sins.
- 2) Victory over Satan - Jesus has utterly defeated Satan and all evil powers. The believer in Christ has no fear of evil powers.
- 3) Victory over Death - Jesus has finished death forever. Believers in Jesus do not have to fear any death but have beautiful hope for eternal life in God's house.

HOW CAN WE RECEIVE THE VICTORIES OF JESUS' SACRIFICE DEATH AND RESURRECTION?

Now that we have heard about Jesus' Christ's sacrifice death and resurrection, how do we receive its blessings for our own lives? It is very simple. It is not hard.

God's Word says:

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8,9

We are complete sinners. We have no power to make ourselves holy or acceptable to the Lord God. Because the Lord God loves us so greatly He freely forgives our sins through Jesus' sacrifice death. We do not have to do anything to receive salvation. God Himself will put faith in our hearts so that we can believe in Jesus Christ. There is no work we can do to save ourselves. There is no sacrifice we can do to save ourselves. God's salvation is completely free.

God's gift of salvation and victory comes to people in three ways: 1) God's Word, 2) Holy Baptism, 3) The Lord's Supper.

1) God's Word Bring Us Jesus' Sacrifice Victories

God's Word says:

Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.
Romans 10:17

God puts faith in people's hearts so that they can believe. Through hearing and reading God's Word, the Holy Spirit puts faith into people so that they can be saved.

The disciple Paul wrote:

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. Romans 1:16

Jesus Christ said:

If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. John 8:31-32

God's Word has true power to completely change and convert the unbeliever into a believer in Jesus Christ. Jesus gives complete freedom from sin, Satan and death through His Word.

2) Holy Baptism Brings Us Jesus' Sacrifice Victories

When Jesus' disciples received power from the Holy Spirit to preach about Jesus, the disciple Peter preached a powerful sermon to the Jewish people. Some of the people listening were the same people who had agreed to kill Jesus on the cross. But after the disciple Peter preached the Lord God's word, the people changed.

God's Word says:

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-- for all whom the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:37-39

Holy Baptism is washing a person with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. It is a simple work. But Holy Baptism is very powerful because in Holy Baptism the Lord God gives people the power of Jesus' Sacrifice Death and Resurrection.

God's Word says:

Baptism that now saves you also-- not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand-- with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him. 1 Peter 3:21,22

The complete power and victory of Jesus Christ's Sacrifice Death and Resurrection comes to us in Holy Baptism.

God's Word says:

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. Romans 6:3,4

If we want the power of Jesus Christ's Sacrifice Death and Resurrection, then the Lord God tells us to hear His Word about Jesus, turn away from our sins and be baptized in His Name. Holy Baptism gives us the three victories of Jesus Holy Sacrifice Death over sin, Satan and death.

3) The Lord's Supper Brings Jesus' Sacrifice Victories

Jesus Christ left His followers another way to receive the victories over sin, Satan and death. He told His disciples to eat a special meal which He promised would have great blessings for them.

God's Word says:

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." Matthew 26:26-28

In this special meal Jesus Christ promises to give His body and blood inside the bread and wine to eat and drink. Jesus promises that every time a believer eats this holy food, he is receiving blessings from the very sacrifice Jesus Christ made on the cross for all people's sins. This food is Jesus Christ's holy sacrifice food for the forgiveness of our sins. When we take this holy food we take the power of Jesus' holy sacrifice. We receive victory over sin, Satan and death. We call this holy sacrifice food The Lord's Supper, Holy Communion, or God's Gift of Holy Sacrifice Food.

The disciple Paul writes that when a believer in Jesus takes this holy sacrifice food that person shows his faith in Jesus' Holy Sacrifice Death on the cross.

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
1 Corinthians 11:26

Paul taught Christians that when we eat Jesus' body and blood in the bread and wine we have a very wonderful relationship with Jesus Christ. We join in a fellowship with Him.

Paul wrote:

Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? 1 Corinthians 10:14-16

When Christians take Jesus holy sacrifice food we have a union with Jesus Christ that brings us great blessings and comfort. It is a fellowship with Jesus and His sacrifice work for us which He made on the cross when He died for our sins. The power and blessings of His sacrifice death are given in the food to Jesus' disciples.

Paul also warns then, flee from idolatry. Nobody should mix Jesus' holy sacrifice with evil sacrifices. The person who believes in Jesus Christ' Sacrifice Death and Resurrection will never trust in any another sacrifice again for blessing and protection. He will never make a sacrifice to the grandfathers or any other spirit again.

Paul wrote:

Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar? Do I mean then that a sacrifice offered to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy? Are we stronger than he? 1 Corinthians 10:18-22

A true believer in Jesus Christ stops all other sacrifices. A true believer knows the only sacrifice that is acceptable to the Lord God is the sacrifice Jesus Christ made. All other sacrifices are made to Satan and the demons. If a person takes both Jesus Christ's holy sacrifice food and also makes other sacrifices, then he mocks Jesus Christ. Such a person is bragging that he is more powerful than the Lord God who created the heavens and earth and all things in it! A true believer in Jesus Christ rejoices to live only in the power and victories of Jesus true and holy sacrifice.

The first people to believe the Good News of Jesus Christ rejoiced to believe in Jesus. They were happy to burn and destroy all their idols and magic books.

God's Word says:

Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. {A drachma was a silver coin worth about a day's wages.} In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power. Acts 19:18-20

When people hear and believe in Jesus Christ they are happy to destroy all other gods and powers in their lives. Those people were happy to destroy books that were worth more than 100,000,000 cedis!

WHICH SACRIFICE FOR US?

Do we want sinful sacrifices advised by sinful soothsayers and offered by sinful men to demons? Or do we want the Holy Sacrifice offered by the Lord God's own Holy Son, Jesus Christ?

Will we follow Satan's lies to make sacrifices that will lead us to hell fire? Or will we joyfully gain victories over sin, Satan and death by the all-powerful sacrifice death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Holy Son of the Lord God?

Will we trust in the blood of chickens, goats and other beasts? Or will we trust in the holy, precious blood of the Son of God, Jesus Christ? Jesus shed His Own blood for us out of His everlasting love for us. Can a goat love us? Or can God's Son love us and save us?

Will we be happy to shed a chicken's blood on the powerless idol and say, "Now I am saved"? Or will we be happy to hear God's Word, receive God's Holy Baptism and eat Jesus Christ's Holy Sacrifice Food for our salvation?

Will we be happy to enter God's joyful house when we die through faith in Jesus Christ? Or do we want to enter Satan's house of fire to suffer for eternity?

Who is truly our God? Is the true God the Lord God who created the heavens and the earth and His Son, Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit? Or is our god molded from a ball of dirt full of chicken's blood?

Today the Lord God is calling you in the same way He called the people in Joshua's time.

Joshua said to the people:

Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:14-15

May the Lord God's Holy Spirit lead you to speak this prayer in complete faith and trust:

Dear Lord God,

You are Creator and Maker of all things. You have made the sun, moon, stars and the whole earth. You made all the plants and animals. And Lord God, you have made me.

But I am a sinner, Lord God. I have listened to Satan's lies. I have been too proud and I have refused your holy Word. I have looked to other powers and other gods. I have completely forgotten about you. I have sinned against you, Holy Lord God.

I beg you to forgive me all my sins. In the name of your Holy Son, Jesus Christ, I beg you to forgive me all my sins. I beg you to free me from the power of Satan and all his evil powers. I beg you to save me from the fires of hell. I beg you in the name of your Holy Son, Jesus Christ, to make a room for me in your house.

Lord God, help me believe your holy Word. Help me to trust in your Holy Baptism. Help me to eat Jesus' Holy Sacrifice Food with a believing heart.

Save me, Lord God. Forgive me. Wash me clean by the power of Jesus' blood shed on the cross. Help me to love you and all people. Help me to live as your true child.

I pray in the Holy, Precious Name of Jesus Christ, Your Beloved Son. Amen.