

The Blood of God

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The text

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Bloodshed

The book of Genesis is sometimes called the seed-plot of the Bible. This is because thoughts and ideas and truths which are later to be developed to their ultimate fullness in the following books are originally to be found in seed, or genus form, in this first book of the sacred scriptures. No less than with many other similar truths fundamental to the revelation of salvation in the Bible, the basic idea concerning all that we mean by and associate with 'the Blood' is to be found in Genesis.

Perhaps to those who love and glory in the gospel there is hardly a theme more sacred than this, and the pursuit of it is ever a delight to the heart. We need therefore to

grasp and to treasure the clearest possible understanding of its preciousness and place and power. It is therefore proper that we see first of all the original idea implanted by God concerning the Blood in the Bible, and for this we must go back to the book of the beginning(s). Other things are said later as truth is revealed about it in the story of mankind and sin unfolding before our eyes. All of these are important as they are God's adaptations or applications or amplifications of the original idea, but the fundamental and most important truth is the first one. Though much may intervene before that which is seen in Genesis comes to perfection, nevertheless it will eventually arrive at its fullness and ultimate glory according to that which is spoken originally in Genesis, rather than that which is spoken in the other books that intervene between

the beginning and the end. This is not to say that the same truth or allusions to and hints of it are missing from the later writings, but that God has to adapt and condition truth to men because they go away from His original intention. Because of this He graciously allows changes and deals with things as He finds them. Nevertheless the first revealed idea remains steadfast, and with inflexible will He moves through time and waits and works to bring men back to it.

As an illustration of this we may take the subject of divorce referred to in Matthew 19: 3-9, where we find the Pharisees tempting Jesus saying, 'Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?' In the answer of Jesus lies the point we seek to make, 'Moses ... suffered you.., but from the beginning it was not so.' What God suffered or allowed in this case was not His original

intention. Yet we read He gave it in commandment. Which shows that what God sometimes commanded under law, was not always what He basically desired (or originally intended for mankind) in a free relationship based on obedience to and acceptance of the perfect intention. In this instance we see that the Lord recognised sin, and because of it allowed certain adaptations to His original desires concerning marriage. The word 'suffered' is a most expressive one. In the beginning God made them male and female to become one flesh — Man; and He said, 'What God hath joined together let not man put asunder.' That is the original idea and truth expressed in scripture, and it is (in turn) based upon another and still greater spiritual truth, that of the unique unity in the Godhead, which is the great spiritual mystery of God Himself.

Returning to our theme, we will therefore remember that although later in the Old Testament further facts are revealed and specific commands are given concerning it, the original ideas and intentions for and about 'the Blood' are not thereby outworked. Instead, recognition of failure is implicit in them, and adaptations are made to tide men over a period of time, and dispensations graciously granted to them by God.

God first introduces us to the great subject of 'the Blood' in Genesis 4. Reading the chapter we see that Cain and Abel, Adam's two sons, bring an offering to God; Abel's, because it was a blood offering, was acceptable; Cain's, because it was vegetarian, was not. Consequently Cain in anger and jealousy slew Abel, and God said of his blood that (a) its voice cried unto Him

from the ground, and (b) 'the earth hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood.' Now that is the original idea revealed in scripture concerning the blood — it was drunk; the earth opened her mouth and drank it in; received it. Here then is the primary truth — 'the Blood' must be drunk. Yet we do not find in the whole of the Old Testament canon one instance of man being commanded of God to drink blood. In fact it was later strictly forbidden; all we note here is that in this seed-plot of the Bible God has sown an idea, and a perfectly natural idea at that. It could not be otherwise.

Turning from this fact of history wherein truth is deliberately sown to await germination millenniums later by commandment and faith unto spiritual life, we will examine the story of the Passover in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. Here we shall

notice quite a different idea concerning 'the Blood.' As we read down the relevant verses we see that the blood of the lamb was to be struck upon the two side posts and on the upper door posts of the houses wherein the people were eating the flesh of the lamb in which it had formerly flowed. The striking of the blood was important only in association with the eating of the lamb. It had no power at all of itself; it had to be in the right place at the right time for the right purpose, that is all. It was but a token of the people's obedience, bespeaking the fact that they were all inside their houses eating the lamb and ready to depart for Canaan as they were commanded. The blood would have meant nothing and afforded no protection at all from the death that was passing through Egypt that night except it was the token God required of them upon that occasion. Its

application was entirely external. Moreover, although this fact is not generally recognised or the underlying truth of it sufficiently, if at all emphasised, this is the only time that the blood of the Passover lamb was ever so used. Never again were the children of Israel commanded to strike the blood on door post or lintel. Its token use was only demanded once by God. So we pass from the original idea which implies the thought of indrinking to the new fact of outward application.

This new idea of outward application is taken up and further strengthened by God into commandment in Leviticus 17.

Commencing to read this chapter at verse 10, we find the basic concept of 'the Blood' and its place and power under Law in the Old Covenant. The central truth is contained in the words, '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.' The Hebrew word translated 'life' throughout the whole of this section is the word for 'soul.' Selecting a few phrases as instances we may say, 'the soul of the flesh is in the blood,' 'it is the soul of all flesh,' 'the blood of it is for the soul thereof.' Here the thought of atonement is introduced because with the giving of the law, God, by prohibiting or authorising certain activities and behaviour, had communicated to the people the knowledge of sin. Gracious as God was to forgive sin, He had to do it under a complicated legal system that only dealt with outwardly committed sin. Internal sin and its cause(s) could not yet be atoned for, for no-one had then been found who could atone for it. This is the reason we find great men like David

crying out in Psalm 51 for inward purging, to a God who required truth in the inward parts. It was simply because the blood they knew and used could not take away sins, neither from before God nor from their consciences; all such blood was intrinsically valueless and only implicitly typical. Because of this it could only be used outwardly.

Which left God with no other thing to do as an alternative but to impute forgiveness and cleansing to His people upon the obedience of faith to His commands. They could never feel what they believed.

The Lord had to move from the original idea. He wished drinking to be the method, but not yet and not that blood. So having caused the idea to be introduced in the beginning, He disallowed the action because of sin until the time appointed. It was not that the entrance of sin into the world took God by

surprise or created an emergency. It was that He could not yet bring in what He wanted, so He stayed in the medium but changed the method.

This introduction of the inferior method of outward application is demonstrated to us most fully in Exodus 24. There we see Moses sprinkling the blood in great profusion: on the altar, on the book, on the people. As it says in Hebrews 9:16-22, it was the blood of the testament which God had enjoined unto them. He sprinkled with blood nearly everything that belonged under that Old Testament arrangement, and we are told that 'without shedding of blood is no remission.' The application of blood was a fixed law unto the people, and we find it much in evidence on that day of dedication and subsequently right throughout the Old Testament period. But nothing was done

haphazardly. There was no application of that blood, inferior and external and symbolical as it was, until they all had confessed and promised that 'all that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.' Only when they had said that did Moses sprinkle the blood upon them, not before; it was 'the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words,' he said. Not concerning eternal life: 'concerning all these words.'

So we see that the blood of the Old Covenant was never to be taken internally. It was given upon an outward altar and sprinkled upon all kinds of people and things to hallow, and dedicate, and sanctify, or signify. It was ever only a token, having no power in or of itself to do any of the things for which it was used by commandment of God. Everything was by imputation only. The

blood of that Covenant had no virtue to impart, no value to atone, no goodness to bestow; all righteousness and holiness and blessing was reckoned over to its users by God from Himself sheerly upon obedience by faith. David, who of all men wrote of the glories of that ancient Covenant, said, 'Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.' (Quoted in Romans 4 : 7, 8). But God had something better in mind and hand for us, as we shall see.

Atonement Typified

The limitation of that Old Covenant, which for that reason is now done away, is nowhere better revealed than in the word used to express atonement throughout the Hebrew scriptures. It is a descriptive word

meaning 'to cover.' God, in speaking of atonement in the Old Testament, never promised to remove sin, but to reckon it as covered. The blood they shed had no power to cover it, but obedience to God's requirements caused coverage to be imputed to them as they followed His instructions. Always sin was there, unremoved, unremovable, until He should come who would, because He could, shed the Blood that should remove sin once for all. When the blood of animals and birds was shed by law it was God's insistence that without shedding of blood is no remission of sins. Constant remission was only available to them through constant bloodshed, and it was accepted by God as coverage for their sin provided it was done according to the correct order.

Now from this idea of coverage it is sadly true that much erroneous phraseology and practice has been incorporated in the churches, and unwarrantably superimposed upon many present day believers all too unaware of the great mistake. It is an axiom of scripture and manifestly true that the greater includes the lesser, but in this vitally important realm where we can least afford the practice, the lesser has displaced the greater. For all around one hears such conventional phrases as 'cover it with the Blood,' or, 'I put it under the Blood,' or, 'We sprinkled it with the Blood,' and much other such talk, and this from good Christian people for the most part. These all have unwittingly slipped back into the Old Testament idea of blood and are not moving in the true knowledge of the power of the Blood of the New Testament at all.

Knowledge of the truth concerning the power of the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ will bring about a freedom from such phrases. Better still, as the understanding is enlightened and convinced with regard to the true value and worth of Jesus' Blood and what it accomplished, the whole personality will pass from the realm of ignorance and fear into calm assurance before God: moreover and more importantly, the Sacrifice and Blood of Jesus Christ will be honoured as it ought.

When Jesus came into the world He said, 'Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.' To this He added his knowledge that His Father had never found any pleasure in the holocausts of blood and bodies and fire He had seen fit to demand of the Children of Israel beforetime. To Him they had been a

distasteful necessity imposed upon them until the time of reformation, when He would reshape the whole idea of atonement and reintroduce His original intention concerning the Blood. This is based upon the fact that He would bring into the world His original Lamb. Not Abel's, nor Abraham's, nor the many lambs of Egypt or Sinai or Canaan, were any of them the first and last and eternal Lamb; God had yet to give Him to man. All other lambs given in sacrifice before this had only remotely borne but the faintest typical resemblance to Jesus, God's Lamb, and all their blood in its application had only superficially suggested the atonement for which the Blood was shed. God had decided that with the shedding of the Blood of His Son He would do away with all the ramification of the Hebrew system of atonement(s) and, returning to the original

idea first implanted in Genesis, go on to perfect it in practice. Moreover, with the passing of the system He intended its phraseology to die also. That is why it cannot be found anywhere in the New Testament as referring to the sacrifice of Christ.

Upon the occasion of Jesus Christ's manifestation to Israel He was declared by John Baptist to be the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. This, coupled with Jesus' own consciousness that His body was specially given Him in connection with God's distasteful acceptance of unpleasurable animal sacrifices, made John's statement one of the most significant in the whole of the Bible. Those sacrifices had never taken away sins, and their 'stricken,' or 'given,' or 'sprinkled,' or 'poured out' blood was woefully

inadequate to reach the inner man. All had left even the very priests who made the sacrifice(s) and atonement(s) with a guilty conscience and miserable consciousness of sin. Guilt and fear created complexes so deep and ineradicable that even the beauties of some of David's greatest Psalms are marred and spoiled by them.

That is why mercy is the great cry of the Old Testament; they were forever crying out for mercy. God sat upon a Mercy Seat. Sin, fear, torment, only found relief in belief and hope. But now God sits upon a throne of Grace. Grace is the great theme of the New Testament, even the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Sin is removed, taken away: the sacrifice for sin and sins has for ever been made — it is perpetual, eternal, present, now. The suffering of death, the bearing of sin, the atoning work and deed

are over, and the completed act is here, held in the Spirit for ever. As it was, it is, and ever shall be; that is the nature of things eternal. Jesus' atonement is by one sacrifice for sin for ever.

This one great eternal act of Christ accomplished at Calvary had been set into the national life of the Children of Israel as a sacred feast. It took the form of a recurring annual event called the Day of Atonement, kept on the tenth day of the seventh month every year. It was a living picture full of pointed meaning, enacted for around two thousand years regularly before the eyes of the entire nation. The account of it as originally commanded by God is to be found in Leviticus 16. He told the people that upon the chosen day they were to gather in soul affliction at the entrance to the Tabernacle, bringing with them two goats: these were to

become the focal point of the solemn rite. The High Priest was instructed to receive them at their hands and follow God's instructions regarding them with great care, that by these cleansing from all sin may be imputed to His people.

In simple logical order one goat was slain and its blood was sprinkled by the High Priest within the veil upon the Mercy Seat, but the other had to fulfil quite a different role. Upon its head with all solemnity the High Priest was commanded to lay his hands and make confession over it. A complete breast of everything had to be made; 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.' Following that public confession and typical transference of all the sins from the people to the animal, it had to be sent away 'by the

hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited,' said the Lord. Thus these two goats were combined in one ceremony to set forth two factors in the act of Christ's atonement:

1. Bloodshed and death, and acceptance of the blood sprinkled upon the Mercy Seat.
2. Sins confessed, transferred and borne away.

In this important matter the goats formed a fairly comprehensive type by which God could reveal to the nation something of the meaning of atonement.

All other blood shed for sin in the land was given by God to the people upon the Altar, but this particular blood by God's commandment was carried in and given to Him. It was sprinkled upon the Seat of

Mercy, where God sat and accepted (may we say, drank?) it, and because of it could still stay and dwell in the midst of this people which were the nation of the broken law. He personally could only accept the blood of a sacrifice that set forth, however feebly, the active removal of sin. Even in type God would not teach that He accepted (drank) blood that only covered sin. This amazing ministration of blood to God was the High Priest's most important function. Following this, his second most important duty had to be administered, and that before he engaged in the second part of the twofold type. In fact the two administrations of the first part were really one in their implied meaning, but were performed in sequence in their correct order. Just as God personally would only accept the blood that bespoke the utter removal of sin from His Presence,

so also the Altar upon which all other blood(s) of 'covering' was given to His people throughout the year had to be sprinkled with the same blood. This was the blood of removal, real atonement. For though in the type it was not the actual blood of the goat that bore away the sin, yet it was reckoned as the same.

For this purpose they both had to be presented to the Lord and stand together before Him as one, that the action of the one and the blood of the other should be as one for the establishing of the type. The Lord was thereby teaching them the truth that He could only allow the continuance of the idea of coverage of sin because the time was coming when He would remove sin altogether. On this basis alone could that present system which consisted in coverage for atonement(s) be at all reconciled to and

acceptable by Him. The High Priest's ministry in the second action of the first part of the twofold type was to reconcile to God the entire Holy Place with all its furniture and furnishings, and all the other articles of worship and sacrifice used by the priests for the people. The Holiest of all did not need the reconciliation; it was the Holy of Holies — entirely without sin or taint of uncleanness because it was entirely God's. But despite the thousands of sacrifices, and volumes of blood consumed upon the Altar throughout the course of the year, the transgression and sin and uncleanness remained with the Children of Israel unremoved.

It could not be removed by such sacrifices; why, even the very priests who alone could offer them had guilty consciences whilst they were performing their rites, we are

told. Hence the necessity for the great Day of Atonement. Not that they or the people were any the more free from sin and a guilty conscience then. They did not know inward removal of sin or its power even though they witnessed most of the solemn sprinkling and reconciliation of the holy things, and watched and listened intently during the ceremony of the laying on of hands, and the sending away of the Scapegoat. All was real enough, forgiveness was genuine, righteousness was imputed to them, reconciliation was effected, but to them their sins were only covered. To us with greater knowledge than they the type is clear, but to them it was still coverage only. God had covered over their sins once again and had forgiven His people, but the memory and conscience of them still remained undying in their hearts.

The precision of the type is wonderful even by suggestion, for anticipating at this point the truth that was (at that time) later to be revealed, we may notice the utter exactness and consistency of God when pictorially He does but suggest eternal realities.

Considering the relevant significance of quantities, we note again that hundreds of gallons of blood must have been poured upon the Altar during a year's offerings and sacrifices, yet on the Day of Atonement God only asked a few drops of blood for His own personal consumption. Outside great quantities, inside a few drops.

When Aaron, or later his successor, went in to God to bring Him His blood in a bowl it must have been an awe-inspiring experience for him. There was the Lord God sitting upon His throne, yet no form did Aaron see, only glory. God was there waiting to receive the

blood. Aaron, carrying the bowl of blood in one hand and a censer in the other, must slip round one edge of the veiling curtain, swinging the censer, that the cloud of incense from the fire may fill the little room of skin with the sweet scent of Jesus. Then he placed aside the still smouldering fire and, dipping his finger into the bowl of blood, advanced toward the Mercy Seat sprinkling the blood on the ground as he went. The One he came to satisfy sat all glorious on His throne, immobile, inscrutable: waiting. Blood in a bowl or sprinkled on the earth could not satisfy Him, He waited until man, this man, should behold and see the miracle for which all the blood shed by His command was shed. So, careful lest he tread on the blood just sprinkled, Aaron, taking his last step forward, once again dipped his finger into

the bowl and, lifting his arm forward and upward, put his hand into the glory and sprinkled the blood in all he knew to be God. The man watched it drop down in a short crimson cascade and darken into scarlet upon the gold, but God had drunk the blood He required at the hand of man.

Aaron's instructions had been explicit enough. He must not sprinkle the life-drops at random, fearful to be there, hastening to be gone, but in the prescribed manner under the Lord's direct command. The Tabernacle had always to be pitched from East to West, having its articles of furniture set out in simple cruciform pattern with the Ark of the Covenant at the head within the Holy of Holies. From it, extending in straight line through the Holy Place to the entrance of the outer court, stood the Altar of Incense, the Laver and the Brazen Altar of

sacrifice. Within the Holy Place and on either side of the golden Altar of Incense, North and South respectively, stood the Table of Shewbread and the sevenfold Lampstand. Thus was the clear course of Aaron's ascent to the throne levelly marked out and set, all prepared for him as he took the blood from the place of death and sacrifice westwards and proceeded eastward along the line that led to the Mercy Seat. There, in all grace and patience, God sat waiting during the few minutes that must elapse while Aaron paused awhile in the soft light and fragrance of the Holy Place to change from his elaborate outward garments to the simple inward habit of pure righteousness in which he must present God's blood to Him as He wanted it.

Moses upon Sinai had been allowed to see God's backward parts. Aaron also, in

company with others of the nobility of Israel had been privileged for a moment at the law-giving to see God, but none had ever gazed upon His face. But here in His chosen sanctuary God had elected to sit thirsting for the blood of atonement facing the people. Aaron could not, must not see His face; it was not visible to human eye in any case. But the clouding incense, sweetly rising, warm from the glowing fire, would both please His heart and sufficiently veil the brightness of His glory; all was perfect as could be for His purposes under the circumstances. So with His backward parts toward the east and His face toward the west He awaited Aaron's ministrations. He had chosen to drink the blood; so Aaron, taking the last wondering step to the throne, put his hand into God and sprinkled the blood. Eastward, directly eastward, from the

front to the back of the sacred seat his hand moved. Not sideways, not diagonally, not in a circle but in line, straight, the purpling drink went into the invisible God. Not much, just a little, a few drops, a sip, but it was all He wanted; it was enough. He was satisfied. Quantity did not matter. Neither the amount nor the substance really counted, for the blood eventually became only a stain on the throne. A Spirit, God, could not drink blood; He commanded and received it as the medium of the life of the one in whose veins it flowed, that the invisible life may be drunk in while the medium dropped away upon the gold. The type, though fragile, is nonetheless exceeding full of suggestive truth to the mind that sees and the heart that knows and understands God. He had never departed from His original intention

and the idea He had set in the scripture in the beginning.

Atonement Illustrated

Because this is so, and because He was moving up to the great eternal act of atonement, a few hours before His sacrifice the Lord Jesus took His disciples into an upper room that He might show them eternal truth. Passing over the intervening years of Hebrew practice and thereby displaying them to be parenthetical, He took a cup filled with wine and said, 'This cup is the New Covenant in my blood ... drink ye all of it.' So they drank the New Covenant in His Blood. To them the whole idea was entirely revolutionary. They had first heard it when, having fed the five thousand men plus women and children, Jesus had taught them that He was the bread from heaven. He had

said that they must eat His flesh and drink His Blood or they would have no life in them. They had not understood it then, nor did they understand what He was saying now, but they knew He was introducing to them an entirely new and (what was considered to be) unlawful practice. Blood drinking was prohibited by the Law, but here was Jesus commanding them to do exactly the opposite from what Moses had said. True it is that He never once intended them to drink His actual blood, and that all was spiritual, but there was no denying that His teaching was absolutely revolutionary.

And revolutionary it surely is, for the Lord was not introducing a new idea, but simply turning them back to an old one: drinking. Instead of 'sprinkling,' 'striking,' 'pouring out,' or any of the other various usages of the blood of the Old Covenant, it was now

and for ever more to be drinking. The New Covenant is not an external covenant like the old one, but an internal and therefore an entirely new one. True it is that the Blood of Jesus Christ had to be poured out, and upon the occasion stamped into the ground like the blood of many another who had hung on Calvary's hill or ever the Lord hung there. It had to be shed for remission, but it was the life of, that is, in the Blood, that gave it its true value. Isaiah has it right. He poured out His soul unto death. It was the life He lived in the flesh, the soul He created in sinlessness, that was really poured out as the actual blood outpoured onto the ground. The soul is in the blood. When a man drinks the Blood he drinks the soul of the Lord Jesus of Nazareth.

Anticipating Calvary, before His death the Lord as it were presented His whole soul-life

as Man on earth in the cup He gave them to drink. It was as though He caught and compressed the real virtue and value and purpose of Calvary into the loving cup, that He might impress upon our tardy spirits the critical importance of the inward action above the outward manifestation, lest we lose the significance of the epochal and eternal thing that was being wrought and instituted as law in the New Covenant. The New Covenant in His Blood is a covenant to create in His own people the soul that was in Him, that being regenerate in spirit they too may live on earth the eternal life He lived whilst here. 'Drink it,' He says.

Oh, the soul of Jesus! How wonderful! The soul-life of that Man for every man who will drink. God manifest in the flesh, His uttermost perfections, His glorious reality, His sweetness ineffable; the wonder of Him,

the righteousness, the holiness, the purity, the loveliness of Him; all that Manhood lived out under all kinds and conditions of life; trials, temptations, provocations, hatred, deceptions, lyings and blasphemies, betrayal, and tortures, and crucifixion; all that perfect soul that loathed sin, and that leapt out against hypocrisy, all the preciousness of this wondrous life that always obeyed the Father — He says, 'Drink Me in, drink in My soul, My life, My all in the Blood.' The concern was and still is not so much that the wine be drunk; one only takes a sip anyhow, a lip-moistening, a little swallow; of itself it is nothing, a mere token thing of the gushings of His soul into ours as we open our being and drink and drink and drink in the perfect life of that Man, that God in Flesh.

So we see that immediately we reach the New Covenant we are brought back to the original idea of the open mouth; 'the Blood' has to be drunk. Yet the idea of sprinkling is also to be found in the New Testament, for the Hebrews letter speaks of the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. The comparison is apt, for Abel's blood was spilled on the ground as valueless for atonement as his brother Cain's, but Jesus' Blood is sprinkled on the throne of grace. I do not know quite what I expect to see when I stand before that throne, but this I know, that as of old the High Priest went every year into the Holiest of all and sprinkled the blood of atonement upon the Mercy Seat, so Jesus has gone into the Heavenly Jerusalem with His own Blood and has sprinkled the throne of grace with it. Moreover, the Holy Spirit has come forth,

the second Apostle of the Trinity to be sent by the Father, to sprinkle hearts from an evil conscience.

All sprinkling of the Blood of the New Covenant is done by the Holy Ghost. His work by it is the inward disinfecting of the human personality from all sin and uncleanness and evil. There is not the slightest ground in the New Testament for believing that men are expected subjectively to handle and use the Blood; to the contrary they are plainly shown to be the objective beneficiaries of another's handling of it. Without question this is because of the redemption in that Blood. Redemption is not only through the Blood, that is because it was shed (meaning that unless it had been outpoured on the cross there could have been no atonement, which is absolutely true), redemption is only through the Blood

because also redemption was in the Blood of that wonderful Man.

There was no redemption in the blood of animals; it contained nothing of the moral and ethical worth of a life free from sin; it was not precious Blood but common blood. Superficial innocence it may have, sufficient enough for the Lord to allow Himself honestly to use it for imputed coverage and token implication, but it would have been immoral to have used it for anything further than that. So the Lord God did not do so. But the precious, unique, eternal soul-life of Jesus was utterly righteous, holy, pure, love-filled, virtuous, and positively redemptive. His Blood covers nothing, but removes everything contrary to its moral, ethical and virtuous nature, and brings into everyone who drinks it the soul-life of the Man who shed it. In one eternal act He shed it in that

manner as the procuring price for the souls of men; just once in the end of an age of bloodshed He did it to end the age of bloodshed and put away sin thereby; and with the consummation of that age came also the passing of its practices, and phraseology.

No more must men use its limited vocabulary when speaking of such precious Blood; no more may men speak of covering anything with it; it is impossible, it cannot 'be done. The ideas are incompatible.

Neither must men conjure up ideas of sprinkling it upon anyone or anything or anywhere. It is already sprinkled in the only places it may be sprinkled. We must not vulgarise it or impute unto it any superstitious uses. We must drink it; it is the blood of the new man which is entirely spiritual while living in the flesh.

Atonement Realised

Perhaps the greatest tragedy underlying much of the unwarrantable misuse of precious spiritual Biblical phraseology is the failure to distinguish the difference between the Old and New Covenants. Because a phrase is Biblical it does not follow that it is correct when used outside of its historical and dispensational setting.

Another great tragedy is surely the fear that underlies so much of the practice now made obsolete by God and therefore unacceptable to Him. It chiefly arises from a misplaced emphasis upon the power of black magicians using black arts to destroy people, or the work of God. Persons who ought to know better are teaching other persons who know less than they to live and move in fear of mediums and magicians, whose power

against them was all destroyed at Calvary. This gives rise to all such superstitious uses of the Blood as covering oneself with it and sprinkling one's possessions with it. Everything must be treated in this way it is said — houses, rooms, cars, situations. People will not get out of bed or enter homes, or go near a demon-possessed person, or even at times converse with another child of God unless some kind of prayer, pious enough in all conscience, is breathed concerning some use, or application, or coverage with the Blood. The sad, sad reason implied if not plainly given is that because the agents of Satan have blood, human, animal, birds', or mixtures of bloods, so also must we have blood to answer, combat, or afford protection from that devilish medium. But this is not so. One real deep inward soul-drink of the spiritual value

and eternal preciousness of that Blood of Christ is sufficient and more than sufficient to undo all the works of Satan. To find, collect, and use the finest selection of Biblical phrases concerning the Blood is not a Biblical prescription for overcoming Satan or giving protection from his powers.

Superstition is not faith, and superstitious use of the Bible is not the least common fault among Christians today. This all must be banished from the churches for it does not honour, but dishonour the Blood.

There can be no doubt that the practices of the early Church are the surest guide to correct behaviour in all matters. The account of their habits, together with the epistles of guidance, and correction, and instruction, and edification, and education, form a major part of the New Testament canon. Nowhere in any of these, throughout the Acts of the

Apostles and onwards (or, for that matter, in the Gospels either) is there any suggestion that the Church of Jesus Christ should act in such a manner as has been described. Not once is coverage or protection sought from or by the Blood. Instead the real reason for the shedding of the Blood is set forth in plainest terms, the forgiveness of sins, redemption, cleansing, drink. These things being had in experience there was nothing to cover, no protection needed. If a man is made the righteousness of God, does that condition need covering? And if so, from whom and by what? It is the basic moral and spiritual quality of the Blood that has been drunk, and that righteousness is as needless of protection in us as in the One whose originally it was. In understanding we must be men.

Pursuing the theme a little further we notice that the saints spoken of in Revelation 12 overcame the dragon, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, by the Blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they were not a lot of sell-lovers. Obviously, since we must love someone or something, they loved the One who shed that Blood and were quite prepared to lay down their lives for Him or their brethren: more, if the word in chapter 1: 5-6 is any indication, they loved the Blood He shed also. By it and their testimony they had no difficulty in defeating the devil. We are not told what they said, nor are we told that they 'used' the Blood in any way; just the honest facts are stated, by these two things they overcame the dragon, fallen Lucifer in his most terrifyingly powerful form.

The absence of reference to any method or 'use' of the Blood in this case is quite typical of all the New Testament scriptures wherever it is mentioned. Nowhere are we told that the apostles practised blood-sprinkling, neither did they teach that the Blood of Jesus Christ was ever intended for that use in general practice when dealing with any variety of demon personage or demonic situation. It is an entirely gratuitous assumption, as erroneous as it is extra-Biblical, to believe or teach that the sons of God need either to sprinkle or cover themselves or others with the Blood. We must surely take it for granted that the early Church would have known the proper attitude to the Blood of the Lamb so lately shed. Therefore, it permits of no other interpretation than that the complete absence from scripture of any such practices

as have sprung into popular use since the closing of the sacred canon shows them to be wrong.

Neither the Lord Jesus Himself during His earthly ministry, nor yet any of His chosen apostles after Him gave any instruction concerning blood-sprinkling or covering or pleading. They did not set any such example for the churches to follow, nor did they allude to any such practice, nor even hint at it. Nor can one example of it be found throughout the entire length of the Acts of the Apostles to give any ground for believing it to be Church tradition. To imply that the New Testament allows or promotes the practice and teaching of such things in connection with the Blood of the everlasting covenant is entirely erroneous: to infer that it may do is both mythical and repugnant; all are absolutely unnecessary and sheerly

human, and if not directly devilish such practices are at least utterly sensual. Coverage is not provided by the Blood of God's Lamb.

When God sent His Lamb into the world, it was a move back again to the original revelation in Genesis as contradistinctive to the teachings given later under the intervening Mosaic system. When speaking to the Jews in His day the Lord Jesus did not say, 'Your Mediator Moses rejoiced to see My day'.. . but, 'Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see My day'. . . for Moses spake of '... a lamb the lamb your lamb,' Exodus 12: 3-5, but Abraham said, 'God will provide Himself a Lamb.' Thus Abraham saw Jesus' day. But Moses had to deal with the blood of men's lambs; so coverage, sprinkling, striking, were its commanded usages. Because blood drinking was

prohibited, men were inhibited and salvation was limited. Acts 13 : 39. Moses could not speak of salvation to the uttermost, whereas the Blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth us from all sin. When we drink the Blood we are washed, sprinkled, purged, loosed, redeemed, forgiven — according to the riches of His grace, not covered according to the limitations of law. All is internal, externality is finished.

It may be that Balaam has a word for us in all this. A wicked king had hired him to use witchcraft against Israel, and for love of money the hireling prophet was for a while willing to do so. But he soon discovered a most remarkable and patent fact which is recorded for us in Numbers 23 : 23. 'Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against

Israel.... What hath God wrought!' Higher up we read, 'God hath blessed and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a King is among them.'

Let a man, even each member of the Israel of God, believe this truth, and he will not have need to relapse into Old Testament clichés, as sacred as they may appear. He will no more need to use its phraseology concerning blood than he will have need of that blood itself. The Blood of Jesus Christ goes on cleansing everyone who, having drunk it in order to become a son of Light, goes on walking in the light. A constantly cleansed man has no conscience of sin and no fear of evil; more than this, he is seldom if ever conscious that he needs protection. He does not believe his Lord is so forgetful of

him that He needs continuously reminding to protect him. He lives in the glorious knowledge that all things work together for his good always. He finds that not only can he obey the injunction to give thanks in everything, but beyond that he also enjoys the mature word which fullness of the Spirit brings within his experience; viz., he finds himself giving thanks always for all things. Ephesians 5:18-20, a vastly better condition and attitude, and a much higher and fuller concept to be sure.

It must never be forgotten that the Bible says it is in **Him** we have redemption; not in His Blood but in Him. Of course it is through His Blood, but not in it. All redemption, even in historic Israel, was because of Him and the Blood He would shed; all is Him, in Him, of Him, and through Him to the Father. He and His Father were before ever He actually

took flesh and blood, which He did in order that He should shed that Blood, so that by that act and through that Blood alone we might be born into Him. We do not, cannot drink the actual human physical substance of the Blood; instead the Holy Ghost has come, that in Him, the blessed Spirit, as from a sacred cup of Heavenly Life placed to the lips of the inward man, we may drink in all the virtuous Life of the soul of the Man Christ Jesus. As there are eyes of the heart, so are there ears of the heart, and lips of the heart even as also there are hands and feet and all faculties and senses and functions of the heart: we all have them; greater and more powerful than the outward, the inward man of the heart exists in us all in a state of death or life. Dead until he drink the Blood, alive only when he has drunk and as he does constantly drink it.

This is the perfect picture and truth of the Body. Does not every member of a body partake of and live by drinking in the blood of and in that same body? Even so does every member of His Body the Church live by drinking in the nature and virtue and life of Jesus Christ in the Spirit. This is why we are told that we are made to drink into one Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13). For the Life that was once manifested on the earth in the soul of the Man Christ Jesus, and is the truth for ever for every man, is brought unto us by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, from whom as a babe in the flesh on earth Jesus came by Mary to be life and truth for us all. Not outwardly now as distinct and separate from us, but inwardly, wholly, spiritually: that is, entire in spirit, as complete and wholesome, and actually He as ever He was when known as Jesus of Nazareth.

A man's redemption is Jesus. He is not only the Redeemer but also Redemption. As Redeemer He is generally only thought of in connection with a redemptive act — Calvary, a price paid, a purchase made, a death died. But wonderful and indispensable as that was, it was and is of no avail unless He is also my Redemption. The Redemption is in **Him** through faith in His Blood.

Redemption is Jesus' Life. Laid down it purchased me, taken up and lived in me it redeems me from myself and sin.

Redemption is Jesus. Jesus in me is made Redemption to me. Jesus, as **He** lived and walked on this earth was Redemption. As the Son of man He redeemed human nature; that is, He was God's reason, just and holy and righteous, for redeeming me, because He proved that it was possible for human nature to be in the midst of sin and yet not

sin, be beset by demons and not be defeated by them, be hated by men and still love them compassionately, tenderly, everlastingly, and ah, so much, much more. Where all men failed He succeeded; in every detail of life where I sinned He remained sinless and more beside; that is how and why He was and is Redemption. He, that Life, is God's justification for justifying me; He is made justification to me. He is Redemption. Redemption is not some thing God gives me, but a personal life, Jesus. He was made Redemption to me having been and being Redemption in Himself as a Man on the earth before me: this is God's magnanimity, and munificence to me. In him I have Redemption: through His Blood He was made Redemption to me; this is the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace.

The end of this is that the life I now live in the flesh is His life not mine, and as He did not in the past need to be sprinkling blood, or pleading it, or getting under it, or covering Himself with it, neither does He require or need to do so in the present. He is the same, yesterday, today and forever, whether in Himself or in His people. His flesh is their meat, His Blood is their drink. 'He that eateth Me shall live by Me,' He said. It is quite impossible to eat raw flesh and not drink blood, for flesh is by blood. The Church of Jesus Christ is His Body — of His flesh and of His bone. Let all who are His members know that all is within them as they are in Him, and let them slip out from under a yoke that neither their fathers nor they were able to bear. The Old is done away with all its irrelevant phrases. The practices and the language went together. The New has

replaced the Old. therefore let spiritual and mental renewal result in newness of speech. We are told that His Blood speaks. It has a language of its own which leaves us with no need to say anything. Abel's blood had to cry to God from the ground whereupon it was shed and by which it was absorbed. There was no-one to carry it to the heavenly Jerusalem, so it cried for vengeance. It had to be avenged even though vengeance may not have been in his heart when it was shed. But the Blood of Jesus speaks in Mount Zion where the glorious Christ mediates the Holy Spirit in unending love to bring us all back up into the image of God. The blood of sprinkling speaks to God and His answer is the outpoured Spirit. Where the Spirit dwelleth no protection is needed, for the Spirit is as the Blood and Him Who shed it. He is the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus,

even the life that was in the Blood, the exact life. Being filled with the Spirit I am filled with all that the Blood stands for; there is no difference, none at all. Now I have no need to find a form of speech for the Blood, instead I have the name. Jesus was the name given to that man of flesh and blood, and when I both bear and use it in all propriety and power, it carries all the virtue and meaning of the Blood to whatever need I have.