

LIFE IS IN THE BLOOD

Leviticus 17: 11

By Abri Brancken, 25 Mar 2018

INTRODUCTION

Passover is time for us to remember the blood of the Lamb.

Why does blood feature so often in the Bible?

What do we need to understand about blood?

What makes blood so special, especially the blood of Jesus Christ?

BLOOD FOR ATONEMENT IN THE OT

In the Hebrew Scriptures under the Mosaic Law, we find the sacrificial offerings of animals that were made on behalf of people for their sins. For example, once a year, the priest was to make an offering of the blood of animals on the altar of the temple for the sins of the people.

The blood, when shed on the altar, would serve as an "atonement" (literally, "covering") for the soul of the guilty sinner making the offering. This sacrifice pointed towards the perfect sacrifice that will one day be brought by God Himself, Jesus Christ.

As far as we know, animals do not sin. They don't have a sense of morality and conscience the way humans do, the ability to commune with God. Therefore, the sacrifice of blood that is without sin, although it comes from a lower being (animals), is a beautiful picture of the sinless blood of Jesus that would one day be shed for humans.

Leviticus 17:11, KJV

"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: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Heb 9:22

And by the law almost all things are made clean with blood, and without blood there is no forgiveness.

Heb 10:3-4

But year by year there is a memory of sins in those offerings. Because it is not possible for the blood of oxen and goats to take away sins.

The animal blood offerings were limited in its effectiveness, which is why it had to be offered again and again.

The animal sacrificial system under the Mosaic Law was a prophetic picture, a foreshadowing of the "once for all" sacrifice which Jesus offered on the cross (Hebrews 7:27). Once that sacrifice was made, there was no longer a need for the blood of bulls and goats. When He shed His blood on the cross, He did away with the Old Covenant requirement for the continual sacrifices of animals. Animal blood was not sufficient to cover the sins of the people, except on a temporary basis, because sin against a holy and infinite God requires a holy and infinite sacrifice.

Heb 7:27

Who has no need to make offerings for sins every day, like those high priests, first for himself, and then for the people; because he did this once and for ever when he made an offering of himself.

Jesus said, "It is finished" as He was dying, and He meant just that—the entire work of redemption was completed forever, "having obtained eternal redemption" for us (Hebrews 9:12).

THE UNIQUENESS OF BLOOD

Blood is fundamental to our existence and without sufficient blood flowing within us, our bodily functions depreciate and ultimately it leads to death. Blood transports the necessary oxygen food to the cells of our bodies, enabling them to survive, grow, and repair themselves. Another role is to assist in the elimination of toxins which are removed by the kidneys. Without blood, cells cannot fulfill their specific functions. Biological human and animal "life" really is maintained by the blood. The mystery surrounding the 'intelligent design' of blood and the true nature thereof continues to leave even the best scientists perplexed as the very "code of life" is interwoven into our blood. The Bible indicates that blood is not merely the conduit of nutrients to keep the body alive; but the blood, -itself-, is-and-contains LIFE.

In the book of Genesis we read that man became a living soul - נֶפֶשׁ 'Nephesh' in Hebrew.

Let's consider the meaning of breath, life and soul in Gen 2:7

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

"...and breathed into his nostrils the breath" (נְשָׁמָה - Neshāmah, meaning blow or vital breath) "of life" (חַי - Chay, meaning life); "and man became a living soul" (נֶפֶשׁ Nephesh, meaning soul or breathing creature)

God's breath (נְשָׁמָה - Neshāmah) of life (חַי - Chay) brought man to life. This "life" (חַי - Chay) that man received from God, refers to God's sustaining, reviving and maintaining power to life. It is the source of all life, the life from which all other life flows. It is God's own breath which He breathed into man that caused man to become a living soul. As God's sustaining life-power is in the blood, it indicates that there is a quality to blood that elevates it to being more than just a complicated red liquid.

The body combined with life (blood) become a living soul.

Leviticus 17:11, KJV

"For the life (*nephesh*) of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul (*nephesh*)."

In fact, the "life" of the flesh is actually its "soul," for "life" and "soul" both translate the same Hebrew word (nephesh) in this text. When the blood was offered, it was thus an offering of the life (Nephesh or soul) itself in substitution for the life (Nephesh or soul) of the sinner.

Blood is not only the vehicle, but the host of the soul. It is the soul. The animal's soul was offered to God upon the altar as a substitute for the human soul. Animals have a soul (nephesh), but the human soul (nephesh) has been ignited by God's Neshamah, breath of life. We can connect with God like animals can't. God did not want to punish His people's souls for their sins, so the punishment was placed upon an animal's soul rather than a human.

DON'T CONSUME BLOOD FOR YOU CONSUME THE SOUL

The prohibition to eat flesh, with the blood in it, formed one of the strictest rules of Israelite and Jewish life.

Gen 9:4

But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. (ESV)

But you shall not eat flesh (meat) with its life (Nephesh -soul), its blood

Biblically, the blood is not only regarded as the seat of the soul, or life principle (Leviticus 17:11), but the blood is the soul itself (Leviticus 17:14). The blood always had to be properly drained before eating meat.

God commanded the Hebrews not to consume the blood of an animal, as doing so would be to consume the very "life" or "soul" of that flesh. The soul is entwined in the blood. The blood hosts the soul.

"Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh." - Deuteronomy 12:23, KJV

Don't consume blood even in the NT

(Reads Acts 15:20, Acts 15:29; Act 21:25)

Acts 15:28

It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond these essential requirements: You must abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things.

The principle not to partake of the soul of another living creature was imposed upon the Gentile converts in the Christian Church by the authority of the Holy Ghost and the apostles (Acts 15:28, 29).

TRANSFUSIONS

When people receive blood in transfusions, there is apparently a phenomenon where the recipient often feels as though someone -else- is "with them". They can't explain it, but their thoughts are plagued, and they sometimes have strange dreams they cannot understand. This phenomenon also often occurs for those who receive an organ transplant from somebody else.

OCCULTIC RITUALS AND BLOOD

You will always find that in occultism rituals and satanism they always consume blood. By doing this they consume the soul of the one from whom the blood comes.

Pagans who conquer others, often drink some of the blood of the strongest members of their enemies, in order to "receive their strength". If one of their enemies was particularly brave and courageous, drinking their blood is supposed to give the recipient some of that person's courage.

In ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics the hawk, which feeds on bloods, represents the soul.

CAIN & ABEL

When Cain killed Abel, what did God say about Abel? "The voice of your brother's -BLOOD- 'cries' out to Me from the ground." (Gen4:10)

APPLYING JESUS' BLOOD BY FAITH

We apply Jesus' blood sacrifice for our sinful lives by faith.

His sinless blood, soul (nephesh) life of Christ, cleanses our sinful blood, soul (nephesh) life.

As Jesus was bleeding, His soul was being emptied from His body. His soul makes atonement for our souls. We drink wine or red grape juice as a symbol of His blood when we take communion. Wine represents blood which represents the soul.

Atonement is a legal cancellation of punishment and also a vital soul transformation. Jesus' soul is "injected" (as it were) into our being like a blood transfusion.

CONCLUSION

1 John 5:6

This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

Something to think about:

John 3:5

Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION IN LIFE GROUPS

1. What does the blood of Jesus Christ mean to you?
2. What are the benefits that flow from the blood of Jesus?