

The Bible of Blood

Series 1-15

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### **Introduction to The Bible of Blood**

There are some subjects in Scripture that men may neglect for a time and still pretend to have religion, and then there are some subjects that, once removed, leave behind nothing but a shell with church language painted on it. The blood is one of those subjects. Take away the blood, and you do not have Christianity in any real biblical sense. You may still have buildings, sermons, music, traditions, denominations, committees, robes, candles, pulpits, seminaries, and religious talk, but you do not have the faith once delivered unto the saints. You have something hollow, something bloodless, something polished enough for a world that hates Calvary but still likes spirituality in soft, respectable forms. The Bible will not allow that kind of religion for one moment. From the opening pages of Genesis to the closing visions of Revelation, blood runs through the Book like a scarlet river because sin is real, guilt is real, death is real, holiness is real, and redemption was purchased at terrible cost. The God of Scripture did not save sinners by pretending their rebellion was small. He saved them by the shedding of blood. That is why this series matters. It is not a side journey into one narrow doctrine. It is a march through one of the great central realities of divine revelation.

The Bible of Blood is therefore not a strange title. It is an honest title. This Book begins with blood crying from the ground, moves through blood on the altar, blood on the doorposts, blood on the mercy seat, blood of the covenant, innocent blood, cleansing blood, and justifying blood, and it ends with the Lamb that was slain and the winepress of the wrath of God. The blood in Scripture is never casual. It is never decorative. It is never merely emotional language meant to stir weak minds. It is judicial, covenantal, priestly, sacrificial, redemptive, and prophetic. It accuses. It testifies. It covers. It seals. It cleanses. It redeems. It preserves. It judges. The blood tells the truth about man by showing what his sin deserved. The blood tells the truth about God by showing what His holiness required. The blood tells the truth about Christ by showing what His death accomplished. That is why every generation that drifts away from the Bible starts trying to clean up the language of blood, tone down the preaching of blood, reinterpret the meaning of blood, or replace the message of blood with something more refined and less offensive. Men do that because blood theology humiliates human pride. It tells the sinner he is so ruined that nothing less than the death of the sinless Son of God could save him.

This series is meant to trace that scarlet line in full force and with full reverence. It will move from Abel to Calvary, from Egypt to the cross, from Leviticus to Hebrews, from the covenant at Sinai to the new testament in Christ's blood, from the blood that justifies the believer to the blood that marks judgment on a Christ-rejecting world. Along the way, one truth must remain fixed in the center: the Lamb who was slain is not a side note in the Book of God, but the blazing center of it. Everything before Him points toward Him, and everything after Him draws its meaning from Him. If this Book is bloody, it is because redemption is costly. If the cross is bloody, it is because sin is dreadful. If heaven still sings of the blood, it is because eternity itself will never exhaust the worth of what Jesus Christ accomplished when He shed it. So this series is not written to entertain religious curiosity. It is written to drive one final truth home with unmistakable force: take away the blood, and you do not merely weaken Christianity. You destroy it.

## **1 of 15: The Bible of Blood - The First Cry from the Ground**

### **Introduction**

The Bible does not begin its doctrine of blood in a tabernacle, at an altar, or in a temple court with a priest in linen garments standing beside a brazen laver. It begins in a field. It begins with jealousy, rage, violence, and a dead man lying on the ground while his brother stands nearby trying to hide what heaven has already seen. That is how God opens the subject. The first mention of blood in Scripture is not ceremonial. It is moral. It is judicial. It is accusatory. It is the Lord saying to Cain, "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Genesis 4:10). That one verse ought to stop a man cold and shake him out of every sentimental notion he has about sin. Blood in the Bible is not first associated with pageantry or symbolism. It is associated with guilt that cannot be buried, murder that cannot be silenced, and a God who hears what no man can hear. Abel's blood had no tongue in his mouth, but once it was shed, it found a voice before the throne of God. Right there in the opening pages of Scripture, the Lord shows you that blood speaks.

That first appearance sets the tone for the whole Book. Blood is tied to life, because when blood is shed, life is taken. Blood is tied to accountability, because when blood is shed, God does not shrug. Blood is tied to judgment, because when blood is shed unjustly, heaven records it and will answer it. Before the reader ever reaches Leviticus, before the passover lamb, before the mercy seat, before the priest sprinkles blood before the veil, he is taught the raw truth that blood spilled on earth rises as testimony in heaven. The ground may soak it up. Men may step over it. Empires may build on top of it. Generations may forget it. But God does not forget it.

"When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble" (Psalms 9:12). That means the blood doctrine in Scripture begins with a moral order so fixed and so holy that injustice cannot disappear into silence. It cries. It testifies. It accuses.

That is why this first essay is the perfect doorway into The Bible of Blood. Before blood ever appears as atonement, it appears as accusation. Before blood covers, it condemns. Before blood is applied for cleansing, it is exposed as evidence. God starts there on purpose. He starts with the crime before He reveals the cure. He starts with the wound before He reveals the balm. He starts with the cry from the ground before He shows the blood that "speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:24). If a man does not understand the first cry of blood, he will never understand why the blood of Jesus Christ matters. He will think Calvary was only a display of love or courage or martyrdom, when in fact it was heaven's answer to the cry of guilt that had been rising from the earth since Genesis 4. The Bible is a bloody Book because this world is a guilty world, and God is not blind, deaf, or senile. He sees the blood, He hears the cry, and He answers it in His own time and in His own way.

### **1. The First Mention of Blood Is a Crime Scene**

The first mention of blood in the Bible is one of the most revealing first mentions in all of Scripture. The Lord does not introduce blood by saying, Here is a priestly substance to be handled with ceremonial care. He introduces it at the scene of a murder. Cain has risen up against Abel his brother and slain him, and when the Lord confronts him, He says, "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Genesis 4:10). That means blood enters biblical revelation not as decoration but as evidence. It is evidence of violence. It is evidence of guilt. It is evidence that something sacred has been violated. A life made in the image of God has been taken, and the blood left behind is not mute. It speaks as witness in God's court.

That first mention tells you immediately that life and blood are inseparably connected. Later, the Lord will state plainly, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11), and again, "the blood is the life" (Deuteronomy 12:23). But the principle is already operating in Genesis before it is explained in Leviticus. Abel's blood cries because Abel's life has been violently taken. Cain has not merely spilled a liquid. He has assaulted the life of a man. He has attacked what belongs to God. That is why the Lord treats the blood as a witness. Bloodshed is not merely a social offense. It is a theological offense. It is rebellion against the God who gave life in the first place.

Now that ought to settle something right away. The Bible does not view blood the way modern culture views it. The world reduces bloodshed to statistics, collateral damage, unfortunate outcomes, or political necessity. God does not talk that way. The first mention of blood tells you

that when blood is shed unjustly, God asks, "What hast thou done?" (Genesis 4:10). That is not the language of therapeutic adjustment. That is the language of moral reckoning. The Lord does not ask Cain how he was feeling, whether his emotional needs were met, or whether he had unresolved trauma from family dynamics. He asks him what he did. That question hangs over the whole subject of blood in the Bible. Blood confronts the sinner with the reality of action, accountability, and divine awareness. It is heaven's way of saying that guilt leaves a stain no man can scrub out.

## **2. Blood Has a Voice Before God**

When the Lord says Abel's blood crieth unto Him from the ground, He is revealing one of the deepest truths in Scripture. Blood has a voice. Not in the ears of men, but in the court of heaven. Abel cannot speak anymore. Cain has silenced him on earth. But God hears what Cain cannot suppress. That means death does not erase testimony. Violence does not erase evidence. The grave does not erase the moral record. The blood itself becomes a witness. That is why later Scripture continues to speak this way. Job says, "O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place" (Job 16:18). In other words, he understands the principle from Genesis. Shed blood cries, and uncovered blood calls for answer.

This theme runs through the Bible because God intends for the reader to feel the weight of it. Blood is not only matter. It is testimony. It testifies that life has been taken. It testifies that sin has acted. It testifies that judgment is due. That is why innocent blood is such a repeated phrase throughout Scripture. The Lord condemns those who "shed innocent blood" (Jeremiah 22:17). He hates "hands that shed innocent blood" (Proverbs 6:17). Jerusalem is charged with being full of blood, and that blood becomes a witness against her. When men think a deed is done and buried, the Lord says the blood is still talking. It is still on record. It is still in evidence. It is still crying for divine inquisition.

That truth ought to rattle the modern conscience. Men imagine that once a victim is dead and buried, the matter is closed. The Bible says no. The blood remains in God's sight. That is why Abel is so important. He is the first man in Scripture whose shed blood becomes a voice of accusation, and in that sense he stands at the head of a long line of blood witnesses. Jesus Christ later speaks of "the blood of righteous Abel" (Matthew 23:35), showing that the Lord never forgot that first murder in the field. Thousands of years passed, but God still remembered Abel's blood. Time does not weaken the testimony. Blood has a memory in the sight of God, and when the Lord determines to make inquisition, the cry is heard as fresh as the day it was shed.

## **3. Abel's Blood Cries for Justice**

There is something else in Genesis 4 that must be faced squarely. Abel's blood is not crying for comfort, inspiration, or sentimental remembrance. It is crying for justice. Cain has committed a

wrong that demands reckoning. The blood from the ground is a witness against him, and the Lord immediately pronounces judgment. "And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand" (Genesis 4:11). Notice that wording. The earth received the blood, but God names Cain's hand. Heaven identifies the guilty party. The blood cries. God hears. The guilty hand is singled out. Judgment falls. That is biblical justice in its barest early form.

This is why blood in Scripture is often connected with vengeance and requital. The Lord says, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Genesis 9:6). He says, "I will avenge the blood of Jezreel" (Hosea 1:4). He says of Babylon, "my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea" (Jeremiah 51:35). The pattern is consistent. Shed blood calls for answer because bloodshed is not an accident in God's moral universe. It is an act against the image of God. That is why Abel's blood introduces the subject so sharply. The Bible does not ease into the doctrine. It strikes the reader across the face with it. Blood cries for justice because God is just.

Now here is where men start to squirm, because modern religion loves mercy but hates justice unless justice is aimed at somebody else. Yet if there is no justice, mercy is just softness with no backbone. Abel's blood demands justice because wrong has been done. The cry from the ground exposes the moral order of the universe. God is not indifferent. He is not detached. He is not a passive observer taking notes while the wicked do as they please. The first blood cry in Scripture proves that heaven is morally alive. The Lord hears. The Lord knows. The Lord answers. And unless a man understands that, he will never understand why atonement must be more than a sentimental gesture. Atonement has to deal with justice because blood cries for justice from the very beginning.

#### **4. Cain Is the First Blood Guilty Religious Man**

One of the most striking things in Genesis 4 is that Cain is not a pagan in a jungle somewhere howling at the moon. He is a religious man. He brings an offering. He comes into the presence of the Lord. He talks with God. And then he kills his brother. That means the first blood guilty man in the Bible is not an atheist. He is a worshipper on his own terms. He is a religious rebel. He offers "of the fruit of the ground" (Genesis 4:3), while Abel offers "of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof" (Genesis 4:4). Cain refuses God's appointed way and then turns violent when his worship is rejected. That is the beginning of blood guilty religion.

This is not some small side note. It is one of the great patterns of Scripture. False religion almost always ends in blood. The prophets are slain. Innocents are sacrificed. Christ is crucified. Martyrs are killed. Why? Because religion without God's righteousness becomes murderous when confronted with truth. Cain hates Abel because Abel's offering exposed Cain's religion as unacceptable. "Wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's

righteous" (1 John 3:12). There it is. Cain's religion was works based. Abel's acceptance was based on righteousness by faith in God's way. Cain could not stand that, so he shed blood. The first cry from the ground comes from a victim of proud religion.

That lesson is still as current as tomorrow morning. Men get the idea that the most dangerous people in the world are always the openly profane. Sometimes they are. But some of the bloodiest hands in history have been attached to men with ceremonies, robes, altars, temples, and holy language. Cain starts that line. He is religious enough to bring an offering and rebellious enough to reject revelation. Then he proves the ugliness of his heart by spilling righteous blood. So before the Bible ever introduces blood on an altar for atonement, it introduces blood on the ground because of religion. That alone ought to wake up any reader to the fact that blood and religion are tied together from the beginning, but only one side of that connection is accepted by God. Blood shed in rebellion condemns. Blood shed by divine appointment redeems.

### **5. The Ground Receives Blood and Becomes a Witness**

There is a remarkable phrase in Genesis 4 where the Lord says the earth has "opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand" (Genesis 4:11). The ground itself becomes part of the testimony. The blood goes into the earth, and the earth is pictured as receiving it. That is not poetic fluff thrown in to sound dramatic. It is revelation. The creation itself is shown as participating in the moral order God has established. The earth receives what Cain sheds, and then the same earth becomes part of Cain's curse. The place that received the blood now stands against the murderer. That means bloodshed affects more than the victim and the perpetrator. It pollutes the world into which it is poured.

Later Scripture confirms that principle. Numbers 35:33 says, "blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." There is your doctrine. Bloodshed pollutes land. The earth is not morally neutral in the Bible. It is not just a platform on which men act out their crimes. It bears witness to what is done upon it. That is why the prophets speak of lands full of blood, cities built with blood, and judgment falling upon nations because of blood. When Abel's blood hits the ground, the earth becomes a witness that this world is now stained with violence born of sin. The field in Genesis 4 is the first polluted patch of ground after Eden's fall produces its full fruit in human murder.

That has enormous significance for the blood theme in the Bible. The cry from the ground means that bloodshed has cosmic implications. Sin is not private. Murder is not merely local. The stain reaches into God's world and calls for divine intervention. That is why Romans 8 says creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. The world is not only physically cursed. It is morally scarred. Abel's blood in the ground is one of the earliest signs that the

creation itself bears the marks of man's rebellion. So when the Bible later speaks of cleansing, reconciliation, and final restoration, it is not talking about patching up a small problem. It is talking about answering a cry that has been rising from the ground for millennia.

## **6. Abel the Righteous Points Beyond Himself**

The Lord Jesus Christ later refers to "the blood of righteous Abel" (Matthew 23:35), and that one phrase opens up the meaning of Genesis 4 in a larger way. Abel is not just the first murder victim in the Bible. He is righteous Abel. He is the first righteous man in Scripture whose blood is shed by the wicked. That puts him in a line that runs through the prophets, through the just men of Israel, and finally to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Abel is a type, not in the sense that every detail of his life is a perfect picture, but in the sense that he stands as an early witness to the persecution of the righteous by the wicked and the testimony of blood before God.

Hebrews 11 says, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous" (Hebrews 11:4). Then it says, "and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Hebrews 11:4). There is that voice again. Abel speaks though he is dead. Genesis says his blood cried. Hebrews says he still speaks. The man dies, but the testimony remains. That is how God wants you to see him. Abel is the first righteous witness whose blood becomes a sermon. It preaches against false religion. It preaches against envy. It preaches against unbelief. It preaches the certainty of divine judgment. And because he is righteous Abel, he also becomes a dim foreshadowing of another righteous One whose blood would be shed by wicked hands.

But here the contrast becomes just as important as the likeness. Abel's blood cries against Cain. Christ's blood speaks "better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:24). Abel's blood cries for judgment. Christ's blood secures mercy for the believer. Abel's blood exposes guilt. Christ's blood answers guilt. Abel's blood shows what sin does. Christ's blood shows what grace provides. So in that sense, the first cry from the ground is not the end of the story. It is the beginning of a line that leads all the way to Calvary. God starts with righteous blood accusing the guilty, then He moves through the whole Old Testament until finally He gives blood that can satisfy justice and still save the guilty. Abel points beyond himself because every cry from the ground is waiting for the blood that can answer it.

## **7. The First Cry Prepares for the Better Blood**

If the Bible had stopped with Abel, every man would be damned without remedy. The first cry from the ground would stand forever as pure accusation. Blood shed by the guilty would cry against them, and there would be no answer but judgment. That is why Genesis 4 is so important as a beginning, but so terrible if taken by itself. It reveals the problem in its naked form. Blood is on the ground. The victim is dead. The murderer is guilty. Heaven has heard. The

earth is stained. The curse falls. If that is all there is, then the world is a long chain of accusations waiting for final condemnation. And in one sense, that is exactly what history becomes wherever the grace of God is refused.

But the Lord did not leave the matter there. He started there so the reader would understand what had to be answered. When Hebrews says believers have come "to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:24), the whole Bible suddenly comes into view. Abel's blood spoke truly, but not finally. It spoke of guilt, but not of cleansing. It spoke of wrong, but not of reconciliation. It spoke of murder, but not of redemption. Christ's blood speaks better things because it does not deny justice. It satisfies it. It does not ignore guilt. It provides atonement. It does not hush the cry from the ground by pretending nothing happened. It answers the cry by paying the price sin demanded.

This is why the series must begin here. Before the Bible of Blood becomes the Bible of Atonement, it is first the Bible of accusation. Before there is a mercy seat, there is a murder scene. Before there is a passover, there is a field stained with righteous blood. Before there is "the blood of the covenant" (Exodus 24:8), there is "thy brother's blood" (Genesis 4:10). God orders revelation this way so the sinner understands that salvation is not God becoming soft. It is God answering a real moral crisis. The first cry from the ground is the opening note in a long and dreadful song of blood guiltiness that runs through the human race. The only way that song can end in peace is if a better blood begins to speak. That blood is the blood of Jesus Christ.

## **Conclusion**

The first cry from the ground is one of the most sobering openings to any doctrine in all the Bible. It tells the reader from the very start that blood is not neutral, sin is not light, and God is not indifferent. Abel's blood cries because life has been taken. It cries because righteousness has been assaulted. It cries because guilt cannot bury itself in dirt and disappear. The first mention of blood establishes the whole atmosphere in which the rest of the Bible must be read. Blood means life. Blood means accountability. Blood means testimony. Blood means judgment. A man who begins there will read the rest of Scripture with opened eyes. A man who skips over it will never fully grasp why the Lord makes so much of blood later on.

That cry also exposes the true nature of this fallen world. The first man born into the world through ordinary generation becomes the first murderer recorded in Scripture. The first righteous worshipper becomes the first martyr. The first mention of blood becomes the first blood accusation. What a commentary on the human race. Civilization had barely begun, and already the ground was drinking blood. That is God's assessment of man outside of grace. The race is blood guilty from the beginning. It cannot clean itself. It cannot silence the testimony. It

cannot answer the cry. That is why religion, morality, education, and culture can never solve the main problem. The problem is deeper than behavior modification. It is blood guiltiness before a holy God.

And that is exactly why this first essay matters so much for the whole series. The cry from Abel's blood is the foundation stone beneath every later revelation about sacrifice, covenant, cleansing, and redemption. It is where the subject begins because it is where the wound is first laid open in plain view. But thank God the story does not end with Abel's blood on the ground. There is another blood in the Book. There is blood that does not merely accuse but atones, does not merely cry against the sinner but cleanses the sinner, does not merely testify to death but secures eternal life. The first cry from the ground is dreadful, but it prepares the heart for the greater word of Calvary. Abel's blood cried unto God from the earth, but the blood of Jesus Christ speaks better things from heaven, and because it does, the guilty do not have to die in their sins if they will come God's way.

## **2 of 15: The Bible of Blood - Life in the Blood and Death for Sin**

### **Introduction**

One of the greatest failures of modern religion is that it has learned how to talk about sin without ever dealing with it, how to talk about forgiveness without ever explaining the cost of it, and how to talk about Jesus Christ without ever bringing a sinner face to face with why He had to die. Men have polished the message until it sounds respectable to a cultured world, but in the process they have gutted the heart out of it. The Bible never treats sin as a misstep in personal development, a lapse in self-awareness, or a temporary failure in human flourishing. The Bible treats sin as a crime against a holy God, and because it does, the Bible deals with it in terms of death, guilt, sacrifice, and blood. That is why Scripture places such weight on this matter. God does not handle blood casually because He does not handle life casually. The two are tied together by divine decree. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11). That is not a poetic remark. That is a doctrinal statement from the mouth of God. It is the kind of verse that slices through a thousand years of soft religious chatter and brings the whole subject back to bedrock.

Long before the law was ever given at Sinai, the Lord had already laid down the principle in Genesis 9. After the flood, when Noah stepped out into a cleansed world still carrying the seeds of the same old fallen nature, God told him, "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat" (Genesis 9:4). There the Lord puts a fence around blood before Israel ever exists as a nation. That means this subject is not merely Levitical ritual. It is older than

Moses, older than Aaron, older than the tabernacle, and older than the temple. Blood is marked off because life is sacred, and life is sacred because God gave it. The Lord is saying in effect, You may eat flesh under My permission, but you do not trifle with the blood, because the blood carries the life, and the life belongs to Me. That one command reveals the moral gravity surrounding blood in Scripture. Blood is not just fluid in the veins. It is bound up with God's claim upon life itself.

From there the doctrine rises like a mountain through the whole Book. Sin brings death. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Death means life forfeited. If life is in the blood, then blood becomes the visible, God-appointed sign that life has been taken, life has been poured out, life has answered for guilt. That is why the Bible does not deal with sin through sentiment. It does not say, Have a good cry and God will overlook the matter. It does not say, Improve yourself, reform your habits, join a church, and perhaps the scales will tip in your favor. The Bible says that because sin brings death, atonement requires blood. "I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls" (Leviticus 17:11). There is the whole matter in one verse. God gave the blood. God appointed the altar. God defined the atonement. God established the principle. When a sinner starts trying to improve on that arrangement, he shows that he has not yet learned the first thing about the holiness of God or the seriousness of sin.

### **1. God Established the Principle Before Moses Ever Wrote a Line**

One of the first things that needs to be settled is that the sacredness of blood is not a narrow Jewish ceremonial idea invented for wilderness worship. God laid the principle down for Noah in Genesis 9, centuries before Sinai. He told Noah, "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat" (Genesis 9:4). Then He follows that with the statement, "And surely your blood of your lives will I require" (Genesis 9:5). That is a remarkable passage because it ties blood, life, and divine accountability together before you ever get to the Levitical code. The Lord is saying plainly that blood is bound up with life, and because life is sacred, blood is not to be treated as a casual thing. The prohibition is not random. It is theological. Blood is fenced because God is staking His claim around the sanctity of life.

Then the Lord goes farther and says, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Genesis 9:6). There you have the issue sharpened even more. Blood matters because man is made in the image of God. When blood is shed unjustly, it is not simply a biological event. It is an assault upon something God marked with His own image. That is why the penalty is so severe. The verse does not rest on social contract, political convenience, or evolutionary survival. It rests on divine image bearing. Human life is sacred because God made man in His image, and human blood is therefore not common. That means every later reference to blood in the Bible rests upon this underlying reality: life belongs to God and is accountable to God.

This alone already exposes the shallowness of modern thinking. The world wants to discuss life as chemistry, biology, probability, or personal choice. Scripture discusses life as a divine trust. The world talks about blood in medical terms, forensic terms, or symbolic terms. Scripture talks about blood as life under God's ownership. That is why the Lord placed a fence around it from the days of Noah onward. He wanted man to know from the outset that life is not self-created, self-owned, or self-defined. The blood thereof is the life thereof, and the life thereof belongs to God. When men forget that, they will cheapen everything else. They will cheapen murder, cheapen sacrifice, cheapen the cross, and cheapen redemption. But when a man understands that God fenced off blood because He fenced off life, he begins to understand why the Bible treats blood with such fearful seriousness.

## **2. The Life of the Flesh Is in the Blood**

Leviticus 17:11 is one of the great doctrinal sentences in the whole Bible. The Lord says, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." That statement is not merely physiological, though it certainly is not less than that. It is theological. It is God telling Israel what He thinks the blood means. Life is in the blood. That is why when blood is poured out, life is poured out. That is why when blood is shed, death has entered. That is why the shedding of blood becomes the central visible sign of life laid down in the place of guilt. The Lord could have ordained ten thousand other symbols if He wished, but He chose blood because blood carries the life. Atonement is not made through empty ceremony. It is made through life given up under divine appointment.

The verse goes on, "and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls" (Leviticus 17:11). That phrase is tremendous. God says, "I have given it." The blood is not something man discovered and offered up to God as though he had invented the plan of redemption. God gave it. God established its use. God assigned its function. God placed it upon the altar. The altar is not an execution platform of human imagination. It is a meeting place ordained by God where life answers for guilt through blood. That means blood atonement is not religion reaching upward by human cleverness. It is God revealing the only way a sinner can approach Him and live.

Then the verse concludes, "for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Leviticus 17:11). There is the blunt divine verdict. Not tears. Not penance. Not resolutions. Not moral effort. Not temple attendance. Not ceremony detached from sacrifice. The blood makes the atonement. Why? Because the blood carries the life, and sin requires death. That is the biblical equation. Atonement is not cheap because guilt is not cheap. It is not sentimental because sin is not sentimental. It is bound up with death because the wages of sin is death. Therefore the life in the blood becomes the God-appointed answer to the death due for sin. You can see at once why the world hates this doctrine. It tells the sinner that his condition is so serious that only

death can answer it, and it tells the religious man that no amount of self-improvement can substitute for the blood God has appointed.

### **3. Blood Is Sacred Because Life Is Sacred**

When God places restrictions around blood, He is not indulging ancient taboo or primitive religious instinct. He is teaching the sacredness of life. In both Genesis 9 and Leviticus 17, the reasoning is plain: blood is not common because life is not common. "Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life" (Deuteronomy 12:23). That verse cuts through everything. Blood is not treated lightly because life is not treated lightly. The reason the Lord says, "Ye shall eat no manner of blood" (Leviticus 7:26), is because He wants His people to understand that life is His domain. They may not consume casually what God has marked as the bearer of life. The law trains the conscience to see life the way God sees it.

This is why the Bible speaks so harshly about the shedding of innocent blood. "Hands that shed innocent blood" are listed among the things the Lord hates (Proverbs 6:17). Why such severity? Because bloodshed is a direct assault on life, and life is sacred before God. It is not sacred because man says so. It is sacred because God says so. It is sacred because man is made in God's image and because every breath, heartbeat, and pulse flows under divine permission. That is why Scripture never treats blood as trivial. The ground receiving blood, the land defiled by blood, the cry of blood, the avenger of blood, the requirement of blood from the hand of man - all of that rests on the principle that life itself is a holy trust.

Now take that truth and apply it to modern religion. Men today want a Savior who inspires but does not bleed, a gospel that uplifts but does not slay, and a cross that symbolizes love without satisfying justice. They want spirituality without blood because blood offends their refined self-importance. But if life is sacred, then the surrender of life is sacred, and if sin brings death, then the laying down of life in atonement is not something that can be softened into poetic metaphor. Blood is sacred because life is sacred. Therefore when the Son of God sheds His blood, Scripture is not describing a moving scene merely designed to stir emotion. It is declaring that the holiest life ever lived was poured out to answer the guilt of sinners before God. That is why the cross is not a sentimental ornament. It is the most sacred transaction in history.

### **4. Sin Requires Death, Not Sentiment**

The Bible's diagnosis of sin is so severe that modern preaching often tries to sidestep it. Men will talk about brokenness, wounds, habits, trauma, and poor choices, but the Book of God keeps saying "death." "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:20). "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). That is not an exaggeration. That is God's legal assessment of what sin earns. Sin is not corrected by sentiment because sentiment cannot satisfy justice. A guilty man may feel very

badly about his crime, but his feelings do not reverse the moral order. Tears are not a substitute for atonement. Emotion is not a substitute for satisfaction. Sin requires death because sin is revolt against the God of life.

That is why the Bible never places the sinner's hope in his own sorrow as though sorrow itself were redemptive. Sorrow has its place. Godly sorrow worketh repentance. But godly sorrow does not atone. It turns the sinner toward the One who does atone. Many a man has cried over his sins and still gone to hell because his tears became a substitute for the blood of Christ in his thinking. The Pharisee may cry theatrically. The publican may smite his breast. But no amount of breast-smitting sheds atoning blood. That is why the Lord ordained sacrifice. The whole sacrificial system teaches that sin must be met by death and that death must be signified by blood. Religion wants to sentimentalize the matter. God judicializes it.

This is where the modern gospel goes soft and slick. It tells men Jesus came to affirm their worth, heal their inner child, and help them live a more meaningful story. That is the kind of syrupy nonsense that could only flourish in a generation that no longer trembles at the holiness of God. The real gospel says Christ came to save sinners by dying in their place. "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3). That is not therapeutic language. That is substitutionary language. He died because sin required death. His blood was shed because life had to be given up under judgment. The altar answers what sentiment never can. The cross answers what tears never can. Blood matters because sin is not cured by feeling. It is answered by death under divine appointment.

### **5. God Gave Blood Upon the Altar for Atonement**

One of the most important phrases in Leviticus 17:11 is "I have given it to you upon the altar." That means blood atonement is not man's gift to God, but God's gift to man. The sinner did not discover a way to placate heaven. The Lord Himself ordained the means by which guilt could be covered in the Old Testament economy. That changes the whole perspective. The altar is not a human invention born from frightened superstition. It is divine revelation. God gave the blood. God appointed the altar. God defined the purpose. When a sinner comes that way, he comes on God's terms. When he rejects that way, he is not being original or independent. He is simply refusing the one path God opened.

That explains the passover as well. In Exodus 12 the Lord says, "when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). Notice, the blood is not placed there because Israel thought up a convincing symbol. It is placed there because God commanded it. The value of the blood lies in divine appointment. God told them what to apply, where to apply it, and what He would do when He saw it. That is how the whole system operates. Whether on the doorposts in Egypt or

on the altar in Leviticus, blood functions because God has given it for that purpose. The sinner is not bargaining with heaven. He is submitting to revelation.

This truth crushes human pride because it leaves no room for man to invent his own approach. Cain's religion says, I will bring what I think should be acceptable. God's altar says, I have given what is acceptable. That is the difference between false worship and true worship all the way through Scripture. Men want to approach God by ethics, culture, liturgy, spirituality, philanthropy, sacramental performance, or inner sincerity. The Lord says, I gave blood upon the altar for atonement. That is why the gospel is such an offense to the natural man. It tells him that reconciliation with God is not found in presenting his best, but in accepting God's provision. The altar is heaven's announcement that God alone decides how guilt is dealt with, and He decided that blood should make atonement for the soul.

## **6. The Law Taught Substitution Through Blood**

Under the law, the sinner learned by repetition what he would not naturally learn by pride. He learned that a substitute must die. The worshipper brought the offering, laid his hand upon its head, and the victim was slain. The blood was then handled according to God's instruction - sprinkled, poured, placed, or brought within the sanctuary, depending on the offering. All of that taught one central lesson: guilt demands death, but by divine mercy a life may answer in the place of the guilty. "And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him" (Leviticus 1:4). There is substitution in plain sight. The victim stands where the sinner ought to stand.

This is why blood is everywhere in Leviticus. Blood on the altar. Blood at the bottom of the altar. Blood on the horns. Blood before the veil. Blood on Aaron's ear, thumb, and toe. Blood on the mercy seat. God saturates the law with blood because He is saturating the conscience with the truth that sin is deadly and access to Him requires life laid down under His appointment. Men today mock the repetition as primitive gore, but the repetition is exactly the point. Every time the blood flows, God is preaching. Every slain animal is another sermon. Every basin of blood is another proclamation. The message never changes because the problem never changes. Sin still brings death, and guilt still cannot walk into God's presence without atonement.

But even in teaching substitution, the law also taught its own insufficiency. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4). That verse does not nullify the law. It explains its purpose. The law taught substitution truly, but temporarily and typically. It pointed forward. It prepared the mind. It fenced the conscience. It showed the necessity of blood. It did not finish what Christ alone would finish. So the blood under the law was both real and incomplete - real as God-appointed atonement within that covenantal order, incomplete as to final removal of sin and eternal redemption. The law hammered home the

principle of substitution until the world would be prepared for the coming of the One whose blood could do what no animal blood ever could.

## **7. Christ Fulfilled the Principle in His Own Blood**

Everything the law taught in shadow, Christ fulfilled in substance. If the life of the flesh is in the blood, then the shedding of Christ's blood means the laying down of His life. The Lord Himself said, "I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:15). When His blood was shed, His life was being poured out under divine purpose. That is why the New Testament refuses to speak of the cross merely as an example of courage or an inspiring display of love. It speaks of "redemption through his blood" (Ephesians 1:7), of being "justified by his blood" (Romans 5:9), and of "peace through the blood of his cross" (Colossians 1:20). The blood of Christ is not sentimental decoration on the gospel. It is the gospel's purchase price.

And mark it well - the Lord Jesus Christ did not merely bleed as any other man might bleed in a tragic death. His blood had value because of who He was. He was the sinless Son of God, "a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19). That means when His blood was shed, the holiest life ever lived was voluntarily laid down in place of guilty sinners. The blood of bulls and goats represented substitution. The blood of Christ accomplished it. Hebrews says, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12). There is the final answer. By His own blood. Once. Eternal redemption. No repetition because the work is finished. No insufficiency because the sacrifice is perfect.

That is why modern religion's squeamishness about blood is not sophistication. It is unbelief dressed in clean clothes. Men will tolerate talk about Jesus as teacher, healer, example, prophet, and reformer. But once you begin talking about His blood, you have crossed the line into the heart of the gospel, and the natural man recoils. Why? Because the blood says sin is serious, justice is real, guilt is deadly, and only death under God's appointment can answer it. The blood of Jesus Christ fulfills the principle laid down in Genesis and Leviticus: life in the blood, death for sin, atonement by divine gift. He is not an appendix to that principle. He is its fulfillment. The altar pointed to Him. The law pointed to Him. The sacredness of blood pointed to Him. The fence God put around blood was preparing the world for the moment when the most sacred blood ever shed would answer forever for all who believe.

## **Conclusion**

The doctrine of blood in Scripture stands like a wall against every soft, shallow, bloodless notion of religion men have invented to comfort themselves in their sins. God fenced blood off because God fenced life off. "The life of the flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11). That truth runs from Noah to Moses, from the law to the prophets, and from the altar to the cross. Blood is sacred

because life is sacred, and life is sacred because it belongs to God. Therefore when sin brings death, atonement must involve blood, because blood is the visible sign that life has been poured out under God's appointment. Men may laugh at that and call it primitive, but the laughter only proves how primitive their understanding of sin really is.

The Bible does not deal with sin through sentiment. It deals with sin through substitution. It does not tell the sinner to save himself by feeling deeply enough or reforming earnestly enough. It tells him that God gave blood upon the altar to make atonement for the soul. That is the Lord's arrangement, not man's. The whole sacrificial system drilled that lesson into Israel's bones until the great fulfillment came in Jesus Christ. Then the New Testament declared that what the law foreshadowed, Christ accomplished by His own blood. That means the issue is not whether a modern man likes blood language. The issue is whether he will submit to the way God chose to save sinners.

So the lesson of this essay is plain. Life is in the blood. Sin brings death. Therefore blood becomes the God-appointed means by which life answers for guilt. That is why blood is never treated lightly in Scripture. It is not superstition. It is revelation. It is not cruelty. It is justice married to mercy through divine provision. And it is not a side doctrine, either. It lies at the center of the Bible's message because it lies at the center of redemption. If a man misses that, he will miss the whole Book. But if he sees it, then every altar, every sacrifice, every warning, every prohibition, every drop of blood in the law, and every cry from Calvary will come together in one blazing truth: God Himself gave the blood because nothing less could answer death for sin.

### **3 of 15: The Bible of Blood - The Coats of Skins and the Covered Sinner**

#### **Introduction**

If a man wants to understand the whole Bible in seed form, he can do a great deal worse than stand in Genesis 3 and watch two guilty sinners trembling in the trees while God comes walking in the garden in the cool of the day. That chapter is not just about a bite from forbidden fruit. It is about the collapse of innocence, the birth of shame, the entrance of death, the curse upon creation, and the first great lesson in how God deals with sinners. Adam and Eve do what every fallen man has done ever since. They realize they are naked, they know something is wrong, and they set out at once to fix the problem themselves. "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Genesis 3:7). There is human religion in its first working form. It is man trying to cover what sin exposed without dealing with the guilt that caused the exposure. It is man

manufacturing a righteousness out of the works of his own hands and hoping it will be enough to stand before a holy God.

But when the Lord appears, those aprons do not solve the problem. Adam is still afraid. Eve is still guilty. The conscience is still awakened. The presence of God is still dreadful to them. That is because fig leaves can cover the eyes of man, but they cannot quiet the voice of God. They can hide the shape of nakedness, but they cannot answer the guilt of disobedience. They can create the appearance of repair, but they cannot remove the sentence that sin has brought into the world. So God does something in Genesis 3:21 that becomes one of the greatest pictures in all the Bible: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21). There is the first clear sacrificial pattern after the fall. Something died so the guilty could be covered. Blood is not named in that verse, but death is there all the same, and where skins appear on the backs of guilty sinners, some life has been taken under the hand of God.

That is why this passage is so rich and so foundational. It is the first great contrast between human religion and divine provision. Man covers himself with vegetation. God covers him with skins. Man works with what the cursed ground produces. God provides a covering that requires death. Man tries to hide shame. God deals with guilt by way of substitution. From that point on, the Bible keeps developing the same truth in larger and brighter ways. The coats of skins in Eden are a shadow of the altar, a shadow of the passover, a shadow of the priestly garments, a shadow of imputed righteousness, and ultimately a shadow of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30). If a sinner misses Genesis 3:21, he will spend the rest of his life sewing fig leaves in one form or another. But if he sees what God is showing there, he will understand that the only covering that stands before God is the one God Himself provides through death.

### **1. The Fall Produced Shame Before It Produced Reform**

The first thing to notice in Genesis 3 is what sin immediately does to man. It does not improve him, enlighten him, liberate him, or expand him into some higher stage of consciousness as the devil promised. It exposes him. "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked" (Genesis 3:7). The devil had said, "ye shall be as gods" (Genesis 3:5), but instead of becoming divine, they became ashamed. That is always the way of sin. It promises enlargement and delivers exposure. It promises freedom and delivers bondage. It promises knowledge and delivers guilt. Adam and Eve stand in the garden as the first witnesses that sin does not clothe a man with glory. It strips him bare. The first sensation after the fall is not triumph. It is shame.

That shame is profoundly revealing because it shows that the human conscience is functioning before any written law is ever given. There is no Sinai yet, no tablets of stone, no Levitical code, and no prophet standing with a scroll in his hand. Yet Adam and Eve know instinctively that something is wrong. Their nakedness becomes unbearable in the light of their guilt. That tells you something about the moral universe God made. Sin is not merely the violation of an external command. It produces an inward consciousness of defilement. The sinner senses that he is exposed. He feels uncovered. He knows he is not fit to stand as he is before the God whose voice now approaches in the garden.

Now mark it carefully. That shame does not produce repentance at first. It produces self-help. Fallen man does not naturally run to God's mercy. He runs to his own resources. The first instinct of sinners is not to seek divine atonement but to patch themselves up. That is exactly what Adam and Eve do when they sew the fig leaves together. There is no prayer meeting there. There is no confession that says, Lord, we have sinned and need a substitute. There is only frantic human action to manage the consequences of guilt. That is the beginning of all works religion. Men do not want grace at first. They want a project. They want something to make. They want something to wear. They want something to point to and say, This should do. But shame cannot be solved by reform because shame is not the root problem. Guilt is.

## **2. Fig Leaves Are the First Works Religion**

When Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons, they began a long tradition that has never died. Every false religion on earth is some improved version of those leaves. The details change, the ceremonies expand, the vocabulary becomes more refined, the buildings get larger, and the priests dress better, but at bottom it is always the same thing: guilty sinners trying to cover themselves by something their own hands have produced. Fig leaves are human righteousness in seed form. They are effort, labor, invention, self-protection, and appearance. They are everything men trust when they do not trust what God provides.

There are several things worth noticing about that fig leaf religion. First, it is man-made. Adam and Eve "sewed" the leaves together. That means they devised the solution. They manufactured the garment. God did not tell them to do it. He did not approve it. He did not initiate it. It came from the panic of guilty sinners. Second, it is outward only. The apron covers what can be seen, but it does not reach the conscience. The presence of God still sends Adam into hiding. Third, it is connected to the cursed ground. The leaves come from the creation now under the sentence of God. That means man's religion is built out of the very world sin has already defiled. It is not enough.

That is exactly how false religion still works. Some men sew church attendance together. Some men sew baptism together. Some men sew moral reform together. Some men sew philanthropy

together. Some men sew emotional experiences together. Some men sew scholarship together. Some men sew liturgy, ritual, fasting, sacraments, and devotions together. They stand back and look at the patchwork and say, That ought to cover me. But it never does. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). That is God's verdict on man's spiritual tailoring business. He is not impressed by the stitching. He is not moved by the design. He does not receive sinners because their aprons are skillfully assembled. Fig leaves are always doomed because they come from the guilty trying to solve guilt without blood, without death, and without divine provision.

### **3. God Did Not Accept Their Covering**

One of the most significant truths in Genesis 3 is that the fig leaf aprons are simply ignored once God begins dealing with the couple. The Lord does not say, Not bad for your first try. He does not say, I appreciate the effort. He does not say, Let Me improve what you have started. He bypasses the entire arrangement and later makes coats of skins. That silence is thunderous. God does not negotiate with works religion. He replaces it. He does not repair man's covering. He provides His own. That is the whole issue in salvation. The question is not whether man can contribute some helpful piece to God's redemption plan. The question is whether he will abandon his covering and receive the one God provides.

You can see already that the fig leaves did not solve the real problem because Adam still says, "I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself" (Genesis 3:10). Think about that. He is wearing an apron, but he still says he is naked. Why? Because he is. Not physically in the same sense as before, perhaps, but morally and spiritually he is still uncovered. His own covering has not removed the essential nakedness. That is one of the clearest statements in Scripture against self-made righteousness. A man may be dressed in religion from head to foot and still be naked before God. He may have every outward badge of piety and still be afraid in the divine presence. He may have covered himself well enough to impress other sinners, but heaven sees straight through the leaves.

That is why all human religion ultimately leaves the conscience restless. It cannot do what only God's provision can do. A sacramental system can keep a man busy for fifty years and never give him peace. A moral code can discipline his behavior and still leave him exposed before God's holiness. A theological education can sharpen his mind and still leave him unclothed in righteousness. The problem is not lack of religious fabric. The problem is that the sinner is trying to stand before God in something of his own making. Genesis 3 says plainly that God did not accept the first covering man ever made. That should make every religious man on earth stop and ask himself whether he is still wearing leaves.

### **4. The Coats of Skins Mean Something Died**

When you come to Genesis 3:21, the whole subject changes. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them." Those skins did not grow on trees. They were taken from living creatures. That means death has entered the picture in a new and visible way. The Lord had said, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). Spiritual death entered immediately, and the body began moving toward the grave. But here in Genesis 3:21, death is also displayed before the sinners' eyes in connection with their covering. Something innocent dies, and the guilty are clothed. That is substitution in picture form. Blood is not mentioned by name, but no one with a Bible in his hand ought to miss what is happening. Life has been taken so shame may be covered by God's provision.

This is one of the reasons the verse is so profound. God does not merely hand them clothes. He gives them a theology. He is teaching by action what He will later teach by altar and priesthood. The sinner cannot cover himself acceptably before God. God must provide the covering. That covering comes through death. And it is not the death of the guilty pair, though justice would have warranted it. It is the death of another. That is the first shadow of substitutionary atonement after the fall. The animal gives up its life. The skins become the garment. The guilty are clothed. You could preach the gospel from that scene if you have enough Bible in you to see where it leads.

And mark this well: the covering God gives is full, not partial. The text says "coats of skins," not aprons. Their own work produced a minimal covering. God's provision produces a complete one. That too is a sermon. Human religion always leaves a man partly exposed. God's righteousness covers completely. When the Lord saves a sinner, He does not give him a spiritual apron. He clothes him in a righteousness not his own. "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10). Genesis 3:21 is not the full doctrine yet, but it is pointing straight at it. The first God-given covering is larger, deeper, stronger, and more costly than anything man could sew together for himself.

## **5. Divine Provision Stands Against Human Invention**

The contrast between the fig leaves and the coats of skins is one of the sharpest contrasts in the Bible. On one side, you have human invention. On the other, divine provision. On one side, you have works. On the other, grace. On one side, you have something taken from the ground by man. On the other, you have something provided by God through death. On one side, you have appearance. On the other, you have reality. On one side, you have man's answer to shame. On the other, you have God's answer to guilt. That contrast is not incidental. It is the heart of the passage. God is setting before the reader two ways that will run side by side through the entire Bible and through the entire human race.

This is why Genesis 3 is so devastating to all forms of self-righteousness. It shows that the very first instinct of fallen man is exactly wrong. He thinks he can solve the problem by doing something. God shows that the problem can only be solved by receiving something He provides. That is the same issue in Cain and Abel. It is the same issue in Israel's unbelief. It is the same issue in the Pharisees. It is the same issue in Galatians. It is the same issue wherever men start trusting law, ritual, morality, or spiritual performance in place of the finished work of Christ. They are all just better-tailored fig leaves. They may be embroidered. They may be passed down in ancient traditions. They may be blessed by educated clergy. They are still leaves.

The Bible never allows the sinner to meet God halfway. That is one of the things proud religion hates most. The Lord does not say, Adam, keep your apron and add My coat on top of it. He removes man's covering by replacing it with His own. That is the doctrine of grace. Salvation is not Christ helping you improve your leaves. It is Christ replacing your leaves altogether with what He alone secured. Paul said he wanted to "be found in him, not having mine own righteousness" (Philippians 3:9). That is the language of a man who has learned Genesis 3 in the light of Calvary. He knows there are only two garments in the end: the one you made, and the one God gave. One leaves you naked before judgment. The other lets you stand accepted in the Beloved.

## **6. Every God-Given Covering Points Forward**

Once you see the coats of skins correctly, you start seeing a whole line of God-given coverings through the Bible. The passover blood covers the house from the destroyer. The mercy seat receives the blood on the Day of Atonement. The high priest wears garments God prescribed, not garments of personal preference. The tabernacle itself is covered as God commanded. Even Noah is enclosed in the ark according to God's plan. The pattern is consistent. When God covers, He does it His way. He determines the means, the material, the method, and the effect. Man's role is not to redesign the covering. His role is to come under it.

This is why the language of righteousness as a garment becomes so powerful later in Scripture. Isaiah says, "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10). Zechariah sees Joshua the high priest clothed with filthy garments, and then hears the Lord say, "Take away the filthy garments from him" and "I will clothe thee with change of raiment" (Zechariah 3:4). Those passages are not accidental developments. They grow out of a truth God began teaching in Eden. The sinner's natural clothing is unfit. God must provide a garment suitable to His own presence. The whole Old Testament keeps pushing that way until the New Testament reveals the believer as clothed in Christ Himself.

That is where Genesis 3 reaches its full glory. The coats of skins are not an end in themselves. They point forward to the greater covering that comes through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. The believer is accepted "in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:6). He is found in Christ, covered not with his own righteousness but with that which is by faith. That does not mean the Genesis 3 garments were merely symbolic and had no immediate reality. They were real coats given to real sinners. But the God who gave them knew exactly what He was prefiguring. Every God-given covering in Scripture points ultimately to Christ because Christ is the final answer to the sinner's exposure before a holy God.

## **7. Christ Is the Final Covering for the Guilty**

When the Lord Jesus Christ goes to the cross, all the seeds planted in Eden begin to flower in full. Here is the innocent dying for the guilty. Here is the provision of God replacing the failure of man. Here is shame answered, guilt answered, nakedness answered, and judgment answered through the death of another. The New Testament does not use the exact phrase "coats of skins" in connection with Christ, but the theology of Genesis 3 is all through it. He is made "sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). There is exchange. There is imputation. There is substitution. There is covering in the deepest possible sense.

And just as the sinner in Eden contributed nothing to the making of the coats, so the sinner contributes nothing to the righteousness of Christ. You do not help God weave it. You do not help Christ bleed for it. You do not help the Spirit apply it by adding your merit to the work. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Titus 3:5). That verse is just Genesis 3 in New Testament language. The same Lord who ignored the fig leaves ignores every man-made substitute for the righteousness of His Son. The question for every sinner is therefore not, How impressive are your leaves? The question is, Are you clothed in what God has provided?

This is why the gospel is so humbling and so glorious at once. It humbles because it tells man his best efforts are not garments but rags. It glories because it tells him God has made provision at infinite cost. Christ's blood is the price, Christ's righteousness is the garment, and Christ Himself is the believer's standing before God. The covered sinner in Genesis 3 becomes the justified sinner in Romans, the reconciled sinner in Colossians, and the robed saint in Revelation. It all begins in Eden, with God clothing two ashamed rebels in garments they did not make and did not deserve. That is not merely a touching story for children. That is the gospel in shadow.

## **Conclusion**

The coats of skins in Genesis 3 are one of the first great sermons God ever preached to fallen man, and the sermon is as sharp now as it was in Eden. Man cannot cover himself. His first

attempt failed, and every improved version since then has failed with it. Fig leaves may satisfy the religious imagination, but they do not satisfy a holy God. They may hide shame from other sinners, but they do not remove guilt from the conscience. They may look green and fresh for a moment, but they dry out quickly under the heat of divine truth. That is why the Lord did not accept Adam and Eve's work. He replaced it with His own provision.

That provision came through death. Something innocent died so the guilty could be clothed. There is no way around that truth if you are going to read Genesis 3 honestly. God did not cover sin by pretending it was small. He covered the sinner by way of sacrifice. That one act establishes the pattern that will unfold through sacrifice, altar, priesthood, passover, atonement, and finally Calvary itself. The Bible is consistent from beginning to end. Man works. God provides. Man hides. God calls. Man sews. God slays. Man covers himself poorly. God clothes him adequately. And every step of that revelation points toward the Lord Jesus Christ.

So the lesson stands plain and strong. The first clear sacrificial pattern after the fall is not in Leviticus but in Eden. The first covered sinners after the fall are covered not by their own ingenuity but by God's provision through death. That means the whole race has had the lesson from the beginning: self-made righteousness will not stand, and only what God provides can cover the guilty before Him. The coats of skins are therefore not a small detail in the early chapters of Genesis. They are a blazing witness that the gospel was already casting its shadow in the garden. And if a man would be wise, he will stop sewing leaves, come out from the trees, and receive the only covering that has ever truly availed before God - the righteousness purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ.

#### **4 of 15: The Bible of Blood - Abel's Offering and Cain's Religion**

##### **Introduction**

If a man wants to find the beginning of false religion in the Bible, he does not have to go to Babel, Rome, Mecca, Salt Lake City, Canterbury, or some jungle shrine with bones hanging from a tree. He can find it in Genesis 4, standing right beside a true offering, talking the same language of worship, bringing something to God, and yet rejected from the start. Cain is one of the most important characters in all of Scripture for that very reason. He is not introduced as an atheist, a blasphemer, or a man who wants nothing to do with God. He is introduced as a worshipper. He brings an offering. He comes before the Lord. He is religious. That is what makes him dangerous. Open unbelief is easier to identify. Bloodless religion is far more deceptive because it looks like reverence while it denies the very principle by which a sinner can approach a holy God. "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground

an offering unto the LORD” (Genesis 4:3). There it is. Worship without blood. Worship without sacrifice. Worship without substitution. Worship without revelation obeyed. That is Cain’s religion, and every false system on earth is one of Cain’s children.

Abel stands on the other side of the line as the first great witness to the truth that God will only be approached His way. “And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof” (Genesis 4:4). That is not a minor detail. That is a blood sacrifice. That is life laid down. That is substitution in type. And the Lord immediately marks the distinction: “And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect” (Genesis 4:4-5). The Bible does not say Cain was less sincere. It does not say Abel was more emotional. It does not say one man sang louder than the other or one had better intentions than the other. It says the Lord respected one offering and rejected the other. That means the issue is not sincerity but divine requirement. God had a way, Abel came that way, Cain did not, and the whole race has been dividing itself along that line ever since.

This is one of the most important doctrinal showdowns in the whole Book because it establishes at the very beginning what the whole Bible will keep repeating in larger and louder ways. No sinner approaches God by his own effort, his own morality, his own produce, his own excellence, or his own idea of what ought to be acceptable. He comes by sacrifice. He comes by the death of a substitute. He comes by blood. Cain is the father of all bloodless religion, all moral religion, all self-made religion, and all worship that tries to stand before God in something produced by the sweat of man rather than the death of a victim. Abel is the first witness that faith obeys revelation and comes with what God requires. If a man gets Genesis 4 wrong, he will get the whole Bible wrong. If he gets Cain and Abel right, he will already understand why the cross was necessary, why blood matters, and why all the polished religious systems of this world are still nothing more than fig leaves carried to an altar.

### **1. Cain and Abel Both Worship, but Only One Comes God’s Way**

The first thing that needs to be settled is that Cain and Abel are not a contrast between religion and irreligion. They are a contrast between false worship and true worship. Both men bring an offering. Both men come to the Lord. Both men are involved in an act of worship. That is what makes the passage so searching. It does not merely divide the race into the openly wicked and the openly godly. It divides worshippers. Cain is not outside the religious world. He is standing right in the middle of it, and yet he is utterly wrong. “Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD” (Genesis 4:3). That means he is not careless about religion. He is intentional. He is devout enough to bring something. But devotion without obedience is still rebellion in religious clothing.

Abel, however, comes in a different spirit and with a different offering. “Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof” (Genesis 4:4). That is the language of sacrifice. That is not simply giving God something valuable. That is offering a life. Hebrews explains what Genesis implies: “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous” (Hebrews 11:4). Faith means Abel responded to what God had made known. Faith is not a religious feeling floating in the air. Faith takes God at His word. So if Abel offered by faith, then God had given revelation concerning the acceptable way of approach. Abel believed it. Cain did not.

That means the whole issue comes down to this: will man come God's way, or will he invent his own? That is the question behind every altar, every pulpit, every priesthood, every ceremony, every sacrament, and every gospel presentation. God is not impressed that a man is spiritual in the abstract. He is not impressed that a man means well. He is not impressed that a man is active in religion. He has always required that the sinner come according to His revelation. Abel does. Cain does not. The line is drawn right there in Genesis 4 and never erased. Every accepted worshipper in Scripture comes by what God has required. Every rejected worshipper comes by what seemed right in his own eyes.

## **2. Abel Brings Blood Because Abel Understands the Problem**

Abel's offering is more than a nice pastoral gift from a shepherd. It is a doctrinal statement. He brings “the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof” (Genesis 4:4). That means he understands something about sin, guilt, death, and divine requirement. He knows that if a sinner is to approach a holy God, life must be laid down. The offering says plainly what Abel believes about himself. He is not approaching as an innocent man bringing God a token of appreciation. He is approaching as a sinner who needs a substitute. That is why the blood matters. Blood means death has intervened. Blood means life has been forfeited. Blood means an offering has been made that acknowledges guilt and answers it God's way.

This is consistent with everything God had already shown in Eden. Adam and Eve had been clothed with coats of skins in Genesis 3:21, which meant something died so the guilty could be covered. Abel is not inventing something strange. He is responding to a pattern already established by God Himself. The first family had already been taught that sin brings death and that God's provision for the guilty involves sacrifice. Abel believes what God has shown and acts accordingly. He does not come with theories. He comes with blood. That is faith. It is not creativity. It is submission to revelation.

And once you see that, Abel becomes one of the earliest Bible witnesses against every bloodless gospel ever preached. He stands there in Genesis 4 saying by his act that no sinner comes to God cheaply. He does not come through talent, productivity, or sincerity. He comes by sacrifice.

That is why Hebrews 12:24 later contrasts “the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” Abel’s sacrifice did not save eternally in itself, but it pointed toward the principle that only blood can answer guilt. Abel is on the right line from the beginning. He is not saved by ritual. He is saved by faith, and that faith takes God’s side against himself and comes under the death of a substitute.

### **3. Cain Brings the Fruit of His Own Labor**

Cain’s offering is just as revealing as Abel’s, but in the opposite direction. “Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD” (Genesis 4:3). At first glance, an unthinking reader might say, What is wrong with that? After all, it was valuable. It was something he had worked for. It was sincere. It came from his vocation. It represented effort and productivity. Exactly. That is what is wrong with it. It is the best of Cain, not the substitute God required. It is human labor brought into the presence of God as though the sweat of the sinner could answer the guilt of the sinner. That is the essence of false religion.

And notice where Cain’s offering comes from: “the ground.” But the ground had already been cursed in Genesis 3:17. Cain is bringing to God the fruit of a cursed earth worked by cursed hands and expecting it to solve a problem that only blood can answer. That is the insanity of self-righteousness. It takes what grows out of the fallen order and presents it to God as acceptable righteousness. It says in effect, Here is what I have produced. Surely You will honor it. But God does not honor it because God is not looking for what man can grow. He is looking for what He has required. The fruit of the ground may be useful for food. It is useless for atonement.

This is why Cain is the father of all self-made religion. He represents every man who thinks his effort, discipline, morality, and productivity will commend him to God. He is the ancestor of every sacramental system that trusts human performance. He is the father of every moralist who thinks decency can substitute for redemption. He is the father of every churchgoer who brings God attendance, service, and clean habits while refusing the blood. Cain says, I will bring what I have done. Abel says, I will bring what God requires. One trusts labor. The other trusts substitution. One presents fruit. The other presents blood. One is accepted. The other is rejected. That is the whole matter in seed form.

### **4. The Difference Is Not Sincerity but Revelation**

One of the great lies of modern religion is that sincerity is the main thing. Men say, God looks at the heart, as though that means God ignores truth, revelation, and divine requirement so long as a man feels deeply enough about what he is doing. But Genesis 4 destroys that cheap and sentimental idea at once. Cain may well have been sincere. He certainly was serious enough to bring an offering. He was not joking. He was not playing games. He was intentional. Yet God

rejected him. Why? Because sincerity is not righteousness. Sincerity does not change error into truth. A man can be sincerely wrong all the way to hell.

Hebrews settles the issue by saying, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain" (Hebrews 11:4). Faith comes "by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). That means Abel's offering was tied to divine revelation. God had shown something, and Abel believed it. Cain, by contrast, did not come in faith because he did not come according to the revealed way. He came according to preference. He came according to reason. He came according to what made sense to him. That is why the problem is deeper than emotion. The problem is rebellion against what God said. Cain is not merely mistaken. He is insubordinate in religious form.

That is still the whole problem with bloodless religion today. Men say, I believe God knows my heart. Yes, He does, and that is exactly why your invented approach will not work. Men say, I think if I do my best, God will understand. Cain did his best in the field. God still rejected him. Men say, I am sincere in my spirituality. So was Cain in bringing his offering. The issue is not whether a man feels honest. The issue is whether he submits to God's requirement. Scripture never says, Without sincerity there is no remission. It says, "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). There is the divine line, and every sincere worshipper on the wrong side of it is still wrong.

## **5. Cain Is the Father of Bloodless Religion**

Once Cain is understood correctly, you begin to see his children everywhere. They are in pulpits, temples, cathedrals, lecture halls, revival platforms, seminary classrooms, and devotional books. They are the men who speak reverently about God while denying the necessity of blood atonement. They are the men who talk of ethics, ideals, service, justice, and spiritual growth, but never preach substitution. They are the men who present Christ as teacher, model, reformer, and example, but not as the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world. They are all Cainites in one form or another. The offering changes shape, but the principle stays the same. It is worship without blood.

Jude speaks of "the way of Cain" (Jude 11). That phrase is enormous. Cain's religion is not just Cain's private mistake. It is a way. It is a path. It is a system. It is the road millions take because it allows them to be religious while keeping control of the terms. Cain's way lets man stay active, moral, spiritual, and self-respecting. It does not force him to come as a condemned sinner under the death of a substitute. It does not force him to abandon pride. It does not force him to admit that his best produce is worthless for atonement. That is why the way of Cain is so attractive. It flatters the flesh while appearing devout.

Look around at the religions of the world and the watered-down “Christianity” of apostate churches, and you will see Cain everywhere. He is there whenever people think charity can replace regeneration. He is there whenever sacraments replace the blood. He is there whenever culture replaces conversion. He is there whenever morality replaces the new birth. He is there whenever men try to approach God by what they have done rather than by the death of the substitute God appointed. Cain’s religion is respectable, industrious, productive, and utterly lost. It is bloodless, and therefore it is powerless. It smells like earth because it came from the ground. It may be beautiful to men, but heaven has no respect unto it.

## **6. Rejected Religion Turns Murderous**

One of the most startling truths in Genesis 4 is how quickly false religion becomes violent when confronted with God's acceptance of true worship. “And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell” (Genesis 4:5). He does not repent. He does not ask for mercy. He does not correct the offering. He gets angry. That is because works religion hates grace. Self-righteousness hates revealed righteousness. Cain cannot bear that Abel is accepted where he is rejected, because Abel’s acceptance exposes Cain’s religion as worthless. The problem is not merely theological. It is moral and spiritual. Cain’s pride is wounded, and pride would rather kill than bow.

Then comes the murder. “And Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him” (Genesis 4:8). There is the first martyrdom in the Bible, and it comes at the hands of a religious man. Abel is not killed by a pagan army or a godless empire. He is killed by his brother in the context of accepted and rejected worship. That is profoundly important. It means that the first shed blood in Scripture comes not simply from random violence but from religious hatred. The man who would not come God’s way destroys the man who did. That pattern will echo through history. The prophets will be killed. Christ will be crucified. Apostles will be slain. Bible believers will be persecuted. Bloodless religion hates blood redemption.

First John explains it with stunning clarity: “Wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous” (1 John 3:12). There is the divine diagnosis. Cain’s works were evil, not because agriculture is evil, but because he was trusting his works against God’s revelation. Abel’s were righteous, not because animal sacrifice in itself merited righteousness, but because Abel came by faith in the way God had shown. False religion cannot tolerate that distinction because it destroys its whole system. It wants everybody to believe all sincere worship is equal. Abel’s acceptance proves it is not. So Cain kills him. Rejected religion becomes murderous because it would rather silence the witness than abandon its pride.

## **7. No Sinner Comes Except by the Death of a Substitute**

From Genesis 4 onward, the matter is settled in principle. No sinner approaches God on the basis of effort, produce, morality, or personal excellence. He comes by sacrifice. He comes by substitution. He comes under death. Abel's offering teaches that from the beginning. Cain's rejection proves it. And the rest of the Bible simply expands that truth. The passover lamb in Exodus 12, the offerings in Leviticus, the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16, Isaiah's suffering servant, John's "Lamb of God" (John 1:29), and Christ crucified - all of it stands in continuity with Abel's side of the line.

This is why the Bible's doctrine of blood is not an embarrassing leftover from a primitive age. It is the very center of redemption. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls" (Leviticus 17:11). That verse is Abel's offering explained in doctrinal language. Abel brought a life laid down because guilt required death. Cain brought fruit because he thought his labor could answer for his sin. The entire conflict is there. And when you come to the New Testament, the matter reaches its climax: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12). Christ is the true and final answer to everything Abel's offering pointed toward.

So the doctrine must be stated plainly and without apology. A sinner does not come to God by being decent enough, moral enough, generous enough, sincere enough, baptized enough, emotional enough, educated enough, or religious enough. He comes by the death of a substitute. Ultimately, that means he comes by the blood of Jesus Christ. Abel's offering is accepted because it stands on that line by faith. Cain's religion is rejected because it stands on the other line, the line of self-made righteousness. Every preacher, every church, every system, and every soul will be found on one side or the other in the end. Either you are standing with Abel under sacrifice, or you are standing with Cain holding the produce of your own hands.

## **Conclusion**

Cain and Abel are not a children's story about sibling rivalry. They are one of the earliest and clearest revelations of the war between true worship and false religion. Abel comes with blood. Cain comes with labor. Abel comes by faith. Cain comes by preference. Abel brings what God requires. Cain brings what seems right to man. One is accepted. One is rejected. And the Lord records the whole scene so early in Scripture that no one can later pretend the issue was unclear. The Bible was never vague about how a sinner approaches God. Men have blurred it because they do not like it, but God never blurred it.

Cain therefore stands as the father of all bloodless religion. He is the spiritual ancestor of every man who tries to approach God without sacrifice, without substitution, and without the death of the victim God has appointed. His offering may look productive, useful, beautiful, and

sincere, but heaven has no respect unto it. Abel stands on the opposite side as the first great witness that true worship bows to revelation and comes by blood. He does not argue with God's requirement. He does not improve it. He submits to it. And by that submission he "obtained witness that he was righteous" (Hebrews 11:4). That is how the thing works from beginning to end.

So the lesson must ring out with full force: no sinner approaches God on the basis of effort, produce, morality, or personal excellence. He comes by the death of a substitute. That is the line running from Abel to Calvary. That is the line the world hates because it destroys pride. And that is the line every soul must cross if he would be accepted before God. Cain's religion is alive and well, dressed up in a thousand forms. Abel's offering still speaks. And the final word of the matter is not the produce of the ground, not the work of the hands, not the morality of the worshipper, but "the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:19).

## **5 of 15: The Bible of Blood - When I See the Blood**

### **Introduction**

There are some passages in Scripture that stand like mountain peaks above the landscape, so clear and so full of Christ that a man almost has to work at being blind if he misses them. Exodus 12 is one of those passages. It is not merely an old Jewish story about a nation escaping slavery in Egypt. It is one of the clearest blood pictures in the whole Bible, and it is set there by the Holy Ghost so no sinner can ever say that God was vague about salvation. In that chapter you have wrath announced, judgment approaching, a lamb appointed, blood shed, blood applied, a household sheltered, and the destroyer passing over because God saw something on the outside of the house that satisfied His requirement. The whole scene is preaching Christ before Bethlehem, before Calvary, before the empty tomb, before Pentecost, and before Paul ever wrote a line. If a man cannot see the gospel in Exodus 12, it is not because the light is dim. It is because his eyes are shut.

The glory of that chapter is in the simplicity of God's statement. The Lord does not say, When I see your emotions, I will pass over you. He does not say, When I see how frightened you are, I will pass over you. He does not say, When I see how sincere you are, how family-oriented you are, how patriotic you are, or how devotedly you stayed in the house, I will pass over you. He says, "when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). That is one of the plainest declarations in all Scripture, and it cuts the throat of every bloodless gospel, every works-based religion, every sacramental counterfeit, and every proud sinner who thinks God will be impressed by something other than what God Himself appointed. The passover is not about

Israel's merit. It is about God's requirement. It is not about how good the firstborn felt inside the house. It is about what God saw outside the house. That is the whole matter of assurance in one sentence.

And this is why the passover must be preached with force and clarity. It is one of the greatest types of the Lord Jesus Christ in all the Bible. Paul said plainly, "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:7). That means the lamb in Exodus 12 was never just a meal, never just a national ritual, never just a historic escape marker. It was a prophecy with blood on it. It pointed to the Lamb of God who would be slain, whose blood would be applied by faith, and under whose blood the believer would be eternally safe from the wrath of God. The passover is a blazing sermon on substitution, judgment, redemption, and safety. It teaches the sinner that wrath is real, death is deserved, the substitute is necessary, and the blood is sufficient. It teaches the saint that his security rests not in his inner condition but in God's perfect satisfaction with the blood of the Lamb. That is why Exodus 12 is not just beloved. It is indispensable.

### **1. The Passover Begins with the Certainty of Judgment**

Before the blood can be appreciated, the judgment must be understood. Exodus 12 opens in the shadow of the final plague upon Egypt. God is not negotiating anymore. He is not sending another warning for Pharaoh to process at his convenience. He is coming through the land in judgment. "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:12). There is nothing soft in that verse. There is no therapeutic tone to it. There is no hint that sin can be brushed aside or rebellion can be tolerated forever. God says He will come through and He will smite. That is the first thing a sinner must understand. Salvation means nothing until judgment becomes real. If there is no danger, then deliverance is only decoration.

And notice something else. The danger was not merely for the Egyptians in the sense that Israel was somehow morally superior in itself. The distinction between the two peoples was not natural innocence on one side and guilt on the other. Israel needed blood too. If an Israelite household had refused the blood, that firstborn would have died just as surely as an Egyptian firstborn. The safety was not in race. It was not in heritage. It was not in being physically descended from Abraham. The safety was in God's appointed provision. That fact alone destroys a thousand false confidences. Men always want some fleshly ground on which to rest - family background, denomination, national identity, church culture, tradition. But in Exodus 12, the issue is simple. Where there is no blood, judgment falls.

That is still the issue today. Men talk about the love of God while forgetting the wrath of God, as though the two are enemies instead of attributes harmonized in truth. But if there is no wrath,

the blood becomes unnecessary. If there is no judgment, then Calvary is theater. If God was not going to smite, the lamb did not need to die. The passover means something because wrath was coming that very night. The blood was not a sentimental symbol. It was the difference between life and death under divine judgment. The sinner who does not believe in coming wrath will never value the blood. But once he hears God say, "I will pass through... and will smite" (Exodus 12:12), he starts to understand why the whole house must be under blood before the night is over.

## **2. God Appointed the Lamb**

The next great truth in Exodus 12 is that God did not leave Israel to invent the means of deliverance. He appointed the lamb. "They shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house" (Exodus 12:3). There again you have divine provision, not human invention. Israel did not gather in a committee meeting to brainstorm how to survive the night of judgment. They did not come up with a list of possible remedies, hold a vote, and settle on a symbolic sacrifice because it felt meaningful. God told them what to take, when to take it, and how to use it. That is always how redemption works. God does not ask the sinner what kind of salvation he would prefer. He reveals His own.

And the lamb was to be "without blemish, a male of the first year" (Exodus 12:5). That requirement was not arbitrary. The lamb had to be spotless because it was standing in the place of another. A blemished victim would not do. An imperfect substitute could not answer the requirement of a holy God. That is why the passover reaches straight into the New Testament and finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. He is the sinless Lamb, the spotless sacrifice, the One of whom Peter said, "ye were not redeemed with corruptible things... But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19). The type in Exodus is precise because the fulfillment in Christ is perfect.

This is where modern religion begins to choke, because it wants God to accept whatever man finds meaningful. But God is not worshipped that way, and sinners are not saved that way. He appointed the lamb in Egypt. He appointed the sacrifice in Leviticus. He appointed the blood on the mercy seat. And in the fullness of time, He appointed His Son to be "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The passover teaches that salvation is specific. It is not any lamb. It is the lamb God prescribed. It is not any blood. It is the blood God appointed. It is not any way. It is God's way. A sinner who misses that will spend his life trying to improve the divine arrangement and die outside the only provision that ever availed.

## **3. The Lamb Had to Die**

It was not enough for the lamb to exist. It had to be slain. "And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening" (Exodus 12:6). That is one of the most solemn

lines in the chapter. A perfect lamb standing alive in the yard did not save anybody. A lamb admired for its beauty did not save anybody. A lamb discussed in theological terms did not save anybody. A lamb preserved as a household pet did not save anybody. It had to die. Its blood had to be shed. Its life had to be taken. That is one of the most important lessons a sinner can learn about the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not enough to admire Him, quote Him, study Him, imitate Him, or sentimentalize Him. He had to die for sinners.

This is why the Bible never presents Christ's death as an unfortunate ending to an otherwise noble ministry. It presents it as necessary. The Lord Jesus Himself said, "the Son of man came... to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28). Paul says, "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3). The Lamb had to be slain because sin brings death, and only a substitute under judgment can answer for the guilty. The passover drives that lesson home with terrible simplicity. Every household needed a dead lamb. Not a theory, not a resolution, not a devotional moment - a dead lamb, with blood shed under divine command.

That truth cuts straight across the grain of modern spiritual shallowness. Men want a Savior who encourages without bleeding, inspires without dying, and comforts without satisfying justice. They want the ethics of Jesus without the blood of Jesus. But the passover will not permit that nonsense for one moment. A live lamb does not stop the destroyer. Only a slain lamb with applied blood does that. In the same way, a merely admired Christ does not save. A merely imitated Christ does not save. A merely respected Christ does not save. It is Christ sacrificed, Christ crucified, Christ's blood shed for sinners that stands between the believer and the wrath of God. The lamb had to die in Egypt because the greater Lamb would one day die at Calvary.

#### **4. The Blood Had to Be Applied**

Perhaps the most practical lesson in the whole chapter is that the blood was not only to be shed, but applied. "And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses" (Exodus 12:7). The blood in the basin did not protect the household. The blood in the veins of the lamb did not protect the household. The lamb dying somewhere out in the field did not protect the household. The blood had to be taken and placed where God said to place it. That is an enormous truth. It shows that the provision had to be personally appropriated according to divine instruction. God did not say, I know a lamb died in the neighborhood, so you should be all right. He required the blood on the house.

This is where a great many religious people miss the whole matter. They know Christ died. They know the gospel facts. They know the language of the cross. They can talk about redemption in general terms. But they have never come under the blood by faith. They are like people with a lamb in the house, blood in the basin, and death at the door. The provision exists, but it is not

applied. The passover teaches that salvation is not merely objective in the sense that something happened long ago. It must be received and rested in personally according to God's command. In New Testament terms, that means faith. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood" (Romans 3:25). There is the application - faith in His blood.

And notice who was responsible to apply it. The family had to obey. The householder had to take the hyssop and strike the doorposts. "Ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason" (Exodus 12:22). Hyssop becomes one of the great biblical symbols of cleansing and application. David later cries, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean" (Psalms 51:7). The point is not ritualistic magic. The point is obedient appropriation. God had provided the lamb, the blood, and the promise, but the people had to act in faith on what He said. So it is with the gospel. Christ has died. His blood has been shed. The promise is plain. But the sinner must come under that blood by faith or remain exposed to judgment. Shed blood unapplied does not shelter an unbelieving heart.

### **5. Safety Was in What God Saw, Not in What They Felt**

Here is one of the sweetest and strongest truths in the whole Bible: "when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). Not when you see the blood. Not when you feel safe because of the blood. Not when you have had a moving experience under the blood. God said, "when I see the blood." The basis of safety was not the emotional condition of the firstborn in the house. It was the divine satisfaction of the God outside the house. Think of the comfort in that. One child might have been trembling, another might have been calm. One mother might have been confident, another terrified. One father might have been strong in faith, another weak and full of questions. But none of that changed the issue. If the blood was on the door, the house was safe because God saw it.

That is one of the great foundations of assurance. The believer's security does not rest upon the strength of his pulse, the steadiness of his emotions, or the consistency of his inward experience. It rests upon what God sees in the blood of His Son. If salvation depended on how well a Christian felt at any given moment, no one would have peace for long. But the passover says safety rests on God's recognition of the blood. That is why the believer can say with Paul, "being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Romans 5:9). God sees the blood of Christ and is satisfied. That is the ground of peace. That is the basis of assurance. That is the answer to the destroyer.

This is also why all forms of self-examination that drift away from Christ and settle upon the believer's own fluctuating condition become spiritually ruinous if they are made the basis of assurance. There is a place for examining oneself, of course. But if a man turns inward and says, Am I safe because I feel safe, he will soon be miserable. The passover answer is better: Are you

under the blood? Is the blood where God said it should be? Has God not promised, “when I see the blood, I will pass over you” (Exodus 12:13)? Then the weak saint has the same perfect ground of safety as the strong one. The question is not whether the firstborn felt secure at midnight. The question is whether the blood was on the door when God passed through.

## **6. The Destroyer Passed Over Because Wrath Was Satisfied**

The blood in Exodus 12 was not a charm. It was not a piece of religious decoration to make the Israelites feel spiritually serious. It had meaning because it answered the judgment God had announced. “The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are” (Exodus 12:13). A token of what? A token that death had already taken place in that house, not in the firstborn, but in the substitute. The lamb had died, the blood testified to it, and when God saw that token, He passed over. That means wrath did not disappear into thin air. It was satisfied in connection with the death of the victim. The principle is substitution. The judgment that would have fallen on the firstborn is answered through the blood of another.

That is why the passover is such a blazing prophecy of the cross. At Calvary, the wrath of God against sin is not ignored or canceled by divine sentimentality. It is answered in the death of Christ. Romans 3:25 says God set Him forth “to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.” Propitiation means satisfaction. It means wrath dealt with. It means God’s justice has found a righteous answer in the blood of His Son. The passover illustrates that truth before the doctrinal language is ever fully unfolded. The destroyer does not pass over because Israel was charming or impressive. He passes over because God sees blood that testifies death has intervened according to His requirement.

This makes the passover one of the strongest answers in the whole Bible to bloodless preaching. The modern pulpit likes to say that Jesus came to show us the love of God, and of course He did. But if that is all a man says, he has not preached the cross. Christ did not merely display love. He satisfied justice. He did not merely move hearts. He answered wrath. The blood on the door in Egypt was not there to inspire the household into devotion. It was there to keep death out because judgment had already been met in the substitute. That is exactly what the blood of Christ does for the believer. It is not a sentimental emblem. It is the God-appointed answer to the wrath that would otherwise consume the guilty.

## **7. The Passover Points Directly to the Lamb of God**

The New Testament removes all doubt about the meaning of Exodus 12 when it says, “For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7). That is not a preacher’s imagination running wild. That is inspired interpretation. Christ is our passover. The lamb in Egypt was real, but it was also typical. It was a prophetic shadow cast forward to the day when the true Lamb would come. John the Baptist sees Jesus and says, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away

the sin of the world” (John 1:29). He does not call Him a lamb by accident. The whole sacrificial line, and especially the passover line, is converging on Him.

Look at the correspondences. The passover lamb was without blemish. Christ was sinless. The lamb was chosen and kept until the appointed time. Christ came in the fullness of time. The lamb was slain. Christ was crucified. The blood was shed. Christ’s blood was shed. The blood was applied. Christ’s blood is applied by faith. The firstborn under the blood was safe from death. The believer under Christ’s blood is safe from wrath. The people were delivered from bondage through the blood of the lamb. The believer is redeemed from sin’s bondage through the blood of Christ. The type is so bright that it almost burns the page.

And that means the passover is not just Jewish history. It is Christian doctrine in shadow form. It is one of the clearest Old Testament witnesses to the gospel of substitutionary redemption. A man who reads Exodus 12 and sees nothing but Hebrew ritual has not read it with New Testament light. The Holy Ghost put that chapter in Scripture so the church would understand Christ more fully. He wanted the saint to see that salvation is by blood, safety is under blood, judgment is stayed by blood, and deliverance comes through blood. That is why the passover remains one of the church’s richest treasures. It does not belong to the museum of obsolete religion. It belongs to the living testimony of the Lamb of God whose blood still speaks peace to every believer.

## **Conclusion**

Exodus 12 stands forever as one of the clearest declarations of salvation by blood in all the Bible. The judgment was real, the wrath was certain, the destroyer was coming, and the firstborn had no hope in himself. But God made provision. He appointed the lamb, required its death, demanded the application of its blood, and gave the promise, “when I see the blood, I will pass over you” (Exodus 12:13). That is the whole matter in one sentence. Not your tears. Not your fear. Not your sincerity. Not your family devotion. Not your knowledge of theology. Not your religious ancestry. The blood. That is what God saw, and that is what made the difference between life and death.

That truth has not changed. The sinner today is no safer in himself than the firstborn in Egypt was in himself. The wrath of God against sin is still real. The wages of sin is still death. The question is still the same: are you under the blood? The answer is not found in your inner weather report. It is not found in your religious résumé. It is found in Christ our passover, sacrificed for us. His blood has been shed. The promise of God stands. The one who comes under that blood by faith is eternally safe from the wrath to come, not because he is strong, but because the blood is sufficient and God is satisfied with it.

So the cry of Exodus 12 must still be sounded with all the force it deserves. The lamb was slain. The blood was applied. The destroyer passed over. And all of it pointed to Jesus Christ. That passover night in Egypt was not merely the birth of a nation. It was one of heaven's great sermons on redemption. It taught Israel what the church now knows in full light: the only thing standing between a guilty sinner and the judgment of God is the blood of the Lamb. And blessed be God, He did not say, When you see the blood. He said, "when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). That is enough to make a trembling sinner rest and enough to make a redeemed saint shout.

## **6 of 15: The Bible of Blood - Blood on the Altar and Blood on the Mercy Seat**

### **Introduction**

When a man first opens Leviticus without any spiritual sense, he is tempted to think he has wandered into a wilderness of strange ceremonies, repeated instructions, priestly details, animal deaths, and crimson-stained ordinances that seem far removed from the polished religion of modern times. That is because the natural man hates what Leviticus is designed to teach. He hates the repetition because the repetition keeps preaching the same truth. He hates the blood because the blood keeps exposing the same problem. He hates the altar because the altar keeps declaring the same verdict. The book does not flatter the sinner. It does not entertain the religious flesh. It does not tell man to discover himself, improve himself, or celebrate himself. It shows him a holy God, a defiled people, a priesthood standing between them, a victim dying in their place, blood being handled everywhere, and a sanctuary that cannot be approached casually. In other words, Leviticus is not meaningless ritual. It is God's visual theology. It is heaven teaching earth in crimson object lessons that sin is deadly, holiness is real, and blood is necessary if sinners are to come near.

That is why you find blood everywhere in the law. Blood on the altar. Blood poured at the bottom of the altar. Blood on the horns of the altar. Blood sprinkled before the veil. Blood brought within the holy place. Blood placed on ear, thumb, and toe. Blood associated with cleansing, consecration, atonement, and access. The whole system is saturated with it because God is not merely organizing a ceremonial nation. He is preaching. He is engraving doctrine into the conscience of Israel by sight, smell, touch, and repeated ordinance. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls" (Leviticus 17:11). There is the key to the whole book. God gave the blood. God appointed the altar. God defined the atonement. God established the principle. If a sinner is to approach Him, that sinner will approach under blood or not at all.

But the glory of Leviticus is not merely that it teaches substitution, cleansing, and access under the law. Its greater glory is that the whole system is unfinished by design. It is real, solemn, God-ordained, and necessary in its place, yet it keeps leaning forward to something greater. The repeated sacrifices, the standing priest, the annual Day of Atonement, the blood brought again and again, all of it is preaching two things at once. First, that blood is required. Second, that the final blood has not yet been shed. The law is therefore both sufficient for its covenantal function and insufficient for eternal completion. It teaches the truth in shadow while waiting for the substance. That substance is Jesus Christ, who by “his own blood... entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Hebrews 9:12). So when we study blood on the altar and blood on the mercy seat, we are not studying dead ritual. We are watching the law preach Christ in advance.

### **1. The Altar Was God’s Meeting Place with the Guilty**

The altar in Leviticus is not furniture. It is theology in wood, brass, fire, and blood. It stands there as a declaration that if a sinner is going to approach God, he will not stroll in on his own terms. He will come where God has appointed, with what God has required, through the means God has ordained. That is why so much of Leviticus is centered on the altar. “And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar” (Leviticus 1:5). There it is from the opening chapter. The victim dies. The blood is handled. The altar receives it. That altar becomes the place where the claims of holiness and the needs of the sinner meet under divine arrangement.

The altar therefore teaches something modern religion cannot stand. It teaches that approach to God is costly. You do not saunter up to the Almighty with a little spirituality and a smile. You do not come with your best intentions and expect the Holy One of Israel to adjust Himself to your mood. The altar says death has to intervene. The altar says guilt is no light thing. The altar says blood has to be shed before communion can be discussed. Every time that blood was sprinkled round about the altar, Israel was being taught that worship is not self-expression. It is approach under sacrifice. The altar is the death of human pride in visible form.

And do not miss this point. The altar stood in plain view. The common Israelite did not begin with the golden candlestick or the shewbread or the ark hidden within the veil. He began with the altar. God arranged it that way because the first truth the sinner needs is not mystical light or esoteric communion. He needs atonement. He needs substitution. He needs blood. That is still the order today. Men want God-talk without guilt, worship without sacrifice, and spirituality without a cross. The altar says no. The first thing you meet when coming toward God is death under divine appointment. The law starts there because the gospel starts there. Until the sinner sees the altar, he will never value the mercy seat.

## **2. The Priest Handled the Blood Because Access Was Not Open**

The presence of the priesthood in Leviticus is another great sermon in itself. If access to God had been naturally open after the fall, there would have been no need for a standing order of mediators. But because sin had ruptured fellowship and defilement barred the way, God appointed priests to handle the sacrifices and the blood. “And the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall bring the blood” (Leviticus 1:5). That repeated formula matters. The worshipper brings the victim, but the priest handles the blood in the sanctuary of God. That tells you that the sinner does not manage his own reconciliation according to personal instinct. God regulates approach through an appointed mediator and through the handling of blood.

This is one of the reasons Leviticus can feel so severe to the casual reader. The sinner is always being reminded that he cannot come any way he pleases. There are boundaries. There are distinctions. There is holy and unholy, clean and unclean, priest and people, sanctuary and camp. That is not religious fussiness. That is the law teaching the distance created by sin. The priest, standing there between God and Israel, says by his very existence that fellowship is not automatic. Access is not native to fallen man. Blood must be handled properly by one God appoints. The sinner needs more than desire. He needs mediation.

And of course that all points forward to Christ. The Levitical priesthood was real, but it was temporary and repetitive. It taught the need of mediation without fulfilling it perfectly. Hebrews later says that Christ is “an high priest of good things to come” (Hebrews 9:11). The priests of Aaron’s line stood daily because the work was never finished. Christ sat down because His work was done. But before you ever get to Hebrews, Leviticus has already prepared your mind for that truth. If priests are necessary, then sinners cannot simply walk into the presence of God on the strength of personal sincerity. If blood must be handled by the appointed priest, then reconciliation is not self-generated. The law keeps shouting the same thing in different forms: sinners need blood and sinners need a mediator.

## **3. Blood on the Altar Preached Substitution and Atonement**

Leviticus is relentless in showing that blood on the altar means substitution. The worshipper lays his hand on the victim, and the victim dies in connection with him. “And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him” (Leviticus 1:4). That is not vague religious symbolism. That is identification. That is substitution. The sinner stands there deserving death, and the offering dies in his place. Then the blood is taken and placed where God commanded. The altar becomes the public witness that death has intervened for the guilty. Atonement is being taught not in an abstract lecture but in sight and smell and blood.

This is exactly why Leviticus repeats itself so much. It is not because God had run out of material. It is because the lesson had to be driven into a stiff-necked people by repetition. Burnt offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings, trespass offerings - different emphases, different angles, different ceremonies, but the same underlying truth. Sin is costly. God is holy. Blood is required. A substitute dies. The altar receives the blood. The worshipper is accepted on that basis, not because he is personally righteous, but because a victim has answered for him under the law's arrangement. Every trip to the altar was a sermon against self-salvation.

And that is where modern religious talk looks so pitiful by comparison. Men speak of forgiveness as though God simply woke up in a generous mood one morning and decided to be nice. Leviticus destroys that childish nonsense. Forgiveness under the law is always connected to sacrifice and blood because atonement is not sentimental indulgence. It is a divinely ordered answer to guilt. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Leviticus 17:11). There is no way around it. Not incense alone. Not prayer alone. Not tears alone. Not intention alone. The blood on the altar preached every day that atonement happens through life laid down in the place of the guilty. That is the same truth Calvary later fulfilled in perfection.

#### **4. Blood Before the Veil Preached Limited Access**

Once you move deeper into Leviticus, the blood is not only on the brazen altar in the court. It is also brought before the veil in the sanctuary. "And the priest shall dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood seven times before the LORD, before the veil of the sanctuary" (Leviticus 4:6). That is one of the most significant movements in the whole system. The veil itself stood as a testimony that direct entrance into the holiest was barred. The blood being brought before it was God's way of saying that if the barrier between sinner and presence is ever to be addressed, blood must address it. The veil was not decorative. It was judicial. It said, Thus far and no farther, except on God's terms.

That blood before the veil therefore preached both hope and limitation. Hope, because blood was moving toward the place where God's presence dwelt above the mercy seat. Limitation, because the worshipper himself still could not enter. Even the priest moved in carefully regulated ways. The law was teaching Israel that nearness to God is not casual. He is not approached by familiarity. He is approached through holiness, sacrifice, mediation, and blood. When blood was sprinkled before the veil, it testified that the obstacle between God and man was not emotional distance or philosophical confusion. It was moral and judicial separation caused by sin.

And once again, all of that prepares for Christ. When He died, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matthew 27:51). Why? Because the true blood had now been shed. The shadows had done their work. The repeated blood before the veil had taught

the nation that access was blocked and blood must answer the blockage. Then Christ came and by His own death opened “a new and living way” (Hebrews 10:20). But if you do not understand the blood before the veil in Leviticus, you will not understand the tearing of the veil in the Gospels. The law taught distance so the gospel could later reveal access. The law taught obstruction so the cross could later announce entrance.

### **5. The Mercy Seat Was the Place Where Blood Met Holiness**

If the altar is where the sinner first learns that blood is necessary, the mercy seat is where he learns that blood must be brought all the way into the question of God’s own throne. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest took the blood within the veil and sprinkled it upon and before the mercy seat. “And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times” (Leviticus 16:14). Then the same was done with the blood of the goat for the people (Leviticus 16:15). This is one of the holiest scenes in the law. The blood does not merely stay in the court. It is brought into the innermost sanctuary before the place where God meets with His people.

Why the mercy seat? Because the issue is not merely that sinners need emotional relief. The issue is that God’s holiness must be answered. The mercy seat covered the ark, and inside the ark was the law - the very standard Israel had broken. Above the mercy seat dwelt the manifestation of divine presence. So when blood was placed there, the whole scene preached that mercy does not operate by ignoring violated law. Mercy operates in connection with blood that answers before God. The mercy seat is not mercy instead of righteousness. It is mercy grounded in a God-appointed satisfaction. The blood there said, in type, that something has died in relation to this broken law and these guilty people.

This is precisely why Paul uses the language he does in Romans 3:25, where Christ is said to be “a propitiation through faith in his blood.” The word propitiation is mercy seat language. It is the New Testament fulfillment of what Leviticus 16 pictured. Christ is the true mercy seat because His blood has answered where the law accused. The annual ritual in Leviticus could typify that reality, but not complete it forever. It had to be repeated because the shadows never finished the work. But the principle was there from the beginning. A holy God requires blood, not merely somewhere in the outskirts of religion, but right up to the very question of His throne and His justice. The mercy seat is where the law reaches its highest crimson sermon.

### **6. The Day of Atonement Gathered the Whole System into One Great Picture**

Leviticus 16 is like the summit of the sacrificial system, where all the lines come together in one solemn yearly event. There you have the high priest, the sin offering, the blood, the holy place, the mercy seat, the scapegoat, the confession of sin, and the removal of guilt from the camp. It

is one of the grandest chapters in the law because it gathers the whole theology of blood into a single annual drama. The people are reminded that sin is still present, access is still restricted, blood is still required, and cleansing must still be sought under God's arrangement. The high priest enters "not without blood" (Hebrews 9:7), and every movement says the same thing: sinners do not remain near God without atonement.

There is something particularly powerful about the twofold imagery of that day. One goat is slain and its blood is brought in before God. The other goat has the sins confessed over it and is sent away into the wilderness, bearing them away in figure (Leviticus 16:21-22). That means atonement is shown under both aspects - satisfaction before God and removal from the people. The blood answers upward. The scapegoat answers outward. One speaks of propitiation. The other speaks of expiation. The law may not use later theological terminology, but the concepts are there in living color. God is showing Israel that guilt must be answered before Him and removed from them, and both truths are tied to His appointed sacrificial order.

But once more, the annual repetition reveals incompleteness. The Day of Atonement had to come again next year. And the year after that. And again and again, because the law was teaching by repetition that the final solution had not yet appeared. Hebrews is explicit: "the Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest" (Hebrews 9:8). Yet the yearly rite still mattered greatly, because it taught the pattern. It fenced the truth. It made sin serious. It made blood central. It made atonement visible. And when Christ finally came, all those yearly rivers of blood were seen for what they were - shadows cast in advance by the one sufficient offering that would never need repeating.

## **7. The Whole System Was a Shadow Pointing to Christ**

At this point the reader must not make one of two mistakes. He must not say the Levitical system was meaningless ritual, because it was not. And he must not say it was the final answer, because it was not that either. It was God-ordained shadow. Hebrews says, "the law having a shadow of good things to come" (Hebrews 10:1). A shadow is not false, but it is not the substance. It is shaped by the substance and points to it. So the altar was real, the blood was real, the priesthood was real, the mercy seat was real, and the atonement under the law was real in its appointed place. But all of it leaned forward toward Christ, who would do once what the law portrayed repeatedly.

That is why Hebrews 9 and 10 are so glorious after Leviticus. They do not mock the law. They unveil it. Christ did not enter "by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood" (Hebrews 9:12). The priests stood daily, "offering oftentimes the same sacrifices" (Hebrews 10:11), but Christ "offered one sacrifice for sins for ever" and "sat down on the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12). There is the contrast. Repetition versus completion. Standing versus sitting.

Shadow versus substance. The law taught substitution, access, cleansing, mediation, and atonement through blood. Christ fulfilled all of it in one sufficient offering that obtained eternal redemption.

This is why a Bible believer can love Leviticus without going back under it. He does not despise the shadows because he knows the shadows came from God. He does not stop at the shadows because he knows the substance has come in Christ. He reads of blood on the altar and sees Calvary foreshadowed. He reads of blood before the veil and sees the torn veil in Matthew 27. He reads of blood on the mercy seat and hears Romans 3 singing through it. He reads of the Day of Atonement and sees the great High Priest entering once for all. The whole system is one vast, solemn, blood-stained preparation for Jesus Christ. And once a man sees that, Leviticus stops being a strange desert of ritual and becomes one of the richest gospel books in the Bible.

### **Conclusion**

The blood in Leviticus is everywhere because the truth it teaches is central everywhere. Blood on the altar, blood in the priest's hand, blood before the veil, blood on the mercy seat, blood on the Day of Atonement - all of it is God's way of preaching the same message over and over until no honest reader can miss it. A holy God requires blood if sinners are to come near. Not because blood is magical, but because the life is in the blood and sin brings death. Not because ritual saves, but because God ordained visible ordinances to teach invisible truths. The law is full of blood because the law is full of holiness and man is full of sin. That combination leaves no room for a cheap approach to God.

At the same time, the repeated blood of Leviticus also teaches that the final offering was still future. The sacrifices had to continue because the lesson had to continue. The priests kept standing because the work kept waiting. The mercy seat kept receiving blood because the true propitiation had not yet appeared in history. Yet none of that repetition was wasted. It was preparation. It was instruction. It was divine pedagogy written in crimson. It taught substitution, access, cleansing, mediation, and atonement so thoroughly that when Christ came, the believing reader could finally say, That is what all of this was about.

So the altar and the mercy seat belong together. The altar teaches the sinner that death must intervene. The mercy seat teaches him that blood must answer all the way up to the throne of God. The priest teaches him he needs mediation. The veil teaches him he is shut out by sin. The Day of Atonement teaches him that guilt must be dealt with comprehensively before God. And Christ fulfills every bit of it. That is why the Bible of Blood is not a collection of savage customs from a primitive age. It is revelation. It is God teaching sinners how near He can bring them without ever ceasing to be holy. And He does it through blood, until at last the one sufficient blood of Jesus Christ says forever what all the rivers of Leviticus could only say in shadow.

## **7 of 15: The Bible of Blood - Innocent Blood and the Curse of the Guilty**

### **Introduction**

There are certain phrases in Scripture that ought to make a man stop reading for a moment and sit still under the weight of what God just said. "Innocent blood" is one of those phrases. The Lord does not use it lightly, casually, or poetically. He uses it judicially. He uses it morally. He uses it as an indictment. When the Bible speaks of innocent blood, it is not merely talking about tragedy. It is talking about guilt before heaven. It is talking about violence that God records, injustice that God does not forget, and a stain that men cannot wash away with speeches, excuses, or ceremonies. The shedding of innocent blood is one of the blackest crimes in Scripture because it combines violence, injustice, pride, and contempt for the image of God in one act. That is why from Genesis onward, God keeps returning to the subject. Abel's blood cries from the ground. Naboth's blood is avenged. The prophets' blood is remembered. Jerusalem fills up with innocent blood. Nations pollute themselves with blood. Rulers build power on blood. And over all of it stands the God of heaven saying, I saw it, I heard it, and I will answer it.

The modern world is almost incapable of thinking in those terms because it has become expert at renaming evil. It talks about collateral damage, unfortunate outcomes, political necessity, social upheaval, and the cost of history moving forward. God calls it blood. When that blood is innocent blood, He calls it guilt. And the Bible goes even farther. It says innocent blood pollutes the land, cries for vengeance, and brings a curse upon those who shed it. "So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land" (Numbers 35:33). That verse alone should undo a thousand university lectures and ten thousand smooth political speeches. The land is not morally neutral. Bloodshed is not morally neutral. The ground itself becomes a witness. The Lord does not regard such violence as a private matter. It becomes a public stain before heaven. The people may move on. The throne may change hands. The newspapers may stop printing. But the blood remains in God's sight until He answers it.

And all of that prepares the reader for the greatest and darkest crime in history: the shedding of the innocent blood of Jesus Christ. That is where all the earlier blood crimes converge and where the full moral horror of human sin is finally revealed. Men murdered prophets, killed the righteous, devoured the poor, and built cities with blood, but at Calvary they crucified the sinless Son of God. Judas himself said, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4). Pilate said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person" (Matthew 27:24). The Jews cried, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:25). There is the climax of the whole matter. The Bible spends centuries teaching what innocent blood means so that when Christ is crucified, the reader will feel the full weight of it. Calvary is both man's

greatest crime and God's greatest provision. It is the supreme shedding of innocent blood, and yet in the wisdom of God it becomes the very blood by which guilty sinners can be saved.

### **1. Abel and the First Cry of Innocent Blood**

The Bible begins the subject of innocent blood almost as early as it possibly can. In Genesis 4, Cain rises up against Abel his brother and kills him, and the Lord says, "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Genesis 4:10). Later the Lord Jesus calls it "the blood of righteous Abel" (Matthew 23:35). There you have the first clear biblical pattern. Innocent blood is not silent. It cries. It speaks. It testifies. Abel's blood becomes a witness before God against the man who shed it. That means the first murder in the Bible is not treated as a family dispute gone too far. It is treated as a moral outrage that heaven itself hears.

That first instance teaches several things at once. It teaches that the innocent may be slain by the wicked even in the context of religion. Cain is not a pagan savage in a distant forest. He is a religious man bringing an offering. That makes the matter worse, not better. False religion sheds blood because it hates righteousness. First John 3:12 says Cain slew Abel "because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." That means Abel's blood is not just innocent in the sense that he was a victim. It is innocent in the sense that he was righteous and slain for it. From the beginning, the Bible ties innocent blood to the persecution of the righteous by the wicked.

And Abel's blood also establishes that innocent blood demands an answer from God. The Lord does not shrug at Cain's act. He pronounces judgment. The ground that received the blood becomes part of Cain's curse. That sets the tone for all later references. God does not forget righteous blood. He does not let it vanish into history. He does not regard it as one more regrettable event in a fallen world. Abel's blood becomes the first recorded cry in the long history of innocent bloodshed, and every later cry joins that chorus until it reaches Calvary. The Bible begins there so you will understand from the start that the shedding of innocent blood is not merely bad behavior. It is a crime that rises into the ears of the Lord of hosts.

### **2. Innocent Blood Pollutes the Land**

One of the most striking biblical truths on this subject is that innocent blood does not only stain the hand of the murderer. It stains the land. Numbers 35:33 says, "for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." That is an astonishing statement. It means bloodshed has more than individual consequences. It has territorial, national, and covenantal consequences. The ground itself is polluted by it. A people may go on farming, building, trading, and celebrating, but as far as God

is concerned, the land carries a moral defilement when innocent blood has been shed upon it without answer.

This is one reason the prophets speak so often about blood in connection with cities and nations. “They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity” (Micah 3:10). “Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!” (Habakkuk 2:12). Men think they are building civilization. God says they are mortaring bricks with blood. That is a very different perspective from the one the world likes to tell itself. Human power often advances by violence against the innocent, but Scripture tears the curtain back and says that such progress is cursed. The walls may go up, the markets may flourish, the courts may function, and the rulers may boast, but the land is defiled in God’s sight.

That truth should make any nation tremble. A land is not clean because its roads are smooth and its economy is active. A land is not righteous because its slogans sound noble. If innocent blood has been shed and normalized, the land is polluted whether its leaders admit it or not. That is why Old Testament Israel repeatedly comes under judgment. It is not only idolatry in the abstract. It is blood guiltiness. “Your hands are full of blood” (Isaiah 1:15). “The land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness” (Ezekiel 9:9). Scripture teaches that innocent blood leaves a stain wider than the act itself. It spreads out into the moral atmosphere of a people and calls for divine visitation.

### **3. God Condemns Rulers Who Shed Innocent Blood**

The Bible is particularly severe when rulers, princes, kings, and national leaders become guilty of blood. That is because power magnifies responsibility. A private murderer is guilty, but a throne that sheds innocent blood or protects those who do compounds guilt with office. Jeremiah thunders against the kings of Judah, “do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place” (Jeremiah 22:3). That is the language of government under divine scrutiny. The ruler is not merely to maintain order. He is to refuse violence and refuse the shedding of innocent blood. When he does not, his office becomes part of the crime.

Naboth’s case in 1 Kings 21 is a prime example. Ahab wants Naboth’s vineyard, Jezebel arranges false witnesses, and Naboth is killed under legal fraud. Then the Lord sends Elijah with this thunderbolt: “In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine” (1 Kings 21:19). That is divine vengeance tied directly to innocent blood. Naboth is not a nameless casualty of politics. He is a man whose blood God will avenge. And He avenges it not merely upon the immediate instruments, but upon the house that used royal power to take what it wanted through murder. That story should have terrified every king in Israel thereafter, but most of them learned nothing.

Manasseh later becomes one of the great examples of national blood guiltiness. “Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another” (2 Kings 21:16). Think of that language. Filled Jerusalem from one end to another. That is not one bad decision. That is a regime soaked in blood. And God’s answer is equally severe. “The LORD would not pardon” because of “the innocent blood that he shed” (2 Kings 24:4). There are times in Scripture when the shedding of innocent blood reaches such proportions that it becomes one of the principal reasons for national judgment. God does not ignore it because the ruler has prestige, power, or an impressive court. Thrones do not intimidate Him. If anything, they place men under a stricter reckoning when they turn authority into a weapon against the guiltless.

#### **4. The Blood of the Prophets Is Remembered**

Another major stream in the Old Testament is the blood of the prophets and righteous witnesses. The people not only drift into idolatry and immorality, they begin persecuting those who speak for God. Jesus later condemns that line of history by speaking of “the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world” (Luke 11:50). That is a staggering phrase. It means heaven has kept the record. The prophets may be buried, the kingdoms that killed them may have passed away, and the people responsible may have turned their tombs into monuments of respectability, but God still calls it “the blood of all the prophets.”

Second Chronicles gives a striking example in the murder of Zechariah the son of Jehoiada. He stands and rebukes the people, and they stone him in the court of the house of the LORD. As he dies, he says, “The LORD look upon it, and require it” (2 Chronicles 24:22). That is blood speaking again. That is righteous blood calling for divine requital. The innocent are not simply victims. They are witnesses whose blood becomes testimony in God’s court. Lamentations later speaks of “the blood of the just” (Lamentations 4:13). The prophets are not forgotten casualties of religious hostility. Their blood is part of the moral charge against the nation.

This line reaches a terrible irony in the days of Christ. The religious leaders build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the sepulchres of the righteous as if they would never have shared in such crimes. Then the Lord says that upon them would come “all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias” (Matthew 23:35). Why? Because by rejecting and crucifying Him, they prove they are the true sons of their fathers. That is the frightening thing about innocent blood. Men can condemn it in history and still repeat it in the present. They can denounce the blood of the prophets while preparing to shed the blood of the Messiah. God sees through all that hypocrisy and keeps the account exact.

#### **5. The Poor Innocents and the Violent Heart of False Religion**

Scripture also brings out a particularly evil feature of innocent bloodshed: the weak, poor, defenseless, and overlooked are often the ones whose blood is spilled. Jeremiah says, “Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocents” (Jeremiah 2:34). That phrase should burn in a man’s mind. The poor innocents. Not powerful men in battle. Not warriors armed for conflict. The poor innocents. That reveals something ugly about sin. It does not merely lash out at equals in open struggle. It preys on the defenseless. The shedding of innocent blood is often the crime of strength against weakness, power against helplessness, and convenience against righteousness.

That is why the Lord repeatedly links innocent blood to oppression. “If ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place” (Jeremiah 7:6). The same heart that oppresses the weak is the heart that sheds their blood. Violence and oppression belong together because both spring from contempt for the vulnerable. False religion often compounds that evil by hiding it under forms of respectability. The same nation that kept feast days could also fill the land with blood. The same rulers who offered sacrifices could murder the guiltless. The same people who talked about covenant could devour the weak. That is why God often denounces blood guiltiness in the same breath as hypocrisy and idolatry.

This line also helps explain why the Bible’s condemnation of innocent blood is never just legal. It is moral to the core. The Lord is not merely enforcing order. He is defending the helpless and exposing the monstrous heart that can murder those who pose no rightful threat. The shedding of innocent blood reveals what man becomes when power, pride, and sin come together unchecked by the fear of God. It shows the devil’s fingerprint plainly. And that prepares the reader to understand Herod slaughtering the children in Bethlehem, the rulers of Israel condemning the just One, and the mob preferring Barabbas over Christ. Innocent blood is always a revelation of the human heart under sin, and nowhere is that more plainly seen than when the guiltless and defenseless are crushed under the machinery of wickedness.

## **6. All Innocent Blood Points Toward the Innocent Blood of Christ**

All the rivers of innocent blood in the Old Testament ultimately flow toward one crimson sea: Calvary. Abel, Naboth, the prophets, the poor innocents, the blood of the righteous - all of it prepares the reader for the moment when the truly innocent One is handed over. The Old Testament trains your moral vision so that when you come to the Gospels, you know exactly what is happening. Judas says, “I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood” (Matthew 27:4). Pilate calls Jesus “this just person” (Matthew 27:24). The centurion says, “Certainly this was a righteous man” (Luke 23:47). The testimony piles up because God wants the issue unmistakable. This is innocent blood in the highest possible sense. Not merely a victim of circumstance. Not merely a righteous prophet. This is the sinless Son of God.

That is what makes the crucifixion the greatest crime in history. Every prior case of innocent blood is awful, but this one surpasses them all because of the person involved. In Abel, man killed a righteous brother. In Naboth, corrupt power killed an innocent landowner. In the prophets, apostate religion killed God's messengers. But at Calvary, the world crucified its Maker. "Ye denied the Holy One and the Just" (Acts 3:14). "And killed the Prince of life" (Acts 3:15). Those are not overstatements. They are exact. If the shedding of ordinary innocent blood brings divine vengeance, what will the shedding of the blood of God's own Son mean? That is why Jesus says the guilt of the generations converges in that hour.

And yet here is the wonder beyond all wonder: the greatest crime becomes the greatest provision. The innocent blood of Christ does not only cry against the guilty. For those who believe, it cries for mercy, cleansing, and peace. Hebrews says we have come "to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:24). Abel's blood cried for justice. Christ's blood satisfies justice and offers grace. That does not make Calvary less wicked on man's side. It makes God's wisdom more glorious on His side. The very blood men shed in hatred is the blood God ordained for redemption. So the cross stands as the place where the full moral horror of innocent bloodshed and the full glory of divine atonement meet in one unspeakable event.

## **7. The Curse of the Guilty and the Weight of Calvary**

By the time a reader has traced innocent blood through the Old Testament, he ought to feel something like dread when he arrives at the crucifixion. He ought to know by then that God does not ignore righteous blood. He ought to know that blood cries, pollutes, accuses, and brings a curse upon the guilty. So when the leaders of Israel cry, "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Matthew 27:25), those words ought to sound like a sentence falling from their own mouths. They are calling down upon themselves the very thing the Scriptures had long warned about. They invoke the curse of innocent blood in relation to the most innocent blood ever shed. That is one of the most fearful moments in the Bible.

And the judgment that follows in history is no accident. Jerusalem's later devastation is not disconnected from her treatment of the Messiah. Jesus Himself ties the blood guiltiness of the generations to that generation's rejection of Him. "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth" (Matthew 23:35). Why? Because in crucifying Christ they sum up the whole rebellion of the race against the righteous. The guilty line reaches its highest expression there. The curse of the guilty is not merely abstract theology. It is historical, covenantal, and judicial. The city that shed the innocent blood of the Son of God did not escape by religious privilege. The curse fell exactly as the prophets had prepared the reader to expect.

But Calvary also stands apart because there the guilty may yet be cleansed by the very blood they shed. Peter preaches to men implicated in the death of Christ and still holds out mercy through Christ. That is staggering. The blood that seals their guilt is the blood that can wash their guilt away if they repent and believe. That is the glory of the gospel. Man's greatest crime does not outrun God's redemptive purpose. Yet the moral weight remains. The sinner must never think the cross was a tidy arrangement in which no real guilt occurred. It was murder. It was judicial corruption. It was mob madness. It was false religion at full boil. It was innocent blood in the highest degree. And that is exactly why the grace revealed there is so astonishing. The guilty deserve the curse. Instead, through that very blood, believing sinners receive pardon.

## **Conclusion**

The Old Testament does not treat innocent blood as a secondary matter, and neither should any Bible believer. From Abel onward, the Lord makes it plain that the shedding of guiltless life is one of the darkest crimes under heaven. It cries from the ground. It pollutes the land. It stains rulers, cities, and nations. It calls down divine vengeance. It is remembered across generations. Men may bury it, excuse it, politicize it, or rename it, but God never loses sight of it. His Word keeps pressing the matter because He intends for men to feel the weight of it. Innocent blood is not merely tragic. It is accusatory. It is judicial. It is one of the clearest revelations of how wicked the human heart can become when it rejects the fear of God.

All of those earlier cases are preparing the reader for the supreme crime of history. When Christ is crucified, the whole Bible's doctrine of innocent blood reaches its climax. Judas knew it. Pilate knew it. The centurion knew it. Heaven knew it. The Son of God was innocent. The blood shed at Calvary was the most innocent blood ever spilled on this earth. That means the cross is not morally neutral. It is the blackest exposure of man's guilt ever recorded. Religion, politics, cowardice, envy, and mob hatred all meet there and nail the Just One to a tree. If a man does not feel the horror of that, he has not yet understood either sin or Calvary.

Yet here is the mystery that makes the gospel glorious beyond all speech. The very event that reveals man at his worst reveals God at His greatest. The innocent blood of Christ is the blood by which the guilty may be saved. The blood that should seal universal condemnation becomes the blood of atonement for every sinner who believes. So by the end of this subject the reader ought to feel both things with full force: Calvary is man's greatest sin, and Calvary is God's greatest provision. The cross is the ultimate shedding of innocent blood, and because it is, it is also the ultimate revelation of what it cost heaven to save guilty men. That is why the Bible of Blood keeps pressing this truth. It wants you to know that when God saves a sinner, He does not do it cheaply. He does it through the innocent blood of His own Son.

## **8 of 15: The Bible of Blood - The Blood of the Covenant**

### **Introduction**

One of the great failures in the way men read the Bible is that they often treat blood as though it were connected only with sacrifice in a narrow and isolated sense, as if blood were merely the cost of a victim laid upon an altar and nothing more. But the Bible goes farther than that. Blood is not only sacrificial. It is covenantal. It does not merely answer guilt in the abstract. It binds, seals, ratifies, and legally establishes a relationship before God. That is why when you come to Exodus 24, you are standing at one of the most solemn moments in the history of Israel. There the Lord does not simply give law. He binds a people to Himself under covenant blood. Moses reads "the book of the covenant" in the audience of the people, the people answer, "All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient" (Exodus 24:7), and then Moses takes the blood and sprinkles it, saying, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words" (Exodus 24:8). That is not pageantry. That is legal, binding, covenantal transaction before heaven.

That scene is one of the clearest proofs that blood in Scripture is not an ornament added to religion for dramatic effect. It is God's seal upon His dealings with man. In Exodus 24, blood stands between the holy God and the covenant people and says that this relationship is not being entered casually, sentimentally, or by mere verbal agreement. It is being ratified through death. The covenant is not merely spoken. It is sealed. That is a truth modern Christianity has largely forgotten because it has become so soft and so casual in its talk about the things of God. Men say they have a relationship with God as lightly as they say they have a gym membership or a subscription to a magazine. The Bible does not talk that way. When God binds Himself to a people under covenantal terms, blood is involved. Why? Because blood means life laid down, death intervening, and God bearing witness to a binding arrangement. In Scripture, blood is not only the answer to sin. It is the legal seal upon divine dealings.

And that makes Exodus 24 a glorious bridge passage in the whole Bible. It reaches backward to Sinai and law, but it also reaches forward to the upper room and Calvary. It shows Israel bound under the first covenant by the blood of calves and goats, and then it throws a long shadow toward the Lord Jesus Christ, who would take the cup and say, "This is my blood of the new testament" (Matthew 26:28). There is the greater fulfillment. The old covenant was ratified with animal blood. The new covenant is inaugurated through the blood of the Son of God. The law was sealed by blood. Grace is sealed by blood. The old arrangement was real in its place, but temporary and preparatory. The new covenant in Christ is better because it is founded upon better promises and better blood. So when we study the blood of the covenant, we are not studying some forgotten Jewish custom. We are tracing one of the great legal and redemptive

lines of the whole Bible, from Sinai to Calvary, from tablets of stone to the new testament in Christ's blood.

## **1. Covenant in the Bible Is More Than Agreement**

One of the first things that has to be cleared out of the way is the weak modern notion that covenant is merely another word for agreement. In Scripture, covenant is weightier than that. It is solemn, binding, witnessed before God, and often established with signs or acts that reveal its gravity. Men can make agreements every day and break them by the afternoon. Biblical covenant carries a moral and legal weight because God stands over it. That is why the Bible repeatedly uses covenant language in connection with His dealings with Noah, Abraham, Israel, David, and ultimately in the new covenant promised through the prophets. Covenant in Scripture is not a casual understanding. It is a divinely recognized bond with terms, obligations, and sanctions.

Exodus 24 makes that plain in a way no reader can miss. Moses does not simply tell the people that God wants to be in relationship with them. He builds an altar, sets up twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel, offers burnt offerings and peace offerings, reads the book of the covenant, receives the people's vow of obedience, and then takes blood and sprinkles it (Exodus 24:4-8). Everything about that chapter says solemnity, not casualness. God is binding a nation to Himself under covenant law. Their standing as His earthly people is not resting on vague spiritual feelings. It is resting on a covenant ratified in blood.

This matters because if covenant is not understood, the force of covenant blood cannot be understood either. Blood in a covenant setting means that life and death are bound up with the arrangement. It means the covenant is no light thing. It means the parties involved are not entering a sentimental association but a relationship established under divine seriousness. That is why the old covenant carries blessings for obedience and judgments for disobedience. The blood ratifying it is a testimony that this is binding before God. Men today want the privileges of covenant with none of the solemnity. They want blessings without binding, promises without holiness, and relationship without obligation. Exodus 24 crushes that foolishness at once. God's covenant with Israel was sealed in blood because it was real, legal, and morally weighty before Him.

## **2. Sinai Was a Blood-Sealed Covenant**

Exodus 24 is one of the high moments in the Pentateuch because it gathers together word, altar, sacrifice, people, and blood into one covenantal act. Moses "wrote all the words of the LORD" (Exodus 24:4). Then he builds the altar and offers the sacrifices. Then he reads "the book of the covenant" (Exodus 24:7). Then the people say, "All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient" (Exodus 24:7). And then comes the blood. "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled

it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant” (Exodus 24:8). The order matters. First comes the word, then the sacrifice, then the blood, then the binding relation. Israel is not entering into this arrangement in a fog. They hear the terms, answer to the terms, and then stand under blood-sealed covenant.

The detail in verse 6 is especially important. “And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar” (Exodus 24:6). Then later the other half is sprinkled on the people. That means the blood is set in relation both to God’s altar and to the covenant people. The whole scene says union under blood. The blood touches the Godward side and the manward side. It stands between them as the ratifying witness of the covenant. In other words, Israel is not merely agreeing among themselves to be religious. They are being bound to the LORD under a blood-sealed arrangement. The altar and the people are brought into relation through the same blood.

That is one reason Sinai is so dreadful and glorious at once. It is not merely legislation. It is covenant ratification under sacrifice. The people are not just receiving moral advice. They are entering into an arrangement before a holy God with blood upon them. That ought to cure any light reading of the law. The law is not a collection of spiritual improvement tips. It is covenantal revelation given to a nation placed under blood obligation. And because it is blood-sealed, violation of it is not merely inconsistency. It is covenant breaking. Once that is seen, the rest of the Old Testament begins to make more sense. Israel’s sin is not just generic human failure. It is blood-sealed covenant violation.

### **3. Blood Joined Law and Obligation**

It is one thing to have laws written down. It is another thing to be bound to those laws under covenant blood. Exodus 24 shows that the law and the blood belong together in the old covenant. Moses reads “the book of the covenant,” then sprinkles the blood and says, “Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words” (Exodus 24:8). Notice that last phrase carefully: “concerning all these words.” The blood is tied to the revealed terms. It is not floating free as a general religious symbol. It seals the covenant in connection with the words God has spoken. The blood does not erase obligation. It establishes it in covenant form.

That is a truth people often miss because modern religion likes to set blood and obedience against each other. But in Exodus 24 they are joined. The blood ratifies the covenant, and the covenant includes commandments. Israel is not sprinkled with blood so they can ignore the LORD’s words. They are sprinkled with blood because they are being bound to Him under those words. The blood therefore has legal force. It marks them out as a people in covenant relation

and covenant obligation. The old covenant is not bloodless law, and it is not lawless blood. It is law sealed by blood.

This helps explain why the prophets later speak with such fierce language when Israel turns aside. They are not merely drifting from wholesome values. They are violating a covenant ratified with blood. They are despising what God solemnly established. That is why idolatry, rebellion, and disobedience are such heinous offenses in the Old Testament context. The nation had been bound to the LORD under blood. They had stood and said, "All that the LORD hath said will we do" (Exodus 24:7). Then they turned and played the harlot with other gods. The blood of the covenant made that treachery more dreadful, not less. The old covenant therefore teaches a crucial truth: blood can bind a people under a solemn arrangement before God, and when that arrangement is despised, guilt is aggravated.

#### **4. The Old Covenant Was Real, but Not Final**

Now here is where many readers lose their balance. Some talk as though the old covenant were worthless, which is false. Others talk as though it were final, which is also false. The Bible teaches neither error. The covenant at Sinai was real, God-given, solemn, and binding in its place. It was not a sham. It was not a divine mistake. It accomplished exactly what God intended it to accomplish. But it was not the final arrangement by which eternal redemption would be secured. It was preparatory. It fenced Israel off as a covenant people, exposed sin, taught holiness, enforced obligation, and filled the national life with blood, sacrifice, priesthood, and promise. But it could not perfect the conscience or bring in the full new covenant blessings that would come only through Christ.

The New Testament says plainly, "Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood" (Hebrews 9:18). That means the writer of Hebrews does not dismiss Exodus 24 at all. He honors it as the real dedication of the first testament. But then he goes on to show that the very existence of a first testament implies the coming of something better. Hebrews is full of this line of thought. Better promises. Better covenant. Better sacrifice. Better priesthood. Better blood. The old arrangement was genuine, but it was never meant to be the last word. It was part of God's unfolding revelation.

That is why the old covenant blood was animal blood, repeated in a system that had to keep functioning. The law could define sin, reveal God's holiness, and maintain Israel in covenant relation, but it could not bring in eternal perfection by the blood of bulls and goats. Hebrews says, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4). The old covenant blood could dedicate, purify ceremonially, and ratify the arrangement at Sinai, but it pointed beyond itself. It was teaching categories that would only be fulfilled when

Christ came. So Exodus 24 must be appreciated in its own place, but also read with an eye lifted toward Calvary. It is real covenant blood, but it is not yet the blood of the new testament.

### **5. Christ Spoke of the New Testament in His Blood**

When the Lord Jesus sits with His disciples and institutes the Supper, He takes the cup and says, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28). That is one of the most astonishing statements in the Gospels because it gathers up Exodus 24 and carries it forward into the cross. Just as Moses once said, "Behold the blood of the covenant" (Exodus 24:8), now Christ says in effect, Behold the blood of the new testament. The old covenant had blood. The new covenant has blood. But the blood is no longer that of calves and goats. It is His own. And the blessings attached are not merely national and ceremonial. They are bound up with remission of sins.

Luke records the same truth with slightly different wording: "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20). There you see clearly that the blood is not only sacrificial but covenantal. Christ is not merely saying He will die. He is saying His blood inaugurates the new testament. It is the covenantal seal. It is the legal basis. It is the blood by which the arrangement is established before God. In other words, just as Sinai had covenant blood, so the cross has covenant blood. But the cross surpasses Sinai in every way because the blood is the blood of the Son of God, and the covenant blessings secured are greater than anything the first testament could ever give.

And this is where the beauty of Scripture shines. The same God who bound Israel under covenant blood at Sinai now brings in the new covenant through the blood of Christ. There is continuity and fulfillment. The categories are not discarded. They are filled full. Blood still seals covenant. Blood still ratifies divine dealings. Blood still stands between God and man as the solemn witness of the arrangement. But now the blood is infinitely greater, the covenant is better, and the blessings are everlasting. The upper room is therefore not merely a farewell meal. It is the announcement that the covenantal blood long anticipated is about to be shed.

### **6. Testament, Death, and Legal Force**

Hebrews 9 unfolds another aspect of this truth that is too often ignored. The writer says, "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator" (Hebrews 9:16). That means the new testament is not merely "new" in the sense of updated. It is brought into force through death. The covenantal and testamentary ideas meet in Christ. His death is not an unfortunate interruption to His ministry. It is the very means by which the new testament comes into legal effect. This is why the blood matters so much. The new testament is not activated by inspiration, example, or teaching alone. It comes into force by death, and that death is signified and sealed in His blood.

That should make a man read the words of Christ over the cup with much greater seriousness. "This is my blood of the new testament" (Matthew 26:28) is not liturgical poetry. It is legal and redemptive declaration. He is announcing that the covenantal promises of God are about to be brought into force through His own sacrificial death. What Moses did at Sinai with animal blood in relation to the first testament, Christ now fulfills at a higher level with His own blood in relation to the new testament. The law was dedicated with blood. The new testament is inaugurated with blood. The difference lies in the dignity of the blood and the greatness of the covenant established by it.

This helps explain why the Supper is such a solemn thing in the New Testament. Paul says, "This cup is the new testament in my blood" (1 Corinthians 11:25). The church is not playing with symbols disconnected from reality. It is remembering the blood by which the covenant blessings of God in Christ have been sealed and brought into force. Every time the church rightly remembers the cup, it is acknowledging that all its blessings are grounded in the death of the Testator. No death, no testament. No blood, no covenant. No cross, no remission. That is how legally and theologically weighty this subject is. The blood of the covenant is the blood by which God's testamentary blessings come into operative effect for His people.

## **7. Blood Is the Legal Seal of Redemption**

By the time you have traced covenant blood from Exodus 24 to the upper room and Hebrews 9, the conclusion becomes unavoidable: blood is the legal seal of God's dealings with man. It seals the first covenant at Sinai. It inaugurates the new testament in Christ. It is not an emotional flourish. It is not merely a symbol of suffering. It is the solemn, God-appointed, legally weighty seal by which covenant relation is ratified. That is why the blood of Christ is connected not only with forgiveness but with purchase, redemption, and reconciliation. "In whom we have redemption through his blood" (Ephesians 1:7). "Ye are bought with a price" (1 Corinthians 6:20). The blood is not just persuasive. It is effectual and binding.

And because it is the legal seal, the believer's standing is not fragile. It does not rest upon moods, resolutions, or fluctuating performance. It rests upon a covenant established in the blood of Christ. The old covenant could be broken by Israel in the sense that they violated its terms and came under its curses. But the new covenant stands upon better ground because the Mediator has satisfied its every requirement in His own blood. That is why Hebrews can speak of "the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Hebrews 13:20). The covenant in Christ is not temporary patchwork. It is everlasting because its seal is perfect and its Mediator flawless.

This also means that to despise the blood of Christ is no light thing. Hebrews warns of those who count "the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing" (Hebrews 10:29). There is the terrible reverse side. If covenant blood is this solemn, then contempt for it

is among the gravest possible sins. Men may joke about religion, mock doctrine, and trifle with church forms, but when they scorn the blood of the covenant they are not merely being irreverent. They are despising the very seal of God's redemptive arrangement. On the other hand, the saint who understands the blood rightly sees in it the unshakable legal ground of all his blessings in Christ. He is not holding on to a wish. He is standing in a blood-sealed covenant established by God Himself.

## **Conclusion**

The blood of the covenant is one of the great linking truths of the whole Bible. It binds Sinai to Calvary, law to promise, Moses to Christ, and shadow to substance. In Exodus 24, God bound Israel to Himself under covenant blood, making plain that His dealings with man are not loose, sentimental, or casual. They are solemn, moral, and binding. Blood sealed the covenant because blood means life laid down and God witnessing the arrangement. The people stood under that blood in relation to the words God had spoken. That was no small matter then, and it is no small matter now.

But the glory of the matter rises even higher when Christ takes the cup and declares, "This is my blood of the new testament" (Matthew 26:28). There the old pattern is fulfilled in a way no animal sacrifice could ever achieve. The new covenant is not ratified by the blood of bulls and goats. It is inaugurated by the blood of the Son of God. The first testament was dedicated with blood. The new testament is established with better blood. The old covenant bound a nation under law. The new covenant brings remission, redemption, reconciliation, and everlasting blessing through Christ. That is why this subject stands as such a beautiful bridge in the Bible. It ties the whole redemptive story together in crimson.

So the final lesson is plain. Blood in Scripture is not merely connected with sacrifice. It is connected with covenant, testament, law, promise, and redemption. It is the legal seal of God's dealings with man. That is why the blood of Christ is so central. It does not merely reveal love. It establishes covenant. It does not merely move the heart. It brings the testament into force. It does not merely speak of death. It seals eternal blessings for all who believe. When a saint looks at the cup and remembers the words of his Lord, he is not merely remembering that Christ suffered. He is remembering that every blessing he has in God stands upon a covenant sealed forever in the blood of Jesus Christ.

## **9 of 15: The Bible of Blood - Why the Blood of Jesus Christ Was Different**

### **Introduction**

There have been rivers of blood spilled in human history. Men have died in battle, in revolutions, in persecutions, in accidents, in murders, and under judgments. Animals bled on Jewish altars by the thousands. Bulls, goats, lambs, and turtledoves all had their place in the law of God. Martyrs have sealed their testimony with their own blood. Prophets have been slain. Apostles have been butchered. Righteous men have died for the truth. But with all of that bloodshed, the Bible still singles out one blood above every other and treats it as utterly unique, utterly unmatched, and utterly sufficient where all other blood failed. That blood is the blood of Jesus Christ. And the reason it is different is not merely that He died. Men die every day. It is not merely that He suffered. Many have suffered cruelly. It is not merely that He was unjustly condemned. Others have been unjustly condemned too. The blood of Jesus Christ was different because Jesus Christ was different. His blood had a worth no other blood ever possessed because His person had a glory no other person ever possessed.

This is one of the great dividing lines in all real Bible preaching. A man can talk about the cross and still miss the cross. He can talk about sacrifice and still miss atonement. He can talk about Jesus as an example of courage, love, sacrifice, and faithfulness and still never reach the heart of redemption. The heart of redemption is not merely that a good man died. It is that the God-man died. It is that the sinless, spotless, virgin-born Son of God, God manifest in the flesh, shed His blood under divine judgment for sinners. That is why Peter calls it “the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:19). He does not call it inspiring blood, moving blood, or even innocent blood, though it is all that. He calls it precious blood. Precious means valuable beyond measure. Precious means incomparable worth. Precious means heaven itself places a value on that blood that no created mind can fully calculate. If a man misses that, he will reduce Calvary to a noble tragedy and never understand why it satisfied divine justice.

That is why this essay stands as one of the centerpieces of the whole series. Up to this point we have traced blood through Abel, through the coats of skins, through Cain and Abel, through the passover, through the altar and mercy seat, through innocent blood, and through covenant blood. But now all those streams meet in one fountain. Why was Christ’s blood different? Because no other blood came from a person like Him. No other blood was shed by One who “did no sin” (1 Peter 2:22). No other blood came from One who could say, “which of you convinceth me of sin?” (John 8:46). No other blood was the blood of One who was born of a virgin, conceived by the Holy Ghost, and called “that holy thing” (Luke 1:35). No other blood belonged to One who was “God manifest in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:16). That is why the cross was not just another martyrdom. It was the offering of the sinless Son of God, and His blood alone could do what no altar, no priest, no lamb, no prophet, and no martyr’s death could ever do. It could satisfy God forever.

## **1. Christ’s Blood Was Different Because His Person Was Different**

The first and greatest truth that has to be settled is that the blood of Christ cannot be understood apart from the person of Christ. Blood is not magical in itself. If it were, any human blood could save, and history would be full of redeemers. But that is not the case. The Bible never teaches that blood as a substance saves merely because it is blood. It teaches that the blood of Jesus Christ saves because of whose blood it is. That is the issue. The cross derives its glory from the person on it. The value of the blood is inseparable from the dignity of the One who shed it. That is why Acts 20:28 says the church was “purchased with his own blood.” The verse does not simply say blood bought the church. It says **his own blood**. The ownership matters because the person matters.

When the New Testament speaks of Christ, it speaks of Him in terms no mere man could ever bear. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). Then, “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). “God was manifest in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:16). “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9). Those are not ornamental verses thrown in for doctrinal richness. They are the foundation stones beneath Calvary. If Jesus Christ is not who the Bible says He is, then the cross may still be tragic, but it is not redemptive in the biblical sense. If He is not God manifest in the flesh, then His death cannot carry infinite worth. If He is merely one man among men, then at best He can die as an example, not as an all-sufficient sacrifice.

This is why false doctrine about the person of Christ always leads to false doctrine about the blood of Christ. Unitarianism, modernism, liberalism, and every other denial of His full deity eventually rot the gospel because they strip His blood of its unique worth. Once Christ is reduced to a creature, teacher, prophet, or exalted moral reformer, His blood becomes only the blood of a remarkable man. But the Bible will not allow that reduction for one second. The worth of His blood is the worth of His person in sacrificial outpouring. The cross means what it means because the One hanging there is the eternal Son in human flesh. That is why His blood was different from the first drop to the last.

## **2. He Was Sinless and Therefore Needed No Atonement for Himself**

Another reason Christ’s blood was utterly unique is that He was sinless. Every other man who has ever lived, apart from Him, has had guilt before God. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). That includes prophets, kings, priests, apostles, preachers, reformers, and martyrs. They may have been saved men, godly men, and useful men, but every one of them was a sinner by nature and by practice. That means if they died, their death could not atone for others in any ultimate sense because they had their own guilt before God. A sinner’s blood is stained already. It may be innocent in relation to a human accusation, but it is not sinless before the throne of heaven. Christ alone stands outside that entire ruined line.

The Scripture is emphatic on that point. He “did no sin” (1 Peter 2:22). He “knew no sin” (2 Corinthians 5:21). He was “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners” (Hebrews 7:26). Pilate said, “I find no fault in this man” (Luke 23:4). Judas cried out, “I have betrayed the innocent blood” (Matthew 27:4). The dying thief said, “this man hath done nothing amiss” (Luke 23:41). Even devils recognized Him as “the Holy One of God” (Mark 1:24). The witness is unanimous. In a world full of sinners, there stood one man against whom no true charge could be brought. That means when He died, He did not die for His own sins. He had none. He died as a substitute.

That is everything. If Christ had needed atonement for Himself, He could never have been the atonement for us. Under the law, the earthly high priests had to offer “first for his own sins, and then for the people’s” (Hebrews 7:27). But Christ had no such need. He did not go to the cross because He had failed somewhere in thought, word, or deed. He went because we had failed. The innocent died for the guilty. The just died for the unjust. “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18). There is the glory of substitution rooted in the glory of His sinlessness. His blood was different because it was never under any claim of guilt from His own life.

### **3. He Was Spotless and Fulfilled Every Sacrificial Type**

The Old Testament sacrifices all pointed toward the necessity of a spotless victim. The passover lamb had to be “without blemish” (Exodus 12:5). The offerings under the law had to be chosen according to God’s strict requirements. That was not mere ceremonial fussiness. It was prophecy. God was teaching Israel that the final sacrifice would have to be flawless. A blemished offering could not picture the true Redeemer. So all the lambs, bullocks, goats, and doves under the law were selected under that principle, yet none of them possessed any moral consciousness or true righteousness. Their outward spotlessness pointed beyond themselves to a person who would be truly spotless in His being and conduct.

That person was Jesus Christ. Peter says we are redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:19). That verse is one of the clearest bridges between Leviticus and Calvary. The law required outward blemishlessness in the victim. Christ fulfilled that requirement morally, spiritually, perfectly, and eternally. He was not merely free from scandal in public reputation. He was free from sin in absolute reality. There was no hidden corruption in Him, no inward stain, no secret perversity, no moral defect. He did not merely look pure to men. He was pure before God.

This is why the sacrificial types matter so much. They were not arbitrary patterns. They were doctrinal shadows cast by the coming substance. Every spotless lamb under the law was preaching Christ in advance. Every rejected blemished offering was another sermon that God

would not receive an imperfect substitute. And when Christ finally appeared, He met the requirement in full. That is why John the Baptist did not say, Behold a moral teacher, or Behold a suffering prophet. He said, "Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:29). He recognized the sacrificial line reaching its fulfillment. Christ's blood was different because the One who shed it was the spotless Lamb every altar had been anticipating.

#### **4. He Was Virgin-Born and Therefore Not Merely Another Son of Adam**

The uniqueness of Christ's blood is also bound up with His supernatural conception and virgin birth. The Lord Jesus did not come into the world by ordinary generation as every other child of Adam does. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). That verse is one of the most decisive in the whole Bible. His birth was holy from the outset. He did not enter the race as a polluted sinner needing redemption. He entered as the holy Son of God taking humanity without taking sin.

Now that matters profoundly, because if Christ had simply come by the ordinary line of Adam's race, He would have stood under the same fallen condition as the rest of us. But Scripture is careful to show that He is born of a virgin and called holy from conception. He takes true humanity without inheriting corruption. He is "made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4), yet not simply another fallen man in the line of Adam. The virgin birth is not an isolated Christmas doctrine for sentimental holiday preaching. It is redemptive bedrock. It means the blood shed at Calvary belongs to One whose entrance into the world was unlike any other man's entrance. He is man, truly man, but not merely another sinner from the stock of Adam.

This is one reason Bible believers have always fought so hard for the virgin birth. Lose it, and the uniqueness of Christ's person begins to collapse. Lose it, and the uniqueness of His blood is soon cheapened. The devil understands that perfectly well. He does not need to get men to deny the cross immediately if he can first get them to deny the incarnation rightly understood. But the Bible ties it all together. The One whose blood was shed was born in a way no one else was born, lived in a way no one else lived, and died in a way no one else died. His blood was different because His very entrance into the world was different. He was not another son of Adam. He was the holy Son of God come in the flesh.

#### **5. His Death Was Not Mere Martyrdom but Propitiation**

There have been noble deaths in history. Men have died courageously for truth, for country, for conscience, and for the defense of others. Martyrs have bled for the name of Christ. Prophets have died at the hands of wicked rulers. But none of those deaths, however brave or tragic, accomplished propitiation. None of them satisfied divine justice for the sins of the world. None

of them turned away the wrath of God in the place of guilty sinners. That is where the death of Christ stands apart from every other death in history. The cross was not merely the killing of a righteous man. It was the offering of the sinless Son of God as a propitiation. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood" (Romans 3:25).

That word propitiation is enormous. It means satisfaction. It means the holy wrath of God against sin has found its answer in the blood of Christ. Not bypassed. Not denied. Not ignored. Answered. That is why the cross cannot be reduced to moral influence. It is not merely that Calvary moves us to love because we see such sacrifice. It is that Calvary satisfies God because He sees such sacrifice. The passover already taught the principle when the LORD said, "when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). The issue was what God saw and how God answered it. At Calvary, that principle reaches its highest fulfillment. God sees the blood of His Son and there finds the righteous ground upon which the believer can be spared.

That makes Christ's blood different from every martyr's blood ever shed. Abel's blood cried for justice. The prophets' blood cried for vengeance. The martyrs' blood cries from under the altar in Revelation. But Christ's blood secures peace. It "speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:24). It does not merely accuse the guilty. It provides atonement for the guilty. No martyr ever did that. No prophet ever did that. No apostle ever did that. Their blood may testify, but it cannot propitiate. Only the blood of Jesus Christ can do that, because only His person was sufficient to stand under divine judgment for others and come out the other side with eternal redemption secured.

## **6. His Blood Alone Could Obtain Eternal Redemption**

Hebrews 9 says, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12). That verse is one of the clearest statements in the whole Bible about the final sufficiency of Christ's blood. Animal sacrifices had their place under the law, but they could not obtain eternal redemption. They could sanctify to the purifying of the flesh, they could function within the Levitical system, and they could teach substitution in shadow form, but they could not do what Christ's blood did. They could not enter the heavenly holy place as the sufficient answer once for all. Only His own blood could do that.

Notice the words carefully. "His own blood." Not borrowed blood. Not representative blood in some abstract sense. Not symbolic blood only. His own blood. And by it He "obtained eternal redemption for us." Not temporary reprieve. Not ceremonial relief. Not provisional possibility waiting to become effective if man adds enough merit. Eternal redemption. That means the work accomplished by His blood reaches as far as eternity because the blood itself has eternal worth in the sight of God. The permanence of redemption rests on the dignity of the Redeemer

and the sufficiency of His blood. If the blood were merely human, the redemption could not be eternal. But because the person is who He is, the blood does what no other blood ever could.

This is why the New Testament keeps speaking of the blood of Christ in definitive and triumphant terms. “Much more then, being now justified by his blood” (Romans 5:9). “In whom we have redemption through his blood” (Ephesians 1:7). “Having made peace through the blood of his cross” (Colossians 1:20). That is accomplished language. That is not the vocabulary of uncertainty. It is the language of finished redemption grounded in the finished worth of His blood. Christ’s blood was different because it did not merely symbolize salvation. It secured it. It did not merely suggest peace. It made peace. It did not merely point toward redemption. It obtained eternal redemption.

### **7. The Preciousness of His Blood Demands Worship, Not Embarrassment**

Peter calls it “the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:19), and that word precious should stop every Bible believer in his tracks. Precious means valuable beyond estimate. Precious means cherished, costly, incomparable. It is the opposite of common. That is why Hebrews warns against counting “the blood of the covenant... an unholy thing” (Hebrews 10:29). To treat Christ’s blood as common is one of the most dreadful acts of spiritual blindness imaginable. Yet that is exactly what modern religion does when it gets embarrassed by blood language, tones down the hymns, rephrases the preaching, and replaces redemption with vague talk about acceptance and community. It is trying to sound refined while trampling the very thing God calls precious.

A Bible believer ought to have no such embarrassment. If heaven values that blood as precious, then saints ought to speak of it with reverence and gratitude, not apology. The saints in glory sing of the Lamb that was slain. They do not blush over it. Revelation 5:9 says, “thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.” There is no attempt there to update the language for cultured sensibilities. Heaven is not ashamed of the blood. Hell hates it. Apostasy despises it. The flesh recoils from it. But the redeemed love it because they know exactly what it cost and exactly what it accomplished.

And once a man really grasps why Christ’s blood was different, worship becomes inevitable. He sees that this is not merely the blood of a victim, but the blood of the virgin-born, sinless, spotless, God-man. He sees that this blood was not shed because heaven lost control, but because divine wisdom ordained redemption. He sees that this blood answered justice, purchased the church, opened the holiest, secured the covenant, and obtained eternal redemption. At that point, the blood of Christ is no longer a doctrine to him only. It becomes the ground of his peace, the song of his worship, and the object of his deepest gratitude. Precious blood indeed.

## Conclusion

The blood of Jesus Christ was different because Jesus Christ was different. That is the great truth that towers over the whole subject. He was not merely another victim of injustice, another righteous sufferer, another prophet rejected by his generation, or another martyr whose death inspires the faithful. He was the sinless, spotless, virgin-born Son of God, God manifest in the flesh, and therefore His blood had a worth no animal sacrifice and no mere human death could ever possess. Every altar in the Old Testament leaned toward Him. Every lamb pointed toward Him. Every priestly action anticipated Him. But when He came, He surpassed them all because the dignity of His person gave infinite value to His sacrifice.

That is why the cross must never be reduced to sentiment. It is not enough to say Jesus died. The question is, who was Jesus? Once that is answered biblically, the blood begins to shine with its proper glory. It was the blood of One who did no sin, knew no sin, and in whom there was no sin. It was the blood of One born holy, living holy, dying voluntarily, and rising triumphantly. It was blood that could satisfy God because it came from One who perfectly pleased God. It was blood that could secure eternal redemption because it belonged to One whose worth cannot be measured by created scales. That is why Calvary was not another martyrdom. It was the offering of the Son.

So the saint should rest there, preach there, sing there, and never move from there. He is not saved by admiration of Christ's life, though Christ's life is perfect. He is not saved by imitation of Christ's example, though Christ's example is glorious. He is saved through Christ's blood. And that blood is sufficient because of who shed it. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Not because blood as such is mystical, but because **Jesus Christ his Son** is who He is. That is why the blood was different. That is why the blood was precious. And that is why all the hosts of heaven and all the redeemed of earth will never finish praising the Lamb who was slain.

## **10 of 15: The Bible of Blood - Justified by His Blood**

### Introduction

If there is one place where modern religion shows its true colors, it is in the way it handles the blood of Jesus Christ. It can tolerate talk about love, purpose, service, compassion, ethics, mission, healing, and spiritual growth. It can even tolerate talk about the cross so long as the cross remains a vague symbol of sacrifice or a moving example of love under pressure. But the moment you say with Paul, "being now justified by his blood" (Romans 5:9), the fight starts.

Why? Because that verse does not leave room for church machinery, human merit, sacramental systems, moral improvement plans, or religious performance. It takes salvation clean out of the hands of the sinner and puts it squarely in the accomplished work of Jesus Christ. That is exactly what proud religion cannot stand. It wants a sinner to contribute something so he can keep a little self-respect while pretending to bow before God. The blood strips him of that last rag and leaves him where he belongs, at the feet of Christ alone.

Paul is the great doctrinal herald of this truth in the New Testament. He does not treat the blood of Christ as a devotional accessory. He does not mention it as though it were one image among many equally useful ways of speaking about salvation. He places the blood right in the center of justification, redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation, access, peace, and eternal security. When Paul talks about the blood, he talks like a man who knows exactly what the issue is. The issue is not whether Jesus inspired men by dying nobly. The issue is whether His death and blood actually did anything before God. Paul answers that question with absolute clarity. The blood of Christ did not merely make salvation a possibility for those willing to finish the job with religion. It actually purchased, secured, and established salvation for those who believe. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Ephesians 1:7). That is present possession, not future speculation.

That is why this essay must drive hard and plain. There is no use tiptoeing around this subject because the Holy Ghost did not tiptoe. If a sinner is justified, he is justified by Christ's blood. If he is redeemed, he is redeemed through Christ's blood. If he has peace with God, that peace was made through the blood of Christ's cross. If he is reconciled, the blood stands at the center of that reconciliation. The blood is not a church ornament. It is not a sacramental ingredient dispensed by clergy. It is not a metaphor for moral seriousness. It is the judicial, redemptive, reconciling ground of salvation. And once a man sees that, every substitute religion on earth begins to look like what it is - a desperate attempt to avoid the humbling finality of the blood of Jesus Christ.

### **1. Justification by Blood Is a Legal Declaration, Not a Religious Feeling**

Paul says, "Much more than, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Romans 5:9). That verse alone should settle a thousand controversies if men would simply believe what it says. Justification is not a mood. It is not a church experience. It is not an internal sensation of being forgiven. It is a legal declaration before God. A justified man is a man God has declared righteous in His court. Not because that man never sinned, and not because he has earned such a verdict by good behavior, but because the claims of divine justice against him have been answered in the blood of Christ. The language is courtroom language. The sinner stood guilty. The blood answered the case. God declared the believer righteous on that basis.

Now notice the wording carefully. Paul does not say justified by baptism, justified by penance, justified by church loyalty, justified by emotional sincerity, justified by reforming your habits, or justified by holding out faithful to the end. He says justified by his blood. That means the ground of the verdict lies wholly outside the sinner in the finished work of Christ. This is why works religion hates Pauline theology. Paul will not let the sinner bring anything into the courtroom except guilt and faith in Christ. All the merit lies in the blood. All the worth lies in the blood. All the answer to wrath lies in the blood. The justified man is not one who finally got his act together. He is one whose guilt has been judicially answered by the sacrifice of another.

That makes justification by blood one of the most offensive truths in the Bible to human pride. Men will tolerate a religion that helps them improve because they can still boast in the improvement. They will tolerate a religion that joins grace to merit because then they can still claim they cooperated nobly with God. But justification by blood kills boasting. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded" (Romans 3:27). Excluded by what? By the very structure of the gospel Paul preaches. A man cannot boast in the blood of Christ the way he can boast in his own discipline. He can only receive it, trust it, and rest in the verdict God gives on the basis of it. That is why justification by blood is not merely a doctrine. It is the death sentence on religious pride.

## **2. The Blood Is the Ground of Propitiation Before God**

Romans 3:25 is one of the great mountain peaks of New Testament doctrine: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." That word propitiation is not there to impress seminary students. It is there because nothing smaller would express the truth. It means satisfaction. It means that God's holy wrath against sin has been righteously answered in the blood of Christ. The blood does not simply make men feel forgiven. It answers God. The blood does not simply move the sinner emotionally. It satisfies divine justice judicially. That is why Paul centers propitiation "through faith in his blood." Faith is not vague spirituality. It is trust directed to the blood as the God-appointed ground of satisfaction.

This matters because a great deal of false preaching talks as though the main problem in salvation is man's damaged self-image or his broken inner life. The Bible says the main problem is that the sinner stands guilty before a holy God whose wrath abides on sin. Until that is faced, the gospel will be watered down into therapy. But propitiation takes you right back into God's throne room. The issue is what answers there. What turns away wrath there. What upholds righteousness there. Paul says the answer is the blood of Christ. That makes the blood far more than a symbol of sacrifice. It makes it the very means by which God can remain just while justifying the ungodly who believe in Jesus.

Now once you grasp propitiation, every bloodless gospel becomes instantly exposed. A bloodless gospel may talk about acceptance, but it has no answer for wrath. It may talk about

transformation, but it has no answer for guilt. It may talk about belonging, but it has no answer for judgment. The blood does. That is why Paul is not embarrassed to tie faith directly to the blood. He knows that without the blood there is no propitiation, and without propitiation there is no righteous basis for forgiveness. If God is to forgive sinners and still remain holy, His justice must be satisfied. The blood of Christ is the satisfaction.

### **3. Redemption Through His Blood Means Purchase, Not Possibility**

Paul says, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins” (Ephesians 1:7), and again, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:14). The word redemption is a purchase word. It is ransom language. It means release secured by payment. Not possible release if the sinner adds enough religion later. Not potential release waiting on church ceremony to activate it. Release by price paid. The blood is that price. The sinner is not redeemed because God decided to overlook the debt. He is redeemed because the debt has been answered in the blood of Christ. That is why Paul says “we have” redemption. Not we may have it if we manage not to lose it by our instability. Not we hope to finish obtaining it after enough effort. We have it.

This strikes directly at every works-based system on earth. Rome says grace comes through sacramental channels administered by the church and must be maintained through continued cooperation, penance, and ritual obedience. Protestant legalists say Christ got you started, but your standing now rises and falls on performance. Mystics tell you to seek inward enlightenment. Moralists tell you to live better. Paul says redemption through his blood. That is not carelessness. That is not oversimplification. That is the Holy Ghost cutting through all the clutter and putting the whole matter where God put it. Redemption is in Christ and through His blood. If it is through His blood, then it is not through the sinner’s conduct as a contributing cause.

And do not miss how closely redemption and forgiveness are tied together in those verses. Forgiveness is not God pretending no debt existed. It is God releasing the sinner because the ransom has been paid. That makes forgiveness costly and glorious at once. It is not cheap kindness. It is blood-bought mercy. That is why redeemed people never get over the cross. They know their forgiveness was not handed out like candy. It was purchased through blood. Paul understands that perfectly, which is why he refuses to let the churches drift into sentimentalism. Redemption through His blood means a real transaction has taken place before God. The prisoner is not merely offered a chance to escape. He is bought out.

### **4. Peace with God Was Made Through the Blood of His Cross**

Colossians 1:20 says, “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself.” Notice again the force of the language. Not offered peace. Not

suggested peace. Not symbolized peace. Made peace. The blood of His cross actually accomplished something objective before God. Peace was made. That means the warfare between divine holiness and human guilt was not ignored, redefined, or sentimentalized. It was settled in the blood of Christ. The sinner who believes does not create peace with God by feeling calmer about religion. He enters into a peace Christ already made.

This is one of the strongest answers in the New Testament to all forms of sacramentalism. Sacramental systems keep the sinner in a state of uncertainty, always returning to ritual, always depending on priestly administration, always wondering whether peace is currently intact. Paul says peace was made through the blood of His cross. That is finished work language. The cross did not merely open a negotiation. It accomplished reconciliation. The church does not make peace. Christ made peace. The priest does not make peace. Christ made peace. The sacraments do not make peace. Christ made peace. If the sinner is ever to enjoy that peace, he will enjoy it because it has already been made in the blood of the cross.

And that peace is not just inward tranquility, though it certainly brings that. It is first of all peace in relation to God. Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Why do we have it? Because the blood answered the issue. There is no hostile claim left unresolved for the believer. There is no wrath left hanging over his head for him to settle by religious effort. Christ made peace. The blood of His cross established it. That means the believer's peace is not floating on the waves of his emotional condition. It is anchored in the finished reconciling work of Christ.

##### **5. Reconciliation by Blood Means the Distance Has Been Answered**

Paul also says, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13). There is another accomplishment of the blood. It brings near those who were far off. Not by emotional uplift. Not by liturgical atmosphere. Not by ecclesiastical membership. By the blood of Christ. The sinner was alienated, estranged, and far from God. The blood answered that distance. It did not merely encourage the sinner to move in God's direction. It made him nigh. That is reconciliation language with blood right at the center of it.

This is important because many men talk about reconciliation as though it were simply the sinner deciding to stop resisting God. But biblical reconciliation is far deeper than that. The problem is not only the sinner's feelings toward God. The problem is the judicial and moral separation produced by sin. Paul says in Colossians 1:21-22, "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death." There it is again. Through death. Through the blood. Through the

cross. Reconciliation is not mental reframing. It is the restoration of relationship on a righteous basis because Christ has answered what stood between.

That is why man-made substitutes fail so miserably. Church culture may give a man a sense of belonging, but it cannot reconcile him to God. Moral reform may make him more socially respectable, but it cannot reconcile him to God. Mystical experiences may stir his emotions, but they cannot reconcile him to God. The blood does. The blood brings near. The blood restores peace. The blood secures the standing. Paul will not let the churches forget that, because once the blood is moved out of the center, religion rushes in to fill the vacuum. Then reconciliation gets redefined into something man can manage. But the apostle ties it to blood and death so tightly that only unbelief can cut the knot.

## **6. The Blood Purchases, the Church Does Not Dispense**

Acts 20:28 says the church of God was “purchased with his own blood.” That statement is devastating to every religious system that tries to place itself as the dispenser of grace in place of Christ’s finished purchase. The church was purchased by blood. That means the church is the bought possession, not the buyer. It is the redeemed company, not the redemptive agent in the ultimate sense. Christ purchased the church. The church does not purchase Christ’s favor for sinners. Once that order is reversed, priestcraft is born. Then men start talking as though grace belongs to the institution and must be distributed through its hands. But the Bible says the institution itself was bought with blood.

This is why Paul’s blood doctrine crushes sacramental arrogance. If the church was purchased with His blood, then all true ministry must point away from itself to that blood. The church is not an alternative ground of confidence. It is the assembly of those who were redeemed by the blood. Baptism has its place. The Lord’s Supper has its place. Church discipline has its place. Sound doctrine has its place. But none of those things purchase anybody. The blood purchased. The cross purchased. Christ purchased. The church proclaims, teaches, guards, and remembers the gospel, but it does not improve upon the price.

That also means the sinner’s hope must never rest on church performance. Many religious people are trusting in a Christianized version of Cain’s offering. They think because they attend faithfully, serve consistently, and maintain respectable habits, they are therefore safe with God. Paul’s doctrine will not let them hide there. The church did not buy them. Christ’s blood did. If they are saved, they are saved by the same blood that purchased the church itself. That levels the whole matter beautifully. The weakest saint and the strongest saint stand on the same ground. The church officer and the new convert stand on the same ground. The ground is not office, maturity, tradition, or sacrament. It is blood.

## **7. The Blood Secures Salvation, It Does Not Merely Offer It**

Perhaps the most important practical truth in all of this is that the blood of Christ does not merely make salvation theoretically available. It secures it. Paul speaks in accomplished terms because the work itself is accomplished. Justified by His blood. Redemption through His blood. Peace through the blood of His cross. Made nigh by the blood of Christ. Those are not hesitant descriptions of a partial work waiting for man to complete it. They are statements of fact rooted in a finished sacrifice. That does not mean every man in the world is automatically saved regardless of faith. It means that for the believer, the blood is not a maybe. It is the secured basis of everything God has given him in Christ.

This is where many pulpits fail utterly. They present the blood as a door opener but not as a purchase price. They present Christ as making salvation possible, with the final determining factor left in the hands of man, church, sacrament, or ongoing merit. Paul does not preach that way. He says, "we have redemption" (Ephesians 1:7). He says we are "justified by his blood" (Romans 5:9). He says Christ "having made peace" (Colossians 1:20). He speaks as a man dealing with an accomplished redemption. The blood did not simply create an opportunity. It actually did what God sent it to do. It purchased. It redeemed. It reconciled. It justified.

That is why the believer can rest. Not because he is careless about holiness, but because his standing with God is not built on his holiness as the ground of acceptance. It is built on Christ's blood. Holiness follows salvation, but it never replaces the blood as the basis of peace with God. The sinner who sees this is freed from both legal pride and legal terror. He cannot boast, because the blood did it all. And he need not despair, because the blood really did it all. That is Pauline Christianity. It leaves no room for human boasting and no room for human despair that comes from looking to self. It directs the eye wholly to Christ crucified and says, There. There is your righteousness. There is your peace. There is your justification. There is your redemption. There is your blood.

## **Conclusion**

The doctrine of justification by the blood of Jesus Christ stands as one of the clearest dividing lines between the gospel of God and the religions of men. Religion says do. The blood says done. Religion says improve, perform, cooperate, maintain, and perhaps you will finally arrive. The blood says redeemed, forgiven, reconciled, justified, and brought near through Christ. Paul never leaves this unclear. He writes like a man under divine commission to demolish every substitute and set the blood of Christ in the center where God put it. That is why his epistles are so hated by sacramentalism, so despised by legalists, and so precious to every saint who knows he had no hope in himself.

The blood is not a symbol of inspiration. It is the ground of justification. It is not a mere emblem of love. It is the price of redemption. It is not an emotional trigger for devotional reflection only.

It is the means of propitiation, reconciliation, and peace with God. That is what Paul says, and that is what every Bible believer ought to say without apology. The sinner is not justified by church performance or moral reform. He is justified by His blood. The sinner does not buy forgiveness by religious labor. He has redemption through His blood. The sinner does not negotiate peace with God by sacramental participation. Christ made peace through the blood of His cross.

So let the world mock blood theology if it will. Let refined religion blush over it if it must. Let apostate churches replace it with talk about inclusion and uplift. The saints of God ought to hold the line exactly where Paul held it. We are justified by His blood. We have redemption through His blood. We are made nigh by the blood of Christ. We have peace because of the blood of His cross. And because that blood actually purchases and secures salvation, the believer can stand before God without boasting, without bargaining, and without terror, resting wholly in the accomplished value of the blood of Jesus Christ.

## **11 of 15: The Bible of Blood - The Blood that Cleanses the Conscience**

### **Introduction**

There are plenty of people who can repeat the right doctrinal words about salvation and still live like prisoners inside their own minds. They can say Christ died for sinners. They can say they believe the gospel. They can say the blood of Jesus Christ saves. But when the room gets quiet, when the lights go out, when memory starts talking, when the old accusations come crawling up from the cellar, and when the devil starts reading old charges back into the soul, they do not live like men and women whose consciences have been cleansed. They live like criminals out on temporary release, always half expecting God to drag them back into court and reopen the case. That is one of the great miseries among real Christians, and it happens because many understand the blood only in terms of legal standing while failing to understand that the blood of Jesus Christ also reaches the conscience. It not only changes the record in heaven. It gives peace in the inward man.

That is one of the glories of Hebrews and 1 John. Those books refuse to leave the blood in the realm of abstract doctrine. They bring it right into the hidden chambers of fear, guilt, shame, memory, and inward accusation. Hebrews says, "How much more shall the blood of Christ... purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:14). There is the thing in plain words. Not merely adjust your theology. Not merely inform your mind. Purge your conscience. Clean it. Deal with it. Answer it. The law could regulate the flesh and maintain ceremonial order, but it could not bring the conscience into finished rest. Christ's blood does.

And if a believer misses that, he may spend years being legally saved and practically miserable, forgiven before God but still haunted in his own soul because he has never learned what the blood accomplished inwardly.

This is where the doctrine becomes deeply personal and pastoral. Many people are not struggling because they do not know enough terms. They are struggling because they know guilt, fear, accusation, and memory far better than they know the practical power of Christ's blood. They remember what they did. They remember how dirty they were. They remember who they hurt, how far they fell, and how deeply they failed. The devil remembers too, and he is a skilled archivist of filth. But the blood of Jesus Christ is not only God's answer to the courtroom above. It is God's answer to the inward torment below. It does not merely say, the case is settled in heaven. It says, the conscience may come into peace before God because what accused it has been answered by the blood of the Son. That is why this essay matters. A wounded saint needs more than a lecture. He needs to know what the blood actually does in the hidden place where accusation lives.

### **1. The Conscience Is One of the Deepest Battlefields in the Christian Life**

A man can survive a lot of outward trouble if his conscience is at peace, and he can be crushed by almost nothing outward if his conscience is tearing him to pieces. That is how serious this matter is. The conscience is that inward faculty by which a man bears witness to moral reality. Romans 2:15 says that men "shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness." It is not the final judge in the absolute sense, but it is a witness. It testifies. It accuses. It excuses. It reminds. It stings. And once sin enters the picture, the conscience becomes one of the most painful regions of human existence. Adam and Eve knew that the moment they sinned. They hid. Shame rushed in. Fear took over. Why? Because the conscience had awakened under guilt.

That is why many wounded believers are not merely dealing with ideas. They are dealing with inward pain. Some have consciences wounded by their own past sins. Some by religious abuse. Some by years of legalistic preaching that taught them to look to themselves every hour for grounds of acceptance. Some by repeated failures after conversion. Some by the devil's relentless accusations. A conscience can become so raw that even after a man has trusted Christ, he lives like every prayer needs to fight through a police barricade, every act of worship is interrupted by old memories, and every verse about grace sounds good for others but not fully applicable to him. That is bondage, and a lot of it exists because the blood has been preached as doctrine without being applied as peace.

The Bible does not ignore that battlefield. God knows what guilt does to the inward man. He knows what unpurged conscience feels like. He knows what it is for a sinner to tremble under

fear of exposure and what it is for a saint to stagger under self-accusation. That is why He did not merely provide a salvation that fixes the heavenly ledger while leaving the believer inwardly chained to old filth. Christ's blood reaches farther than that. It goes into the part of man where shame hides, where memory stabs, where accusation echoes, and where the devil likes to set up camp. If the conscience is not understood, a Christian will either fall into despair or try to numb himself with activity. But if the blood's power over the conscience is understood, he can begin to serve God with inward liberty.

## **2. The Law Could Cleanse Ceremonially but Not Perfect the Conscience**

Hebrews makes one of the most important distinctions in the whole Bible on this subject. It shows that the old covenant ordinances had a real place, but that place had limits. Hebrews 9:13 says, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh." There is no mockery in that verse. The old ordinances really did sanctify to the purifying of the flesh. They maintained ceremonial order. They dealt with outward uncleanness in the covenant life of Israel. They had real God-appointed function. But then the writer presses the comparison farther: "How much more shall the blood of Christ... purge your conscience" (Hebrews 9:14). There is the difference. The law could regulate the outer man, but it could not bring the inner man into final rest.

Hebrews 10:1-2 drives that point home with great force. The law, with its repeated sacrifices, could never "make the comers thereunto perfect" because "then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins" (Hebrews 10:1-2). That does not mean the believer under grace has no awareness that he sins. It means he is no longer standing before God as a man whose conscience is still holding his guilt as an unsettled judicial burden. Under the law, the sacrifices kept recurring because the issue was not brought to full and final completion in the conscience. The yearly remembrance of sins remained because the blood of bulls and goats could not carry the infinite worth needed to settle the matter forever.

That is one reason legal religion is so exhausting. It is always doing, always repeating, always returning, always making another circuit around the mountain, because it cannot bring the conscience into full peace. It can scare a man, restrain a man, structure a man, and occupy a man. It can make him ceremonial, disciplined, and outwardly polished. But it cannot perfect the conscience. That is why so many religious people are busy but haunted. They are devout but restless. They are active but uncertain. The law, whether in its Old Testament form or in its modern legalistic imitations, cannot bring the conscience into settled rest. Only Christ's blood can do that.

## **3. The Blood of Christ Purges the Conscience**

Hebrews 9:14 is one of the sweetest and strongest verses in the whole Bible for a wounded saint: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Mark every word there. The blood of Christ. Offered without spot. To God. Purge your conscience. Serve the living God. That verse carries the believer from Calvary to the secret chambers of the heart and says the blood was designed to reach there too. Not only the altar above, but the conscience within. Not only the court of heaven, but the inward witness that keeps replaying old failures.

Now notice what the conscience is purged from: "dead works." That phrase includes more than wicked acts in the obvious sense. It reaches into all the lifeless religious efforts by which man tries to handle guilt apart from Christ. Dead works include the old sins that defiled the conscience, yes, but they also include the helpless religious attempts to scrub oneself clean through self-effort, ritual, penance, and spiritual performance. A conscience under dead works is always laboring, always compensating, always trying to make up for something. The blood of Christ cuts through that whole miserable economy and says, stop trying to pay what has already been paid. Stop trying to cleanse what has already been purged by the blood.

This is what makes the doctrine so freeing. The blood does not merely tell the conscience to be quiet. It gives the conscience a righteous basis for peace. That is different. Religious psychology tries to manage guilt by distraction, reframing, denial, or positive thinking. The blood answers guilt by actual atonement. The conscience is not being drugged into silence. It is being purified by the knowledge that what accused it before God has been dealt with by the blood of Christ. Once a believer sees that, he can stop treating his own memory as a higher court than the throne of God. If God says the blood has purged the conscience, then the conscience must learn to bow to God's testimony.

#### **4. The Blood Speaks Better Things Than the Voice of Accusation**

Hebrews 12:24 says believers have come "to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Abel's blood cried for justice. It rose from the ground as accusation. It testified against Cain. That is exactly what guilty memory and satanic accusation do in the inward life. They keep saying, guilty, guilty, guilty. They keep replaying old scenes and old crimes and old failures. In that sense, a great many believers are haunted by an inward echo of Abel's blood - not literally, of course, but morally. Something in them is always crying that wrong was done, filth was committed, guilt is real, and judgment is deserved. And on that point, the accusation is not lying. The wrong was done. The guilt was real. The sinner was filthy. That is why the blood of Christ must do more than flatter the soul. It must speak better things.

What does it speak? It speaks atonement, satisfaction, reconciliation, peace, cleansing, and finished redemption. It does not deny the reality of guilt. It answers it. It does not say the sinner was never wicked. It says the wicked sinner may be washed. It does not say the accusations had no basis. It says the basis has been answered by the blood of Christ. That is why the blood speaks better things. Abel's blood cried for reckoning. Christ's blood secures peace with righteousness intact. The conscience that hears only accusation will either harden or despair. The conscience that hears the blood of Christ rightly will begin to rest because it has heard heaven's own answer to the charge.

This is also how the believer fights the devil's accusations. Revelation 12:10 calls him "the accuser of our brethren." That is one of his chief ministries. He accuses, not always by falsehood, but often by bringing up true sins with malicious purpose. He is not interested in holy conviction leading to confession and cleansing. He is interested in turning the saint inward until the saint begins to treat old forgiven sins as present condemning realities. The answer to that is not pretending the sins never happened. The answer is the blood. "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 12:11). The blood speaks better things than the accuser does. The accuser says condemned. The blood says justified. The accuser says filthy. The blood says cleansed. The accuser says unfit. The blood says made nigh.

## **5. The Blood Cleanses from All Sin, Not Some Sins**

First John 1:7 says, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." That verse is one of the broadest and most comforting declarations in all Scripture. All sin. Not respectable sins only. Not pre-conversion sins only. Not small sins only. Not sins that fit easily into religious testimonies only. All sin. That means the blood of Christ reaches as far as the stain reaches, and farther still. Some believers live as if there are categories of sin for which the blood is theoretically sufficient but emotionally inaccessible. They believe Christ can cleanse other people's filth, but their own particular shame remains a kind of private stain too dark to be fully addressed. First John destroys that unbelief. The blood cleanseth from all sin.

Now that does not mean sin is light or that fellowship cannot be hindered in the practical Christian life. First John itself calls believers to confession because fellowship must be maintained honestly before God. But even that confession stands upon blood, not apart from it. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Faithful and just - not merely kind. Just. Why just? Because the blood has answered the case. That means even the believer's ongoing cleansing in fellowship rests on the same blood that established his standing. The conscience is not cleansed by self-punishment. It is cleansed by the faithfulness and justice of God in relation to Christ's blood.

This is where wounded saints especially need to slow down and believe God. The verse does not say the blood cleanseth from some sins if you can stop feeling dirty enough. It does not say the blood cleanseth from all sin except the one that still embarrasses you twenty years later. It says all sin. The old immorality. The old blasphemy. The old hypocrisy. The old lies. The old violence. The old perversity. The old addiction. The old self-righteousness. The old filth nobody else knows. All sin. The conscience that keeps treating one forgiven sin as if it were outside the reach of the blood is not being humble. It is contradicting God. The blood of Jesus Christ is not a weak disinfectant. It is divine cleansing from all sin.

## **6. A Cleansed Conscience Leads to Service, Not Paralysis**

Hebrews 9:14 does not stop with purging the conscience. It says the conscience is purged “to serve the living God.” That is crucial. God does not cleanse the conscience merely so the believer can sit in a chair and enjoy a private sense of relief. He cleanses the conscience so the believer can rise and serve without dragging chains of condemned guilt behind him. One of the greatest tricks of the devil is to keep forgiven people inwardly paralyzed. If he cannot damn them, he will try to disable them. If he cannot keep them from heaven, he will try to keep them from usefulness. And one of his chief tools in that effort is unresolved inward accusation.

A believer with a constantly tormented conscience often becomes spiritually ineffective in one of two ways. Either he collapses into discouragement and inactivity, or he throws himself into constant restless labor trying to silence inward guilt by outward work. Neither is true liberty. The first is despair. The second is dead works in religious form. But the blood purges the conscience for service. Not service to earn peace, but service flowing from peace. Not labor to make God love you, but labor because you know the blood has settled your standing. That is a very different thing. A man who knows the blood has answered his conscience can pray more freely, witness more boldly, worship more sincerely, and serve more steadily because he is no longer trying to purchase acceptance through activity.

This is why some of the most useful saints are those who have learned the deepest lessons about the blood. They are not the ones who think lightly of sin. Often they are the very ones who know most keenly what they were and what Christ delivered them from. But precisely because they know the power of the blood, they are not shackled by yesterday’s filth. They can say with Paul, “forgetting those things which are behind” (Philippians 3:13), not because the past was small, but because Christ is greater. The cleansed conscience does not produce laziness. It produces liberated service. It is the tormented conscience that either collapses or overcompensates. The blood breaks both forms of bondage and sets the believer free to serve the living God.

## **7. Peace of Conscience Comes by Believing God’s Testimony About the Blood**

A cleansed conscience is not maintained by staring endlessly at yourself. It is maintained by believing God's testimony about the blood of His Son. That is one of the hardest lessons for many Christians to learn because the flesh always wants to inspect itself for grounds of peace. But peace does not come from self-inspection. It comes from Christ-inspection. It comes from taking God at His word concerning what the blood has done. Hebrews, Romans, 1 John, Ephesians, and Colossians all drive the believer away from self as the ground of confidence and toward Christ crucified. The conscience finds no rest by constantly reopening old cases. It finds rest by bowing to the verdict God has issued on the basis of the blood.

This does not mean the believer ignores conviction when the Spirit of God points out present sin. True cleansing always works hand in hand with truthfulness. But it does mean that the saint must stop treating the blood as insufficient whenever memory becomes painful. The question is not whether your memory is vivid. The question is whether God's testimony is true. The question is not whether you still feel sorrow over what you were. The question is whether Christ's blood answered it. The question is not whether Satan can still quote your history. The question is whether the blood of Christ is greater than your history. Faith says yes because God says yes.

That is why the blood gives peace before God. Not shallow self-assurance. Not psychological denial. Peace before God. Real peace. Judicial peace, cleansing peace, conscience peace, serving peace. The conscience does not become omniscient. It becomes quiet under a higher witness. It learns to stop taking sides with accusation against the blood. It learns to say, Yes, I was that. Yes, I did that. Yes, the guilt was real. But the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin (1 John 1:7). That is how peace grows. Not by lessening sin, but by magnifying the blood.

### **Conclusion**

The blood of Jesus Christ does more than alter the sinner's legal record in heaven, though blessed be God, it surely does that. It also reaches into the inward torment of conscience and gives peace before God. That is one of the sweetest and most necessary truths in the whole gospel, especially for wounded believers who know guilt, fear, memory, and accusation far too well. The law could touch the flesh. It could regulate ceremony. It could maintain outward order. But it could not perfect the conscience. Christ's blood can. It purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. That is not poetry. That is spiritual reality for every believer who will believe what God says about the blood.

And because that is true, no Christian needs to live as a forgiven man still inwardly chained to old condemnation. He may remember what he was, but he need not live under its verdict. He may feel sorrow over former sins, but he need not treat those sins as still unanswered before God. He may have to fight accusations, but he does not have to bow to them. The blood speaks

better things. The blood cleanses from all sin. The blood overcomes the accuser. The blood gives the conscience a righteous basis for peace. That is why this doctrine is not merely doctrinal in a cold sense. It is pastoral, healing, liberating, and life-giving.

So if the conscience is wounded, let it come under the blood. If memory is loud, let it hear the blood speak better things. If the accuser is active, let him be answered by the blood of the Lamb. If a saint has been trying to serve God while secretly dragging chains of old guilt behind him, let him learn what Hebrews and 1 John are saying. The blood of Jesus Christ is not only for the day you first believed. It is the abiding answer to every condemning echo that tries to rise against the soul. God did not merely save you on paper. He gave you blood that can cleanse the conscience and bring you into peace before Him.

## **12 of 15: The Bible of Blood - The Communion of the Blood of Christ**

### **Introduction**

There are few subjects in the Christian life where men manage to go wrong in two opposite directions with such miserable consistency as they do with the Lord's Supper. On one side, you have superstition, priestcraft, and sacramental mysticism turning the table of the Lord into a kind of ongoing altar, as though Christ must somehow be re-presented, re-offered, or mystically manipulated through clerical hands for grace to keep flowing. On the other side, you have carelessness, shallowness, and dead routine turning the Supper into a dry church custom, a quarterly ritual, or a little piece of religious scheduling that people drift through without fear, gratitude, or any real sense of what is being remembered. Both errors are deadly in their own way. One insults the finality of Calvary by acting as though the sacrifice still needs repeating. The other insults the holiness of Calvary by treating the remembrance of that sacrifice as a casual church form with no spiritual weight. The Bible will allow neither error. The Lord's table is not a new sacrifice, and it is not a trivial ceremony. It is a holy remembrance of a finished sacrifice.

That is why Paul's language in 1 Corinthians is so important. He calls the cup "the communion of the blood of Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:16). That phrase ought to stop every saint long enough to think. He does not call it the repetition of the blood of Christ. He does not call it the recreation of the blood of Christ. He does not call it the magical transformation of a cup into literal blood. He calls it the communion of the blood of Christ. That means fellowship in relation to it, participation in its memorial significance, common sharing in what it accomplished, reverent identification with the One who shed it and the covenant it sealed. The cup in the New Testament assembly stands in relation to the blood of Christ, not as a fresh offering, but as a

remembrance, proclamation, and holy communion concerning what was once shed and never needs to be shed again.

And that is what makes this subject so precious and so serious. The Lord's Supper is one of the appointed places where the church gathers around the finished work of Christ and says in visible form, We have not forgotten the blood. We have not moved on to a bloodless religion. We have not graduated from Calvary into something more sophisticated. We are still standing under the new testament in His blood. We are still feeding spiritually on what He accomplished. We are still proclaiming that the Lamb was slain. But because that is what we are doing, the table must be handled with reverence, discernment, and gratitude. It is not Roman superstition. It is not Baptist carelessness. It is not mystical cannibalism. It is not dead ritual. It is covenantal remembrance grounded in a finished sacrifice. That is where the Bible places it, and that is where Bible believers ought to keep it.

### **1. The Lord's Table Begins with Christ's Own Words**

The foundation for the whole subject is not church tradition, denominational custom, or theological speculation. It is the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. At the passover meal, He took the cup and said, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28). Luke records it this way: "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20). Those words are decisive. The Supper is tied to His blood, to the new testament, and to His death. It is not free-floating symbolism. It is anchored in the covenantal blood of Christ. It points back to what was shed. It does not announce that the blood is being shed again at that table. It announces that the table stands in living remembrance of blood already shed.

That matters because once men start tampering with Christ's own words, all kinds of superstition rush in. Rome takes those words and twists them into transubstantiation, as though the bread and cup cease to be what they are and become Christ in a literal, physical, sacrificial sense. But the same Lord who said, "This is my blood," also said, "I am the door" (John 10:9) and "I am the vine" (John 15:5). He knew how to speak sacramentally and representationally without turning language into superstition. The issue is not that the cup becomes literal blood. The issue is that the cup stands in covenantal relation to His blood and is to be received in that remembrance.

And mark this carefully. When the Lord instituted the Supper, the blood had not yet been shed physically at the cross. Yet He could already speak of the cup in relation to His coming sacrifice because the event was certain and the meaning fixed in the divine purpose. That alone should tell you the Supper is interpretive and memorial, not magical. He is teaching His disciples how to understand His death. He is placing the cup in relation to His covenant blood so that after

Calvary the church would never lose sight of what His death meant. The table therefore begins with Christ explaining His own cross. If that point is lost, the ordinance will either become superstition or emptiness.

## **2. The Cup Is the Communion of the Blood of Christ**

Paul says, “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?” (1 Corinthians 10:16). That is one of the most important verses on the subject because it gives the New Testament name and function of the cup in the assembly. Communion means fellowship, participation, common sharing. The cup is not a new sacrifice. It is communion in relation to the blood. It is the gathered church participating together in remembrance, thanksgiving, and identification with the blood of Christ and all that blood accomplished. The saints are not producing anything at that table. They are confessing something. They are not offering Christ to God. They are honoring Christ before God and one another in relation to what He already offered.

That communion is therefore deeply covenantal. The cup is not detached from the cross. It is the cup of blessing because the blood of Christ has already purchased the blessing. It is communion because the redeemed gather together as those who share in that blood-bought salvation. It is not merely private remembrance. It is corporate testimony. A congregation taking the cup rightly is saying together that they stand under one covenant, one sacrifice, one redemption, and one Savior whose blood has brought them nigh. That is why Paul immediately links the cup and the bread to the oneness of the body in 1 Corinthians 10:16-17. The church communes not in mystical absorption into literal blood, but in grateful participation in the covenant blessings secured by that blood.

This guards against two mistakes at once. It guards against Romanism, which turns communion into priestly manipulation of Christ’s body and blood. And it guards against bare memorialism of the driest and most thoughtless kind, which acts as though the ordinance is little more than a symbolic exercise with no real spiritual weight. Paul will not permit either extreme. The cup is not empty ceremony, because it is communion of the blood of Christ. But neither is it a fresh sacrifice, because communion is not repetition. It is fellowship in remembrance of a finished work. The believer’s relationship to Christ’s blood at the table is therefore reverent, thankful, and covenantal, not magical and not casual.

## **3. The Lord’s Supper Remembers a Finished Sacrifice**

One of the clearest lines in the whole discussion comes from the repeated command, “this do in remembrance of me” (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). That settles the matter if men would let it. The Supper remembers. It does not repeat. It commemorates. It does not continue the atonement. Christ did not say, Do this so that my sacrifice may go on being offered through the ages. He

said, Do this in remembrance of me. Remembrance presupposes completed action. You remember what has been done. You do not repeat what was finished. The table therefore is not an altar of re-sacrifice. It is a memorial feast grounded in the fact that the sacrifice has already been offered once for all.

Hebrews reinforces that truth with thunder. Christ “needeth not daily” to offer sacrifice (Hebrews 7:27). He entered in “once” by His own blood (Hebrews 9:12). He was “once offered to bear the sins of many” (Hebrews 9:28). “By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Hebrews 10:14). Those verses are a death blow to every sacramental system that turns the Supper into a repeated sacrificial act. If Christ’s offering was once for all, then the table cannot be a fresh propitiatory sacrifice in any sense that undermines that finality. To make the Supper an ongoing sacrifice is to deny, in practice if not in stated creed, the finished sufficiency of the cross.

That is why Bible believers must guard this point fiercely. The Lord’s table is precious precisely because the sacrifice is finished. The saint does not come to the Supper hoping Christ will be sacrificed for him again. He comes because Christ was sacrificed for him once and forever. He does not come to keep the atonement going. He comes because the atonement is complete. The memorial is only as strong as the finality it remembers. If the cross were unfinished, the Supper would be a desperate ritual trying to sustain what still hung in the balance. But because the cross is finished, the Supper becomes a holy act of gratitude, proclamation, and covenant remembrance.

#### **4. The Table Proclaims the Lord’s Death Until He Come**

Paul says, “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Corinthians 11:26). That verse is remarkable because it gives the ordinance a public preaching function. The church does not merely remember privately. It shows forth, proclaims, displays the Lord’s death. Every right observance of the Supper is a sermon without a pulpit. It tells the world, the congregation, angels, and devils that our hope stands in the death of Jesus Christ. Not His teaching alone. Not His example alone. Not His miracles alone. His death. The bread and the cup together announce that the church still believes salvation came through a slain Savior and shed blood.

And notice the time frame: “till he come.” That means the ordinance stretches from Calvary to the Second Coming. It belongs to the church age as a continuing testimony that the church has not outgrown the cross. The saints do not leave the blood behind and move on to more advanced spirituality. They keep proclaiming the Lord’s death until He returns. That alone should rebuke the spiritual vanity of every generation that wants to be sophisticated, relevant,

refined, or intellectually superior to plain old blood redemption. The church's table keeps saying the same thing century after century: our boast is still in the death of Christ.

That also means the Supper carries an eschatological note of hope. It remembers what was done, proclaims what remains central, and points toward the One who is coming again. The slain Lamb is also the coming King. So the church at the table is doing more than looking backward in sorrow. It is looking backward in grateful faith and forward in living hope. The blood was shed once. The sacrifice is finished. The Lord is coming. Until He comes, the assembly keeps honoring that death openly. There is something glorious in that simple obedience. In a world drunk on novelty, the saints keep gathering to say the same old truth in bread and cup: Christ died for us.

### **5. The Table Must Not Become Empty Ritual**

Because the Supper is so familiar in many churches, it is especially vulnerable to becoming routine. That is one of the devil's cleverest tricks. If he cannot turn the ordinance into idolatrous superstition, he will happily turn it into dead formalism. Then saints drift through it half awake, thinking about lunch, schedules, children, errands, and church logistics while the symbols of the Lord's death pass before them. That is a dreadful thing. The table is not an item to get through on the order of service. It is not liturgical furniture to preserve denominational identity. It is not a sentimental pause in the meeting. It is a holy remembrance of the blood of Christ.

Paul's rebuke to the Corinthians proves how seriously God takes the matter. They had turned the Supper into a disorderly, selfish, fleshly affair. Some were rushing ahead. Some were shaming others. Some were eating and drinking in a carnal spirit. And Paul says, "this is not to eat the Lord's supper" (1 Corinthians 11:20). In other words, you may be going through the motions, but what you are doing is not the Lord's Supper as He intended it. That ought to sober any congregation. It is possible to have the bread, the cup, and the religious setting and still miss the thing entirely because the heart has slipped away from reverent remembrance.

That is why churches need to recover holy gravity at the table without sinking into theatrical gloom. The answer to empty ritual is not elaborate pageantry. It is spiritual discernment and thankful remembrance. The saints ought to come to the Supper thoughtfully, prayerfully, and with minds fixed on Christ crucified. The preacher or elder leading ought to help the church feel the scriptural weight of the moment, not by manipulating emotion, but by setting forth clearly what the ordinance means. The church ought to taste the bread and the cup with a sense that it is handling holy signs of the greatest event in human history. When that gravity is lost, ritual fills the vacuum. And ritual without spiritual understanding is one of the saddest things that can happen in a church.

### **6. The Table Must Not Be Approached Carelessly or Irreverently**

Paul's warning in 1 Corinthians 11 is severe because the matter is severe. "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:27). That does not mean a believer must become morally perfect before coming, as if only sinless people could ever partake. If that were the standard, no one would come. It means the Supper must not be approached in an unworthy manner - carelessly, carnally, flippantly, hypocritically, selfishly, or without discernment of what is being remembered. The issue is the manner of approach and the spiritual condition of heart toward the ordinance.

Paul continues, "let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (1 Corinthians 11:28). Not let him stay away forever in morbid fear. Not let him trust the ceremony to fix what he refuses to judge. Examine himself, and so let him eat. The ordinance is not for sinless men. It is for honest men, penitent men, discerning men, men who know what the bread and cup signify and who are willing to come in truth before God. Self-examination keeps the table from becoming careless familiarity. It teaches the saint to come with reverence, confession where needed, and real remembrance of Christ.

And Paul's further warning is not theoretical. "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (1 Corinthians 11:30). God had judged some in Corinth over their abuse of the Supper. That ought to settle forever the idea that the table is merely symbolic in a light and therefore negligible sense. Yes, the elements are symbolic in what they represent. But the ordinance itself is no light thing to God. Symbols related to the body and blood of His Son are treated by heaven with utmost seriousness. That should produce holy fear, not slavish terror, but reverent sobriety. The answer to carelessness is not Roman superstition. It is biblical reverence.

### **7. The Believer's Relation to the Blood at the Table Is Thankful, Reverent, and Covenantal**

When all the errors are stripped away, what remains is something beautiful and strong. The believer comes to the table not to receive Christ again, not to re-sacrifice Christ again, and not to handle mystical substances. He comes to remember Christ. He comes to proclaim Christ's death. He comes to commune in relation to Christ's blood. He comes as a member of the blood-bought body, sharing with fellow saints in thanksgiving for the new testament sealed in that blood. The whole thing is covenantal. The cup is "the new testament in my blood" (1 Corinthians 11:25). Every right observance is therefore a fresh acknowledgment that the church stands under the covenant blessings secured by the blood of Christ.

That covenantal sense gives the ordinance both warmth and gravity. Warmth, because the saints are not gathered under terror but under grace, remembering a Savior who loved them and gave Himself for them. Gravity, because the cost of that grace was blood, and the covenant

was sealed by death. The table is therefore not mystical in the Roman sense, but neither is it coldly symbolic in the shallow modern sense. It is deeply relational, deeply reverent, and deeply theological. The church gathers around bread and cup and says, We belong to the One who shed His blood. We stand in the covenant He sealed. We remember Him. We proclaim Him. We wait for Him.

This is why the table, rightly observed, becomes one of the church's richest blessings. It humbles pride. It rebukes self-sufficiency. It silences novelty. It resets the heart on Christ crucified. It binds the congregation together in shared testimony. It teaches the children watching that this church still believes the blood matters. It reminds wounded saints that the sacrifice is finished and remembered. It reminds drifting saints that the covenant was bought at terrible cost. And it keeps the church from floating off into bloodless religion because every faithful observance says again, in visible form, that our hope still rests in the blood of Jesus Christ.

## **Conclusion**

The communion of the blood of Christ is one of the most solemn and beautiful realities in the life of the New Testament church. It is not superstition, and it is not emptiness. It is not a repeated sacrifice, and it is not a throwaway ritual. It is the church's appointed remembrance of the finished sacrifice of Christ, the proclamation of His death until He comes, and a holy communion in relation to the blood that sealed the new testament. Once that is understood, both Roman sacramentalism and careless Protestant indifference are exposed as opposite corruptions of the same ordinance.

The blood of Christ was shed once, and because it was shed once, it never needs to be shed again. That is the glory of the Lord's table. It does not continue Calvary. It remembers Calvary. It does not sustain the atonement. It honors the atonement already accomplished. It does not manipulate grace through priestly hands. It acknowledges grace already secured by the blood of the Son of God. That is why Bible believers ought to guard the table carefully. The ordinance belongs neither to mystical invention nor to casual routine. It belongs to Christ, His covenant, His church, and His finished work.

So when the saints gather and take the cup, they ought to do so with thankful hearts, discerning minds, and reverent joy. They are not pretending the blood is in the cup literally. They are not pretending the sacrifice is still underway. They are remembering, proclaiming, communing, and waiting. Remembering the blood once shed. Proclaiming the death once accomplished. Communing together as the blood-bought people of God. Waiting for the One who said to do this till He come. That is the New Testament place of the blood at the table, and it is glorious enough without superstition and solemn enough without irreverence.

## **13 of 15: The Bible of Blood - The Avenger of Blood, Refuge, and the Sinner's Escape**

### **Introduction**

There are some pictures in the Old Testament so vivid, so dramatic, and so full of the gospel that a man can almost hear the pounding footsteps in the dust if he reads them with any spiritual sense at all. The cities of refuge are one of those pictures. You can see the whole thing unfold before your eyes. A man has killed another man. Blood has been shed. The law recognizes the seriousness of it at once. The avenger of blood is stirred up. Justice is not sleeping. The land is not morally indifferent. The slayer cannot stand out in the open and hope the matter blows over. He must run. He must flee. He must get to the place God appointed before wrath catches him in the way. "That the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood" (Joshua 20:3). There is law, danger, movement, urgency, and refuge all in one sentence. That is not dead history. That is God preaching Christ in advance.

This is one of the richest typological pictures in all the Bible because it brings together so many strands of redemptive truth at once. Blood has been shed, so judgment is in motion. The avenger of blood is not a villain. He represents the reality that guilt has consequences and that death is not a light matter before God. The slayer is not safe merely because he wishes to be safe. He must flee to the place God designated. The city stands open not because the case is meaningless, but because God in mercy has made provision in the midst of justice. Then, once inside, the slayer remains there under protection until the death of the high priest, after which he may return without fear (Numbers 35:25). That is one of the most astonishing parts of the whole picture. Refuge, preservation, and release are all tied together in relation to a priestly death. A man would have to work hard not to see the gospel shining through that arrangement.

And that is exactly what gives this passage such tremendous preaching force. The sinner outside of Christ is exposed. He is not strolling through a neutral world. He is a man with judgment behind him and nowhere in himself to hide. The law has a claim. Justice is not asleep. Wrath is real. But God, who never compromises His holiness, has made a refuge. He has appointed a city. He has opened a way of escape. And in that city there is safety from the avenger, preservation from judgment, and eventual release grounded in the death of the High Priest. It is all there in shadow before you ever reach the New Testament. So when we study the avenger of blood and the cities of refuge, we are not wandering off into Old Testament curiosities. We are standing in one of the great gospel illustrations in all Scripture, where fear, pursuit, law, mercy, blood, priesthood, and safety all meet in one unforgettable drama.

### **1. Bloodshed Brought the Avenger into Motion**

The first thing that must be understood in this whole matter is that bloodshed is not treated lightly by God. If a man was slain, the case was not left floating in the air as though death were one more unfortunate event in a morally indifferent universe. The blood called for answer. Numbers 35 repeatedly speaks of “the revenger of blood” (Numbers 35:19, 21, 24, 25, 27). That phrase alone tells you that the Bible does not treat life cheaply. Bloodshed has judicial consequence. The avenger of blood exists because the law recognizes that death is serious, guilt is serious, and the land cannot simply absorb blood without moral reckoning. This is consistent with the broader biblical teaching that “blood it defileth the land” (Numbers 35:33).

Now that avenger is often misunderstood by modern readers who have been trained to think of justice only in terms of bureaucratic process. But in the biblical setting, the avenger is not a rogue character. He is part of the moral seriousness of the arrangement. He stands for the reality that blood cries for answer. He stands for the fact that guilt cannot be shrugged off. He is not there to satisfy private malice. He is there because God has built into the order of things a witness that death and bloodshed matter. That is why Numbers 35 is so careful to distinguish between deliberate murder and unwitting killing. The law is not blind rage. It is justice with distinctions. But justice remains justice all the same.

That truth alone is enough to preach the gospel powerfully, because the sinner must first understand that he is not dealing with a sleepy universe and a sentimental deity. He is dealing with a holy God whose law has claims and whose justice does not doze off because men become modern. Outside of Christ, a sinner is not safe simply because he is busy, distracted, religious, or optimistic. He is exposed to judgment. The avenger of blood is one of God’s ways of teaching that truth in visible form. It says to every generation: bloodshed has consequences, guilt has consequences, and if there is to be mercy, it will have to be mercy that honors justice, not mercy that erases it.

## **2. The Slayer Had to Flee, Not Linger**

Joshua 20 and Numbers 35 both make the same thing plain: the man in danger could not afford delay. He had to flee. “The slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither” (Joshua 20:3). That word flee is loaded with urgency. It is not stroll thither. It is not think about it for a while. It is not attend a seminar on alternative ways of staying alive. It is flee. The avenger is real, the danger is real, and the one exposed must move immediately toward the refuge God has appointed. That is gospel language if there ever was any. “Flee from the wrath to come” (Matthew 3:7). “Lay hold upon the hope set before us” (Hebrews 6:18). The sinner is not invited to admire the city from a distance. He is told to run for his life.

That fleeing also means the man outside the city has no confidence in himself. He does not set up camp in a field and say he will take his chances. He does not stand on his own moral record.

He does not argue that the avenger should be more understanding. He runs because he knows the only hope lies in the place God appointed. That is exactly how saving faith behaves. It flees out of self and into Christ. It does not bring excuses. It does not bargain. It does not negotiate terms. It runs to the refuge because outside the refuge there is no safety. A man who sees his danger rightly never treats Christ as a mere religious enhancement. He treats Him as the only refuge for a guilty soul.

And there is another point here that ought not be missed. The slayer had to take God's refuge seriously enough to use it. The city could stand there open, mercifully appointed, ready to shelter him, and still be of no use if he remained where he was. So it is with the gospel. The provision of Christ does not save those who merely admire it, discuss it, or appreciate it in literary terms. A sinner must flee to Christ. He must come. He must enter. He must be found in the refuge God provided. The urgency of the cities of refuge destroys the easy-believism of the careless and the slow-motion hesitation of the proud. If judgment is real, then flight must be immediate.

### **3. God Appointed the Refuge, Man Did Not Invent It**

One of the great beauties of this type is that the cities of refuge were not an afterthought invented by frightened men. God appointed them. "Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge" (Joshua 20:2). That matters enormously. The refuge is part of divine provision in the midst of divine justice. It is not man softening God. It is God providing mercy in a way that still honors His own holiness. The cities do not exist in opposition to the law. They exist inside the law as God's own arrangement. That means refuge is not a compromise of justice. It is an expression of God's wisdom, mercy, and righteousness together.

This is one of the strongest answers to the common idea that grace is somehow God becoming less holy than He was under the law. No. The same God who established the avenger established the refuge. The same God who said blood matters also said there is a place to flee. The same God who made guilt serious also made mercy available. That is the whole glory of redemption. The refuge does not deny the danger. It addresses the danger according to God's own ordinance. In the same way, Christ is not a workaround that lets God ignore His justice. Christ is God's own appointed refuge in the midst of justice satisfied.

This also exposes the folly of all self-made refuges. A man could not build his own little fortress on a hill and demand that the avenger respect it. He had to flee to the city God named. In the same way, no sinner can build his own refuge out of morality, ceremony, good intentions, church attendance, baptism, philanthropy, or theological culture. God has appointed one refuge. It is Christ. Anything else is just another human shelter made of fig leaves and rotten boards. The avenger will not honor a refuge God did not ordain. That is why the gospel is so

exclusive. Not because grace is narrowhearted, but because God Himself determined where safety would be found.

#### **4. The City Stood Open for the One Who Needed Mercy**

There is something profoundly moving about the way the cities of refuge functioned. They were not hidden away for the elite, nor guarded as secret chambers for the spiritually advanced. They stood open in the land, appointed by God, available to the one in danger. Joshua 20:4 says the slayer would “stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city.” There is openness there. There is access. The man fleeing does not come to a locked door and a silent wall. He comes to a city prepared to receive him according to God’s provision. That is one of the glories of the gospel. Christ is not a hidden refuge. He is openly set forth. The invitation is real. The way is plain. The sinner does not have to discover a secret code. He has to come.

Now that does not mean the matter is casual. The slayer declares his cause. The elders hear. The city is not a denial of justice but a provision in relation to justice. That again is exactly how the gospel works. Christ is not a refuge because sin is unreal. He is a refuge because sin is dreadfully real and judgment is certain. The gate is open because God opened it, not because holiness ceased to matter. In fact, holiness is the very reason the refuge must be what it is. A holy God must provide a righteous refuge if guilty men are to be saved. Christ is that refuge. He does not trivialize the sinner’s danger. He receives the sinner fleeing from it.

This openness also has strong pastoral force. There are souls who think Christ might be a refuge for others but not for them. They stand at the gate in their minds and imagine they will be turned away because their case is too ugly, too complicated, too shameful, or too late. But the cities of refuge preach otherwise. The one needing refuge was the very one invited to enter. The one in danger was the very one for whom the city was provided. Christ did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. The man who needs mercy is the man to whom the gate matters. The sinner who is running with the avenger behind him is not turned away from Christ because he is needy. His need is the very reason Christ was set forth.

#### **5. Safety Was Found Only Inside the Refuge**

Numbers 35 makes this point with unmistakable force. The slayer was safe only inside the city. “The congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge” (Numbers 35:25). But if the slayer went outside the border of the city, the avenger could kill him and “he shall not be guilty of blood” (Numbers 35:27). That is one of the sharpest aspects of the picture. Safety was not vague. It was located. It was definite. It was found in a God-appointed place, and outside that place the avenger still had claim. There was no neutral zone between refuge and exposure.

This preaches Christ powerfully. Salvation is not found in religious atmosphere, moral aspiration, or spiritual admiration from a distance. It is found in Christ Himself. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). That phrase in Christ Jesus is the New Testament equivalent of being inside the refuge. Outside of Christ, the sinner is exposed. Inside Christ, there is safety from the wrath that would otherwise overtake him. That is why the language of union with Christ matters so much. The believer is not merely inspired by Christ. He is in Christ. And all the safety lies there.

This also destroys every mixed gospel that tries to place men half in Christ and half in themselves. The city of refuge did not protect a man because he once admired it, visited it, or agreed with its concept. He had to be there. In the same way, the sinner's hope is not that Christ plus church plus effort plus law plus religious identity will somehow suffice. Christ is the refuge. To be outside Him is exposure. To be in Him is safety. That gives the whole matter a tremendous clarity. It also gives the believer great comfort. His safety is not scattered across a dozen fragile supports. It is concentrated in one refuge, one Savior, one city, one Christ.

## **6. The Death of the High Priest Brought Release**

One of the most astonishing parts of the whole arrangement is this: the slayer remained in the city "unto the death of the high priest" (Numbers 35:25). Then, after the high priest's death, he could return to his own land. Numbers 35:28 says he was to remain there "until the death of the high priest: but after the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession." That is a remarkable feature of the type. Refuge, preservation, and eventual liberty are all tied to the death of the high priest. The man in the city lives under protection until priestly death changes his standing in relation to the case.

A man would have to be spiritually blind not to see Christ there. Under the gospel, our refuge and our release are both bound up with the death of our High Priest. Hebrews is full of this truth. Christ is the great High Priest who has offered Himself and entered in once into the holy place by His own blood (Hebrews 9:11-12). The sinner who flees to Him finds refuge, and the death of that High Priest is precisely what secures the believer's standing. The city of refuge already taught in shadow what Hebrews later declares in substance: the death of the priest is bound up with the freedom of the one sheltered.

And think of the beauty of the comparison. In the Old Testament type, the earthly high priest would die and the sheltered man could go free. In the New Testament fulfillment, our High Priest dies and rises again, and because of His death we have refuge and liberty forever. There is no need for another priest to die later to continue the arrangement. His death is once for all. So the type reaches forward beautifully but is also surpassed gloriously by Christ. The slayer in the

city waited for the death of another. The believer in Christ looks back to the death already accomplished by the eternal High Priest and rests in a refuge that can never be overturned.

## **7. The Whole Picture Presses the Gospel Upon the Soul**

When you put all the pieces together, the picture becomes overwhelming in its force. Bloodshed brings danger. The avenger pursues. The guilty man cannot stand where he is. God appoints a refuge. The way stands open. Safety lies only inside. The death of the high priest secures release. It is all there. Law, fear, judgment, mercy, provision, shelter, priesthood, and freedom. The Old Testament is not playing at religion here. It is preaching Christ in one of the richest object lessons ever written down. The sinner outside the refuge is a picture of every lost man outside of Christ - exposed, pursued, without defense in himself, and in desperate need of a place where justice has been answered according to God's own arrangement.

This is why the cities of refuge are so effective in preaching. They make the gospel vivid. A man can see it. He can feel the dust of the road, the fear in the chest, the urgency in the legs, the relief at the gate, the safety inside the walls. And all of that helps the soul grasp what cold abstraction often fails to communicate. The gospel is not merely that God would like sinners to improve. It is that sinners are in danger and must flee to Christ. It is not that Christ offers spiritual enrichment. It is that Christ is the refuge from wrath. It is not that the cross adds beauty to religious life. It is that the death of the High Priest secures safety for the one who has fled to Him.

That is why this passage ought to be preached until men can see it in their sleep. The sinner in his pride imagines he has time, options, and alternative shelters. The city of refuge says otherwise. Judgment is real. Refuge is urgent. The place of safety is appointed by God, not invented by man. And once the soul has entered that refuge, there is peace in knowing that the avenger cannot break in and drag him out. Christ is not a flimsy shelter. He is an everlasting refuge. "The eternal God is thy refuge" (Deuteronomy 33:27). In Him there is safety, preservation, and final deliverance from the wrath that would otherwise overtake every guilty son of Adam.

### **Conclusion**

The avenger of blood and the cities of refuge form one of the richest gospel pictures in all the Old Testament. The whole scene is alive with spiritual truth. Blood has been shed. Justice is awake. The guilty man must flee. God has appointed a refuge. The city stands open. Safety lies within. The death of the high priest brings release. That is not accidental arrangement. That is divine teaching. It is God taking law, danger, fear, and mercy and weaving them together into a picture that points straight to Jesus Christ. The sinner outside of Christ is exposed. The sinner in Christ is safe.

And what a comfort that picture gives to the believer. He does not stand in an open field hoping the avenger loses interest. He is not hiding behind bushes of self-righteousness or crouching inside a shack of religious performance. He is in the refuge God appointed. The walls that protect him are not his feelings, his consistency, or his strength. They are Christ Himself. The death of the High Priest is already accomplished. The way into refuge is open. The avenger cannot override God's provision. That means the saint may rest, not because justice has been ignored, but because justice has been honored in the very refuge where mercy shelters him.

So this great Old Testament picture presses one final question on every soul: where are you standing? If you are outside of Christ, you are outside the city, and outside the city there is no safety. If you are in Christ, then the very truths that once terrified you now magnify the mercy that saved you. The avenger, the blood, the law, the refuge, the high priest - all of it leads to Him. And blessed be God, the refuge is not narrow because Christ is unwilling. It is narrow because Christ alone is sufficient. Flee there, and live. Stay outside, and perish. That is the sermon of the city of refuge, and it is one every sinner needs to hear while there is still time to run.

#### **14 of 15: The Bible of Blood - Blood, Judgment, and the Winepress of Wrath**

**Key Passage: Isaiah 63:3 - "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment."**

#### **Introduction**

There is a side of the blood theme in Scripture that modern religion hates with a passion because it ruins every soft, syrupy, sentimental picture of God that men have built up in their own imagination. Most people can tolerate blood when you speak of the cross, the passover, the mercy seat, and the forgiveness of sins. They can nod along when blood is connected with love, sacrifice, redemption, and cleansing. But when the same Bible that says, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7) also says, "the mountains shall be melted with their blood" (Isaiah 34:3), the natural man recoils. He does not want a God who judges. He does not want a Christ who returns in wrath. He does not want a Bible where the blood that saves the believer also becomes the sign of vengeance on the rebel. Yet the Holy Ghost wrote both sides of that truth into the same Book, and any man who tries to preach one side while editing out the other is not preaching the whole counsel of God.

That is why this essay matters so much in this series. If all you ever see in the Bible of Blood is comfort, cleansing, and redemption, then you have only seen half the story. The blood in

Scripture is not only connected with mercy. It is connected with judgment. It is not only found on the mercy seat. It is found in the winepress. It is not only sprinkled in atonement. It is poured out in wrath. Joel saw a day of “blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke” (Joel 2:30). Isaiah saw the Lord coming from Bozrah with garments stained red because “their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments” (Isaiah 63:3). Ezekiel saw birds and beasts summoned to a great sacrificial feast where they would “eat flesh, and drink blood” (Ezekiel 39:17). John saw the winepress of the wrath of God trodden until blood came out “even unto the horse bridles” (Revelation 14:20). That is not figurative fluff. That is prophetic reality. The same Bible that glories in the blood of the Lamb also warns of the day when the nations that reject that Lamb will be crushed beneath His wrath.

And that is exactly the point that must be pressed with all possible force. Blood in Scripture is never sentimental. It is holy, fearful, and final. If a man will not have the blood of Christ for atonement, then he will meet blood in judgment. If he will not be washed in the blood of the Lamb, he will one day face the wrath of the Lamb. The world imagines that God is evolving into tolerance, that history is moving toward some humanitarian softness, and that divine judgment belongs to an obsolete age of primitive religion. The Bible says the exact opposite. The Bible says the day is coming when the holiness of God, the justice of God, the fury of God, and the vengeance of God will be revealed against a Christ-rejecting world, and blood will flow not to save, but to judge. That gives the blood theme in Scripture its full weight. It is not merely the means by which the repentant are reconciled. It is also the sign by which the impenitent are destroyed.

### **1. The Bible of Blood Has Always Contained a Judgment Side**

One of the greatest mistakes a careless reader can make is to assume that blood in the Bible always points in one direction only, as though every mention were automatically redemptive, comforting, or atoning. That is simply not the case. Blood appears in Scripture at the very beginning in connection with guilt and judgment, not atonement. Abel’s blood cries from the ground (Genesis 4:10). The flood world is destroyed after violence fills the earth (Genesis 6:11-13). Egypt’s waters are turned to blood as a sign of divine judgment (Exodus 7:20-21). From the earliest pages of Scripture, blood is tied not only to sacrifice and redemption, but to moral reckoning. It speaks. It accuses. It defiles the land. It cries for answer. It marks the reality that God does not treat sin lightly.

That truth continues through the prophets with increasing severity. Blood in the prophets is often the mark of divine displeasure upon nations and cities that have filled themselves with wickedness. “The land is full of blood” (Ezekiel 7:23). “Your hands are full of blood” (Isaiah 1:15). “Blood toucheth blood” (Hosea 4:2). The point is not merely that men are violent. The point is that violence, bloodshed, and blood guiltiness accumulate under the eye of God until

He rises to answer. Blood becomes both the evidence of human wickedness and the medium through which divine vengeance is displayed. That is why the blood theme in prophecy grows darker as it moves toward the day of the LORD. The same world that rejected mercy begins to drink the cup of judgment.

This is why the Bible of Blood cannot be preached honestly if judgment passages are ignored. A preacher who only speaks of blood in terms of sweetness, comfort, and pardon may stir emotion, but he has not represented the full character of divine revelation. God's holiness demands a reckoning with evil. His justice demands answer for rebellion. His wrath is not a flaw in His nature. It is the necessary reaction of His holiness against sin. Therefore blood in Scripture becomes a two-edged testimony. It either speaks peace to the believer through the blood of Christ, or it speaks doom to the rebel through the bloodshed of divine judgment. The Bible has both, and both must be preached.

## **2. Isaiah's Prophecies Turn Blood Into a Picture of Cosmic Judgment**

If there is one Old Testament prophet who paints the judgment side of blood in terrifying colors, it is Isaiah. He is not content to give general warnings. He gives images that burn into the mind and refuse to leave. In Isaiah 34, speaking of the Lord's indignation upon the nations, he says, "Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood" (Isaiah 34:3). That is not the language of a God mildly disappointed with the world. That is the language of total slaughter under divine vengeance. The land itself is overwhelmed with the blood of the judged. Blood is not here the means of cleansing but the evidence of wrath.

Then the prophet says, "The sword of the LORD is filled with blood" (Isaiah 34:6). Notice that expression. Not man's sword merely. The LORD's sword. That means the slaughter described is not merely political upheaval or human warfare interpreted poetically. It is divine intervention in judgment. The sword is filled with blood because God Himself is acting against the wicked. The world loves to imagine Christ as a perpetually meek figure incapable of holy vengeance, but Isaiah will not allow that sentimental delusion. The Lord who once came to save is also the Lord who will come to judge, and His judgment is not symbolic niceness. It is violent, holy, and bloody.

Then Isaiah 63 takes it even farther. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?" (Isaiah 63:1). The answer comes back that He has trodden the winepress alone, and "their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment" (Isaiah 63:3). That is one of the most fearful pictures in all the Bible. The returning warrior is stained red, not with His own atoning blood as at Calvary, but with the blood of those crushed in His judgment. The One who once wore a robe stripped from Him in humiliation will return with

garments stained in vengeance. The winepress image is not decorative. It means crushing, trampling, pressure, destruction, and blood bursting forth under the fury of God. That is the prophetic side of the blood theme the modern church almost never wants to touch.

### **3. Joel Joins Blood with the Day of the LORD**

Joel is another prophet who makes it plain that blood belongs not only to redemption but to the terror of the day of the LORD. He says, "And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke" (Joel 2:30). Then he adds, "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come" (Joel 2:31). That is not quiet devotional language. That is apocalyptic upheaval. Blood is woven into the cosmic disturbance that accompanies the coming day of divine intervention. Joel is not merely describing unusual weather or political symbolism. He is showing that when God rises in final judgment, the world itself will bear signs of terror and blood.

Then in Joel 3 the prophet says concerning the nations, "because they have shed innocent blood in their land" (Joel 3:19). There again, blood becomes the reason for vengeance. Innocent blood is not forgotten. Blood guiltiness is not erased by time. The day of the LORD is partly the answer to accumulated bloodshed. The nations have done violence, and God will answer it. In that sense, blood in judgment is also revelatory. It shows the world that God has not forgotten what men forgot. The blood of the innocent may dry in the dust of history, but it remains fresh in the books of heaven until the Judge rises.

Joel therefore joins two great truths together: blood as sign of cosmic upheaval and blood as the moral basis for judgment. That makes the prophetic picture even more severe. The day of the LORD is not merely a bad season in human history. It is heaven's answer to human wickedness. The same nations that laughed at God's warnings, despised His prophets, and rejected His Christ will find themselves under judgments in which blood appears again and again as the sign that divine vengeance has broken into time. Joel will not let the reader escape with a sentimental view of prophecy. He writes of blood because prophecy, at its darkest edge, is about holy judgment falling on an unrepentant world.

### **4. Ezekiel Shows Blood Filling the Streets and the Sacrificial Feast of Judgment**

Ezekiel is perhaps the prophet most relentless in his descriptions of blood guiltiness and blood judgment. He speaks of Jerusalem as "the city sheddeth blood in the midst of it" (Ezekiel 22:3). Again and again he returns to the phrase. Blood in the midst of thee. Blood in the streets. Blood upon the land. For Ezekiel, blood is the visible proof that the city is ripe for judgment. The shedding of blood is not one sin among many. It is a major reason the wrath of God is about to break upon the people. "Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land" (Ezekiel 36:18). There is no softness there. Bloodshed leads to fury.

But Ezekiel's most terrifying blood imagery comes in the latter prophecy of Gog and the judgment of the nations. In Ezekiel 39 the Lord calls the fowls and beasts to a great sacrificial supper: "gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you" (Ezekiel 39:17). Then He tells them, "Ye shall eat flesh, and drink blood" (Ezekiel 39:17). Again, "Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth" (Ezekiel 39:18). That is staggering language. The enemies of God, who would not accept the blood of atonement, become the bloody sacrifice of judgment. The birds and beasts feed on the aftermath. The whole scene is one of holy reversal. Men who exalted themselves become carrion beneath the judgment of God.

This is why the blood theme in prophecy must never be sentimentalized. Ezekiel does not use blood merely as a symbol of sorrow. He uses it as a sign of divine slaughter. And that slaughter is not random. It is judicial, covenantal, holy, and deserved. The God who offered mercy now answers rebellion. The God who provided blood for atonement now fills the scene with blood in vengeance. The prophetic burden is clear: blood guiltiness leads to blood judgment. The day eventually comes when the earth that received innocent blood will receive the blood of the guilty under divine wrath.

## **5. Revelation Brings the Winepress to Its Final Fulfillment**

By the time you reach Revelation, all the Old Testament imagery of blood in judgment comes to a final and terrible climax. Revelation does not invent the theme. It gathers Isaiah, Joel, Ezekiel, and the whole prophetic stream into one final apocalyptic storm. In Revelation 14, the angel thrusts in the sickle, the vine of the earth is gathered, and "cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God" (Revelation 14:19). Then comes one of the most unforgettable verses in the Bible: "And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles" (Revelation 14:20). There is no way to domesticate that verse. It is blood in vast quantity under divine wrath. It is judgment overflowing its bounds like a flood.

Then Revelation 19 shows the returning Christ. He comes as the Rider on the white horse, judging and making war in righteousness (Revelation 19:11). His vesture is "dipped in blood" (Revelation 19:13). And a few verses later, "he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Revelation 19:15). That is Isaiah 63 brought to its full realization. The Lord Jesus Christ, who once came meek and lowly to shed His own blood for sinners, returns now as the divine warrior trampling the nations in wrath. That is the same Jesus. Not a different deity. Not an Old Testament Father and a New Testament Son at odds with each other. The Lamb is also the Lion, and the Savior rejected becomes the Judge revealed.

This is where the blood theme in Scripture reaches its thunderclap ending. The world that laughed at the cross will meet the winepress. The nations that mocked the blood of the Lamb

will face the blood of judgment. The kings who set themselves against the LORD and against His Christ will not merely lose an election cycle. They will be crushed under the fierceness of Almighty God. And that is not contrary to the gospel. It is the other side of the same holy truth. The Christ who saves all who come is the Christ who judges all who refuse. Revelation is the Spirit's final refusal to let men imagine that the blood means only tenderness and never terror.

## **6. The Same Christ Who Shed Blood for Sinners Will One Day Shed the Blood of Rebels**

This is perhaps the hardest truth for sentimental religion to accept, and that is exactly why it must be stated plainly. The same Christ who once allowed wicked men to shed His blood at Calvary will one day return to shed the blood of those who persist in rebellion. He came first as the Lamb, silent before His shearers, giving His back to the smiters, pouring out His soul unto death. But Scripture never says that His meekness in the first advent cancels His kingship in the second. In fact, the first advent magnifies the guilt of those who reject Him. Men are not rejecting a bare sovereign decree when they reject Christ. They are rejecting crucified love, offered mercy, and blood-bought redemption.

That is why the day of wrath is so fearful. It is wrath against grace despised. It is vengeance against mercy trampled. It is judgment after patience abused. Romans 2:4-5 says men despise "the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering" and "treasure up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath." That is exactly what prophetic blood judgment reveals. Men treasure up wrath while heaven waits. Then the day comes when the One they would not have as Savior appears as Judge. The blood they mocked becomes the dividing line between the redeemed and the damned. Those washed in His blood are safe forever. Those who despised His blood meet Him in wrath.

And that means no preacher has any right to preach the blood of Christ only as comfort if he refuses to preach it also as a dividing line. The blood saves those who believe, but it also seals the doom of those who reject it. There is no neutral relationship to the blood. A man is either washed in it or judged for despising it. Christ is either his passover or his avenger. The gospel is glorious precisely because the alternative is so dreadful. If there were no wrath, the blood would be unnecessary. If there were no final judgment, the winepress imagery would be theatrical nonsense. But because both are real, the blood of Christ becomes all the more precious to those who have fled to Him.

## **7. Blood in Judgment Proves the Holiness of God Is Final**

By the time the reader has followed the blood theme from Genesis to Revelation, one thing becomes inescapably clear: the holiness of God is not a temporary mood. It is final. Blood appears in atonement because God is holy. Blood appears in judgment because God is holy. The same holiness that required the blood of the Lamb for salvation requires the blood of the

wicked in judgment if that Lamb is rejected. That is why blood in Scripture is never cheap. It is always tied to holiness, justice, life, guilt, and final reckoning. The world would like a God whose love cancels His holiness, but the Bible gives a God whose holiness gives moral structure to both His love and His wrath.

This is also why the prophetic blood passages are so necessary in a generation drunk on sentimentality. Men want a God who cries easily, forgives automatically, and never acts in vengeance because they have made an idol out of softness. But the God of the Bible is not soft. He is merciful, gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, but He is also just, terrible in judgment, and utterly uncompromising in holiness. Blood in judgment proves that His holiness will not be mocked forever. Men may pollute the earth, despise the gospel, shed innocent blood, and reject the Son, but the final answer will not be a divine shrug. It will be wrath.

That makes the blood theme in Scripture one of the most complete revelations of God's character anywhere in the Bible. At the cross you see what His love will provide. In the winepress you see what His holiness will require. At Calvary you see blood shed for sinners. At the end you see blood shed because of sinners. In redemption you see grace triumphing through blood. In judgment you see vengeance triumphing with blood. And together they teach the final lesson: God is not sentimental. He is holy. Therefore His blood theology is holy, fearful, and final.

## **Conclusion**

The blood theme in Scripture does not end at the cross in the sense many modern readers imagine. It does not stop with cleansing, redemption, forgiveness, and peace. It also runs forward into prophecy, judgment, vengeance, and the winepress of wrath. Isaiah saw garments stained with the blood of the nations. Joel saw blood and fire in the day of the LORD. Ezekiel saw birds summoned to drink the blood of princes. John saw the winepress trodden until blood flowed to the horse bridles. That is all part of the same Bible of Blood. It is not another religion, another god, or another message. It is the full revelation of the one holy God whose mercy saves and whose wrath destroys.

That ought to do two things at once. First, it ought to make the saint treasure the blood of Christ more than ever. The believer is not saved from a vague bad future. He is saved from the wrath to come. He is safe from the winepress because he is washed in the blood of the Lamb. He will never face the blood judgment side of prophecy as an object of wrath because Christ already bore wrath in his place. That should produce gratitude, humility, reverence, and fear of God. The blood of Christ is not precious merely because it is emotionally moving. It is precious because it has delivered the believer from something terrible and final.

Second, it ought to strip away every soft lie from the minds of the unconverted. The same Bible that offers cleansing through blood also warns of blood in judgment. The same Christ who bled at Calvary will one day tread the winepress. The same Lamb who was slain will return in wrath against those who would not have Him reign over them. So the sermon of this essay is as plain as it is solemn: if you will not have the blood for atonement, you will meet blood in judgment. The Bible of Blood is not sentimental. It is holy, fearful, and final. And blessed is the sinner who learns that now at the foot of the cross rather than later beneath the treading of the winepress.

### **15 of 15: The Bible of Blood - The Bloody Book and the Bloody Lamb**

**Key Passage: Revelation 5:9 - "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."**

#### **Introduction**

If there is one truth this whole series ought to have burned into the mind by now, it is this: the Bible is a bloody Book because the God of the Bible is holy, the sin of man is dreadful, the guilt of the race is real, and redemption was never going to be bought with polite talk, moral effort, or religious ceremony. Blood runs through this Book because life is in the blood, death came by sin, and God determined from the beginning that if guilty men were ever to be reconciled to Him, that reconciliation would not come by sentiment but by sacrifice. From Genesis to Revelation, the Book is marked with blood. Abel's blood cries from the ground. The coats of skins cover the guilty. The passover blood shelters the house. The altar runs red in Leviticus. The covenant is sealed with blood. The prophets cry out against innocent blood. The New Testament opens with the Lamb of God, moves to the blood of the cross, and ends with the Lamb in glory and the winepress of wrath. A man does not understand the Bible if he cannot see that line. He may know history, grammar, backgrounds, languages, and ancient customs, but if he cannot see the scarlet line running through the Book, he has missed the center of divine revelation.

That is exactly what the modern world cannot stand. It can tolerate spirituality so long as spirituality remains bloodless. It can tolerate a Jesus who inspires, consoles, and teaches, so long as He does not bleed and so long as His blood is not treated as the one thing standing between the sinner and the wrath of God. It can tolerate churches that talk about community, purpose, healing, growth, kindness, and mission, but the moment a preacher opens his mouth and says, "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22), the world begins to choke. Why? Because the blood tells the truth about man. It tells him his sin is not a bruise. It is not a stumble. It is not a developmental setback. It is a crime before a holy God that required

death. The blood tells the truth about God. It tells him that God is not a sentimental grandfather in the sky patting rebels on the head and pretending evil is not evil. He is holy. He is just. He is righteous. And because He is all of those things, redemption had to be purchased at terrible cost. The bloody Book offends men because it reveals what kind of God they are dealing with and what kind of sinners they really are.

And that is why this final essay must not end softly. It must gather the whole matter up and drive it home like a hammer blow. The blood is not a side subject in the Bible. It is not decorative theology. It is not a primitive symbol that later generations should improve upon. It is one of the blazing centers of the whole Book, and the Lamb who was slain is not a side note in the revelation of God. He is the center of it. Heaven sings about Him. The elders fall before Him. The redeemed are washed by Him. The church is purchased by Him. The covenant is sealed by Him. The conscience is cleansed by Him. The wrath to come is escaped by Him. And the world will one day be judged by the One whose blood it despised. Take away the blood and you do not merely weaken Christianity. You destroy it. Take away the Lamb and you do not merely lose one doctrine among many. You tear the heart out of the Book of God and leave sinners with no hope but judgment. That is the grand conclusion of the Bible of Blood.

### **1. Abel's Blood Began the Cry That Runs Through the Whole Book**

The first mention of blood in Scripture set the tone for everything that followed. God did not introduce blood at a polished altar with a choir singing softly in the background. He introduced it in a field where a righteous man lay dead and his brother stood guilty before heaven. "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Genesis 4:10). That is where the blood theme begins in its moral force. Blood speaks. Blood testifies. Blood accuses. Blood brings guilt before God. Abel's blood is not ceremonial blood. It is crying blood. It is innocent blood. It is blood demanding reckoning. Before blood ever appears as a means of atonement, it appears as the evidence of guilt. That is one of the most profound truths in all of revelation. God starts the subject there because He wants the reader to know that blood is not first about religious ritual. It is first about life violated, guilt exposed, and heaven hearing what earth tries to bury.

That first cry from the ground reveals the whole tragedy of man outside of grace. The first brothers divide over true worship and false religion, and the first bloodshed comes at the hand of a religious man who would not submit to God's requirement. Cain kills Abel because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous (1 John 3:12). That means from the opening pages of the Bible, blood is already entangled with sin, hatred, false religion, and divine justice. Abel's blood does not save Cain. It condemns him. It does not soothe the earth. It pollutes the earth. It does not proclaim reconciliation. It proclaims guilt. So the scarlet line begins not with peace but with accusation. God lets the cry sound before He reveals the answer so that every reader will know how serious the problem is.

And yet Abel's blood also points forward. Hebrews says believers have come "to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:24). There is the whole movement of the Bible in one comparison. Abel's blood cried for justice. Christ's blood secures mercy without dishonoring justice. Abel's blood rose from the ground as accusation. Christ's blood rises before God as propitiation. Abel's blood testified that a righteous man had been slain. Christ's blood testifies that the righteous Son of God has answered for guilty men. So the whole Book begins with blood crying from the earth and ends with blood speaking from heaven. The line that begins in the field with Abel does not stop until it reaches the throne with the Lamb.

## **2. Sacrificial Blood Taught That the Guilty Need a Substitute**

After the fall, man's instinct was to cover himself. Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons (Genesis 3:7). There is human religion in its first homemade form. The sinner trying to solve guilt with the work of his own hands. But God did not accept that covering. He made "coats of skins, and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21). That means something died so the guilty could be covered. Blood is not mentioned in that verse directly, but death is there, sacrifice is there, and substitution is there. That is one of the first great shadows of the whole Bible. Man covers with leaves. God covers through death. Man tries to manage shame. God answers guilt by sacrifice. That sets the pattern for all sacrificial blood that follows.

Then Abel brings the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof (Genesis 4:4), while Cain brings the fruit of the ground (Genesis 4:3). One comes by blood. One comes by works. One is accepted. One is rejected. That contrast never leaves the Bible. The blood theme is always forcing the question: will the sinner come by divine provision or by self-made righteousness? Then the passover in Exodus 12 makes the lesson even plainer. The lamb is slain, the blood is applied, and God says, "when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). Not when I see your tears, your effort, your sincerity, or your moral resolve. When I see the blood. That is the foundation of the whole matter. The guilty are safe only because a substitute died and its blood is before God.

Leviticus then saturates the whole national life of Israel with blood. Blood on the altar. Blood before the veil. Blood on the mercy seat. Blood for the priest. Blood for the people. Blood for cleansing. Blood for consecration. Blood for atonement. And the explanation is given in words that ought to ring in the ears of every Bible believer forever: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls" (Leviticus 17:11). There it is. God gave the blood for atonement. He did not say He gave sentiment, or ritual performance, or moral resolve, or human sincerity. He gave blood. Why? Because the life is in the blood, and the guilty need a substitute whose life answers for their guilt. Every sacrifice

from Genesis onward is preaching one message: the sinner cannot stand before God except under blood.

### **3. Covenant Blood Showed That God Bound Himself to Redemption Through Death**

The blood theme in Scripture is not merely sacrificial. It is covenantal. In Exodus 24, Moses takes the blood, sprinkles the altar, sprinkles the people, and says, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words" (Exodus 24:8). That is one of the most solemn moments in the entire Old Testament. Israel is not merely receiving rules. They are being bound to God in covenant under blood. The blood stands between the holy God and the covenant people as the legal and solemn seal of the relationship. That tells you something enormous about the dealings of God. He does not enter lightly into relation with man. Covenant is not sentimental understanding. It is solemn, binding, moral arrangement, and blood seals it.

That pattern runs straight into the words of Jesus Christ in the upper room. "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20). There is the bridge from Sinai to Calvary. The old covenant was dedicated with blood. The new testament is inaugurated in blood. But the blood of bulls and goats gives way to something infinitely greater - the blood of the Son of God. That means the covenant blessings of God under the new testament are not floating on mere intention. They are sealed in blood. They stand upon the death of Christ. Every blessing the believer has rests upon that covenant blood. Forgiveness, reconciliation, justification, access, peace, eternal life - all of it is bound to the blood of the covenant.

This makes the Bible of Blood both solemn and glorious. It means God did not leave redemption hanging on human reliability. If He had, it would have collapsed at once. He sealed the covenant in blood. The old covenant blood testified to obligation and holiness. The new covenant blood testifies to remission, reconciliation, and finished redemption in Christ. That is why the blood of the covenant can never be treated as common. Hebrews warns against counting "the blood of the covenant... an unholy thing" (Hebrews 10:29). To despise the blood is to despise the covenant God sealed in His Son. The Bible is a bloody Book because God chose to bind His redemptive dealings with man to blood. That is how serious holiness is, and that is how sure redemption becomes in Christ.

### **4. Innocent Blood Magnified the Horror of Sin and Prepared the Way for Calvary**

Another great stream in the Bible of Blood is innocent blood. Abel was righteous blood. Naboth was innocent blood. The prophets were slain. The poor innocents were oppressed and murdered. Jerusalem was filled with blood from one end to another. Over and over the Lord condemns "innocent blood" (Jeremiah 22:17; 2 Kings 21:16). Why such emphasis? Because innocent blood reveals sin in its ugliest form. It is violence against the guiltless. It is power turned against the defenseless. It is the wicked crushing the righteous. It is blood that cries,

blood that pollutes the land, blood that brings divine vengeance. The Bible keeps returning to it because God wants the reader to feel what kind of thing sin really is when it reaches full expression.

Then all those streams of innocent blood converge at Calvary. Judas says, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4). Pilate calls Christ "this just person" (Matthew 27:24). The centurion says, "Certainly this was a righteous man" (Luke 23:47). The Lord Jesus is not merely another victim in a long sad history of injustice. He is the climax of it. All the innocent blood that came before Him prepares the reader to understand the full moral horror of the cross. Here is the truly innocent One, the holy Son of God, handed over by religion, politics, envy, cowardice, and mob rage. If all previous innocent blood cried to heaven, what must heaven think when the blood of Jesus Christ is shed?

And yet here the glory of God rises higher than all the sin of man. The greatest crime becomes the means of the greatest salvation. The innocent blood of Christ is the blood by which the guilty are redeemed. That does not lessen the crime. It magnifies the wisdom and grace of God. Men meant it for evil. God made it the ground of eternal redemption. Calvary is therefore both the blackest revelation of the human heart and the brightest revelation of divine mercy. The Bible keeps teaching the horror of innocent blood so that when you finally stand at the cross, you feel the full weight of it. Man's sin is no small matter. The cross proves it. But God's grace is no small matter either. The cross proves that too.

### **5. Atoning Blood and Cleansing Blood Brought the Believer Near**

If the Bible only spoke of blood in terms of accusation, sacrifice, covenant, and innocent suffering, it would already be a fearful Book. But it goes farther. It speaks of blood as the actual means by which guilty sinners are justified, redeemed, reconciled, and cleansed. Paul says, "being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Romans 5:9). He says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins" (Ephesians 1:7). He says Christ has "made peace through the blood of his cross" (Colossians 1:20). Those are not poetic flourishes. They are doctrinal declarations. The blood does not merely inspire. It accomplishes. It justifies. It redeems. It reconciles. It secures peace.

Then Hebrews and 1 John carry the matter inward. The blood does not only answer God's courtroom above. It reaches the believer's conscience within. "How much more shall the blood of Christ... purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:14). "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). There again the blood shows its unique glory. It is not only the ground of peace with God objectively. It is the answer to the inward torment of guilt, shame, accusation, and memory. The sinner who believes is not merely told to feel better. He is given blood that actually cleanses the conscience. The Bible of

Blood is therefore not only solemn and judicial. It is deeply pastoral and personal. It takes the sinner from guilt to peace through blood.

That is why every substitute religion is such a pathetic fraud. Sacramentalism cannot justify. Moral reform cannot redeem. Church culture cannot reconcile. Human effort cannot cleanse the conscience. If the blood of Christ is removed, sinners are left to dead works, empty ritual, and inward torment. But where the blood is rightly believed, there is real peace. Not theoretical peace. Not ceremonial peace. Not borrowed church peace. Peace through the blood of His cross. That is why the bloody Book is also the Book of hope. It is bloody because redemption was costly. It is hopeful because the cost was paid.

## **6. Judgment Blood Reveals That the Holy God of Redemption Is Also the Holy God of Wrath**

If the Bible of Blood ended at the cross in the minds of many modern readers, it is because they have edited the prophets and Revelation to fit a sentimental god of their own making. But the Book will not allow that. The same Bible that glories in the blood of the Lamb also speaks of a day when blood will flow in judgment. Isaiah saw the Lord coming from Edom with garments dyed red because “their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments” (Isaiah 63:3). Joel saw blood, fire, and pillars of smoke in the day of the LORD (Joel 2:30). Ezekiel saw the birds and beasts summoned to drink the blood of princes (Ezekiel 39:17-18). John saw the winepress trodden until blood came out “even unto the horse bridles” (Revelation 14:20).

That is not another Bible. That is the same Bible. The blood theme is not sentimental. It is holy, fearful, and final. If a man will not have blood for atonement, he will meet blood in judgment. If he will not be washed in the blood of the Lamb, he will one day face the wrath of the Lamb. The same Christ who came first to shed His own blood will come again to tread the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God (Revelation 19:15). That is the final answer to all soft modern notions of deity. God’s mercy does not cancel His holiness. His patience does not nullify His justice. The blood that saves believers also stands as the dividing line that condemns those who reject it.

And that completes the full panorama of the Bible of Blood. Blood in accusation. Blood in sacrifice. Blood in covenant. Blood in innocence. Blood in atonement. Blood in cleansing. Blood in judgment. The whole Book is telling one great coherent story. God is holy. Man is guilty. Blood is necessary. Christ is the answer. Reject Him, and judgment remains. Receive Him, and redemption is secure. That is why the blood theme cannot be trimmed down into a devotional niche. It is one of the great organizing truths of the whole Book. Without it, the Bible collapses into fragments. With it, the whole revelation of God comes into blazing focus.

## **7. The Bloody Lamb Is the Center of the Whole Book**

All of it finally gathers around the Lamb. Not merely around blood in the abstract, not around sacrifice as a principle only, not around judgment as a fearsome doctrine alone, but around the

Lamb who was slain. Revelation 5 is the great heavenly unveiling of what the whole Bible has been moving toward. The search is made for one worthy to take the book and open the seals thereof, and no man in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth is found worthy. Then John is told, “behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda” (Revelation 5:5). But when he looks, he sees “a Lamb as it had been slain” (Revelation 5:6). There is the center of the whole Book. The Lion is the Lamb. The King is the Sacrifice. The worthy One is the slain One.

And heaven’s song confirms it: “Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood” (Revelation 5:9). Not by His teachings alone. Not by His miracles alone. Not by His ethical example alone. By His blood. Heaven is not embarrassed by that. Heaven is not trying to modernize the language. Heaven sings it. The Lamb who was slain is not a side note in the divine plan. He is the worthy center of it. The book of God, the purposes of God, the judgments of God, and the redemption of God all meet in Him. That is why the Bible is a bloody Book. Because its center is a bloody Lamb. The Book takes its shape from the One who stands in the midst of the throne as the Lamb slain and yet alive.

That is the grand summation of everything. Abel’s blood points to Him. The coats of skins point to Him. Abel’s offering points to Him. The passover points to Him. The altar points to Him. The mercy seat points to Him. Covenant blood points to Him. Innocent blood points to Him. Justifying blood points to Him. Cleansing blood points to Him. The communion of the blood of Christ points to Him. The refuge from blood guilt points to Him. The winepress of wrath points to Him. He is the center. He is the sum. He is the answer. Take away the Lamb and the whole Bible becomes an unsolved riddle full of dead ceremonies and unexplained terrors. Keep the Lamb in the center, and every thread of blood in Scripture finds its meaning in Him.

## **Conclusion**

The conclusion of the whole matter is therefore plain, weighty, and unavoidable. The Bible is a bloody Book because man’s sin is no small matter. It took blood to answer it. It took blood to cover the guilty. It took blood to seal the covenant. It took blood to satisfy divine justice. It took blood to redeem, to justify, to reconcile, and to cleanse. And if that blood is rejected, the same Book warns of blood in judgment, blood in wrath, and blood in the winepress of God’s vengeance. The Book is bloody because reality is serious. Sin is serious. Holiness is serious. Judgment is serious. Redemption is serious. Men may try to soften that truth, but they cannot erase it without cutting the heart out of the Bible itself.

And that means Christ’s blood is the center of all true hope. Not a side doctrine. Not a secondary emphasis. Not an old-fashioned phrase to be updated for refined ears. The blood of Jesus Christ is the center because the Lamb who was slain is the center. He is the one all the prophets pointed to, all the sacrifices foreshadowed, all the covenants anticipated, all the

apostles preached, and all the redeemed adore. If a sinner has hope, it is in that blood. If a saint has peace, it is through that blood. If a church has a message, it is the message of that blood. If heaven has a song, it is about that blood. The Lamb is not an appendix to the Book of God. He is its blazing heart.

So let the final declaration of this whole series ring out as clearly and forcefully as possible. Take away the blood and you do not merely weaken Christianity. You destroy it. Take away the blood and you do not merely trim a doctrine from the edges of Scripture. You rip the center out of the revelation of God. Take away the blood and the sinner has no atonement, the conscience has no cleansing, the covenant has no seal, the church has no purchase price, the throne has no song, and the Book has no Lamb. But leave the blood where God put it, and the whole Bible lights up from Genesis to Revelation. It becomes what it truly is: the bloody Book of the bloody Lamb, the holy Book of the holy God, and the saving Book that tells ruined sinners where all true hope is found - in the blood of Jesus Christ.

### **Series Conclusion**

The conclusion of this series is therefore as plain as it is solemn. The Bible is a bloody Book because man's sin is no small matter, God's holiness is no small matter, and redemption was purchased at terrible cost. Blood cries from the ground in Genesis, blood flows on the altars of Leviticus, blood seals the covenant, blood marks the passover, blood condemns the guilty, blood cleanses the conscience, blood justifies the believer, and blood appears again in final judgment. That is not exaggeration. That is the structure of the Book itself. The scarlet line is not something forced into Scripture by overzealous preaching. It is woven through Scripture by the Holy Ghost because the God who wrote this Book wanted no sinner ever to imagine that salvation could be bought with effort, religion, ceremony, or moral reform. It had to be bought with blood.

And that means the blood of Jesus Christ stands at the center of all true hope. Not as one doctrine among many, but as the heart of the whole matter. The blood of Christ is the answer to Abel's cry, the fulfillment of every acceptable sacrifice, the sealing of the everlasting covenant, the cleansing of the defiled conscience, the purchase price of the church, the ground of justification, the means of reconciliation, and the reason the believer has peace with God. The Lamb who was slain is not a side note in the Book of God but the blazing center of its message. All the rivers of blood in Scripture flow toward Him, and all the songs of redemption in eternity rise because of Him. Heaven does not get over the blood, and neither should the church.

So let the final declaration of this whole series stand firm and unmoved. Take away the blood, and you do not merely weaken Christianity. You destroy it. Take away the blood, and you strip the cross of its meaning, the gospel of its power, the covenant of its seal, the conscience of its cleansing, and the sinner of his only plea. But leave the blood where God put it, and the whole Bible opens up in one unified testimony to the holy God who saves through sacrifice and reigns through the Lamb. That is why this Book is bloody. That is why the gospel is glorious. And that is why every saint who has been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ ought to hold that truth higher than ever, preach it plainer than ever, and thank God for it deeper than ever.