

Tuesday 18th January 2021

Leviticus 14: 4 *“the priest shall order that two live clean birds and some cedar wood, scarlet yarn and hyssop be brought for the one to be cleansed.”*

Psalm 51: 7 *“Cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;*

wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

Hebrews 9: 19 *“When Moses had proclaimed every commandment of the law to all the people, he took the blood of calves, together with water, scarlet wool and branches of hyssop, and sprinkled the scroll and all the people.”*

Hyssop is a plant in the mint family with blue flowers and which grows in Southern Europe and the Middle East. Although sweet smelling and thought to have healing properties it is the spiritual symbolism which was important to the early Israelites. Branches of hyssop were used by the Israelites to daub blood of a sacrificed lamb on the door frames of their houses in Egypt. That way the people in the marked houses were ‘passed over’ for destruction by God and their escape from captivity was facilitated.

This connection between sacrificial blood and the forgiveness of sin was maintained throughout Biblical times and surfaced on the cross with Christ being given, by means of a hyssop branch a sponge soaked in vinegar to drink.

Christ’s instruction for the taking of bread (body) and wine (blood) built on this connection to the past and serves to remind us today of the redemption gained by His sacrifice on the Cross.