

THE BLOOD - A DEEPER MEANING

"Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!"



As you read Genesis 9 we need to remember that God instituted a plan, called the plan of redemption through the blood, and we are going to begin to see blood all over the Old Testament. Since the beginning there were those that didn't agree and called it a "slaughterhouse religion" and even a "blood thirsty religion," but God's warning still stands just as he warned Cain. So throughout the Old Testament blood is everywhere. At certain times during the Passover celebration there were over 250,000 lambs slain with blood everywhere, all over the Temple, with so much blood flowing down the brook Kidron that it was called a "horrifying sight." Seeing the lamb which had become a household pet for four days, and then watching it kick and scream and be slaughtered in the presence of the family and the children was an object lesson that would forever make your skin crawl.

It may make us cringe to see an animal's throat cut but it is our throat that deserves to be cut. That animal was standing in for us.

1 Corinthians 15:21-22, "For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive."

So throughout the Old Testament when they slaughtered a lamb the full penalty would fall upon the innocent substitute and the man who was really guilty was no longer guilty because the sin has been dealt with. He could proclaim that he had been forgiven and that the debt has been paid, until he sinned again and then he would come again at a point in

time throughout the year and once per year on Yom Kippur all the sins of the nation were atoned for. ***Of course this was year by year, every year, until the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ came and took away sin for all time.***

It wasn't enough just to bring a substitute. It wasn't enough just to shed its blood correctly and properly place its fat upon the altar. Remember Cain and Abel? Cain was upset because he clearly thought that he was a better person than his brother and yet God accepted Abel's sacrifice. Lets suppose that Cain was much better of a person than Abel in every way, after all, he did show up first to bring an offering. He showed the first act of religious devotion. But Abel crying out to God of his unworthiness and approaches Him with the blood of a substitute. Which one would be justified? Which one would God accept? Cain brought the fruit of the ground. Cain brought the best of his good works and God was repulsed. There are no good works in man apart from Jesus Christ. Abel knew that he was unworthy and that is why in faith he brought a substitute. Notice what it says in Hebrews 11:

Hebrews 11:4, "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks."

It wasn't that he ritually brought the right thing the right way but it was his attitude. Notice it says, "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice," he knew that he deserved to die and that the Lord in his mercy provided a substitute for him. ***It was the condition of the heart.*** It was never just the ceremonial act in the Old Testament that brought forgiveness and acceptance but ceremony plus faith.

Ceremony alone with the wrong attitude was never accepted. Remember when Jesus condemned the ceremonies and traditions of the Pharisees? Imagine that the long awaited Messiah had finally arrived in Israel and the leaders of Judaism were so hardened and blind in their ways that they completely missed it all. Jesus said to them, "You will not see Me again till you learn to say, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord."

It's always hard for the religious person who is severely devoted to his rituals and good works to tolerate how God can accept the most wretched who would come with a good heart, a heart of faith. God's love covers a

multitude of sins.

Throughout all of history and even today it is the attitude of faith that the Lord wants. It is a heart that truly believes in the promises of God no matter how bad he might have been. No matter what depth of sin he had fallen to.

As Paul, the apostle, reiterated, "So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.

24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?

25 Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

Articles used in writing this devotion:

Is the Shedding of Blood Necessary for Forgiveness? By Daniel Mann

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