

# REFLECTIONS ON THE BLOOD OF JESUS

A PASSION WEEK DEVOTIONAL

With life's business and distractions, one can easily go right through the week before Easter without ever thinking about what this week truly means. What it means to God, to believers, and to non-believers. We often never take the time to consider what it means for Christ to shed His precious blood on our behalf? And why was His blood the only thing that could pay the price for our sins? What is it about His blood?

This small devotional is meant to help families take the time with Easter approaching, to reflect on the blood of Jesus. Our prayer is that your family will take a few minutes each day, during this week from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday, commonly known as Passion Week, to draw closer to our wonderful Savior. Please consider the blood of Christ.



# I. PALM SUNDAY

## “FOCUSING ON THE BLOOD”

“ And according to the Law, one may almost say,  
all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood  
there is no forgiveness. ”

*Heb. 9:22*

There is a scarlet thread of blood running through the entire Bible, from the Old Testament to the New Testament. The first shedding of blood occurs after Adam and Eve sinned. Upon their first act of disobedience, they discovered they were naked and felt shame. Afterwards, they made a feeble attempt to cover their nakedness with fig leaves that would have quickly fell apart. The point is clear; we can never successfully cover up our own sins through our own efforts. So God comes and covers the two of them with coverings made from animal skins. Our heavenly Father had to slaughter the animal in order to make these coverings. This is the very first instance of the shedding of blood on the planet, and it was carried out by God Himself, and it was done to cover mankind's sin.

The Old Testament has many meaningful ceremonies where the shedding of blood was central. Let us look at two:

**The Passover:** This was a commemorative ceremony that the Israelite's would take part in every year, which was pointing back to the first Passover. This is when God brought about the plagues upon Egypt during the time Moses was asking Pharaoh to let God's people go and release them from bondage. The first-born male of all of Egypt would die during this plague, except the homes of the Israelite's whom God had instructed to place the blood of an unblemished sacrificed lamb over the door-

posts and lintels of their homes. When God's wrath fell upon Egypt, He would pass over the homes with the sacrificed blood. Every home without the lambs blood would not escape the death of every first-born male. You can read about the Passover in Exodus 11 & 12 and 1 Corinthians 5.

**The Day of Atonement:** Along with the many blood sacrifices that individuals would make throughout the year, there was one time a year when the entire nation was atoned for by the high priest. At the appointed time, the high priest would enter the holy of holies in the Tabernacle with blood sacrifices. First, he would offer a young bull for his own personal sins, then he would cast lots over two goats, and offer one of them on behalf of the nation. This became known as the scapegoat, for it would carry the sins of the entire people away. The high priest would enter the holy of holies with a bowl of the blood from the young goat, which he would never dare entering to the presence of Holy God without that blood. *“With his finger he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it seven times and cleanse it, and from the impurities of the sons of Israel consecrate it.” Lev 16:19.* You can read about the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16 and Hebrews 9. John the Baptist connects the two testaments with his words in *John 1:29 “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”*

Q: How did Adam and Eve's sin affect their relationship with God?

Q: What would have been the outcome if God had not slaughtered that first sacrifice?

Q: Why do you think that God instructed the Israelites to use blood to mark their doorposts before the angel of death was sent?

## II. MONDAY

### “THE BLOOD AND GOD’S WRATH”

“... whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed.”

Rom. 3:25

#### **Read: Romans 3:9-26**

Propitiation is a word that does not relate easily to us in our culture, but it literally means to remove wrath by providing a substitute.

God’s holy wrath is turned against our sin, because in that we have rejected and betrayed our Creator. All people have degenerated into a pattern of sin, refusing to heed God’s warnings and repent, therefore God is angry. Have you read the second chapter of John, where Jesus drove out the money-changers from the Temple? He was angry! Yet be sure that God’s anger is not like our anger. God’s anger and wrath exudes from a position of holiness and righteousness. God’s wrath is His firm opposition to sin and His righteous determination to punish the sinners responsible.

In the first Passover, God was bringing His judgment on the firstborn sons of Egypt. The death angel would pass over every house with the blood of the sacrificial lamb on the door. Otherwise God’s wrath would visit that home. *“The blood shall be a sign for you 011 the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and 110 plague will befall you to destroy you whe11 I strike the land of Egypt.” Ex 12:13.* Now, in the same way, when God sees the blood of Jesus, that blood satisfies His justice and turns away His wrath from all believers.

“God does not love us because Christ died for us; Christ died for us because God loved us. If it is God’s wrath that needed to be propitiated, it is God, s love that did the propitiating.” John Stott

Q: What do think of when you see the term “God’s wrath”?

Q: Is it possible to angry and not be sinning?

Q: How do you think the families felt the night of the first Passover when they could hear the cry’s of grieving parents?

Q: How do you feel, knowing that Jesus blood protects you from God’s wrath?

### III. TUESDAY

#### “THE BLOOD AND OUR POSITION BEFORE GOD”

“ Much more then,  
having now been justified by His blood,  
we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. ”

*Rom. 5:9*

#### **Read: Romans 5**

“Justified” is a legal term, when a court found out that an accused person was innocent, they were declared “just”. Meaning that they had a right and good standing before the law.

Justification is when God pronounces us, “Not guilty.” We are not speaking here of guilt in the sense of having guilty feelings; instead, it is our legal standing before a holy God. Prior to conversion we stand guilty before God. Once we come to God through the blood of Jesus, we are justified. As Wayne Grudem describes it, we have, “a legal declaration concerning our relationship to God, s laws, stating that we are completely forgiven and no longer liable to punishment.”

Romans 4:5 tells us how we receive a right standing before God: “*But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is cred-*

*ited as righteousness*” In other words, we trust Jesus, not our own good works, to save us. As our substitute, on the cross, Jesus assumed our bad record and paid the penalty for our sins. In salvation He gives us His perfect record – righteousness is “credited to our account.” It is given to us as a gift, “*the gift of righteousness*” Rom 5:17. We must refuse to try standing on our own records, we must renounce any trust in our own merits, “*for we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law*” Rom 3:28.

A right standing before God is merited alright; just not by us! Jesus secured our new standing with God. For us, the key to receiving this right standing is faith. For God, however, the key to procuring this right standing is the blood of Jesus Christ. On the cross Jesus took on our sin and suffered our punishment – we have now been declared righteous by His blood.

Q: How grateful should a person be who was guilty and yet they were let off?

Q: Given the fact that Christ forgave us so much, how should we respond to others when they do us wrong?

Q: Why can't God just forgive you and not require the blood of Christ?

Q: Which of God's attributes are on display in the above commentary?

## IV. WEDNESDAY

### “THE BLOOD AND THE POWER OF SIN”

“... and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead,  
and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood ”

Rev. 1:5

#### Read: Romans 6

Redemption: “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace” Eph 1:7. God used this word from secular life to describe a spiritual reality. It means to purchase out of slavery. In the Old Testament, when people were in financial straights they often sold themselves into slavery to satisfy the debt, a relative could possibly redeem them. If a person was captured in war he could be redeemed with a ransom. In the Roman world, if a slave was able to save up the money he could go to the temple and pay the redemption price and buy himself out of slavery.

We were slaves to sin. In John 8:34, we read, “Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.” Prior to salvation, we all desperately need to be redeemed from our former master; sin!

Redemption is not merely being ransomed from the penalty of sin; but also from the power of sin. “Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb

unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.” 1 Pet 1:18-19. Take note of two things: first it is the blood of Jesus that was the purchase price of our freedom, and second, we were redeemed, not just from hell, but from our empty way of life! Leonard Ravenhill raised this question in a sermon:

“If I was to ask you tonight if you were saved? Do you say ‘Yes, I am saved’. When? ‘Oh so and so preached, I got baptized and ...’ Are you saved? What are you saved from, hell? Are you saved from bitterness? Are you saved from lust? Are you saved from cheating? Are you saved from lying? Are you saved from bad manners? Are you saved from rebellion against your parents? Come on, what are you saved from?”

In Heaven, one praise chorus sings to Jesus, “and they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased (redeemed) for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.” Rev 5:9. We are part of “the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.” Act 20:28. The ownership issue is settled. We have been bought with a price, freed from sin, and made a slave of Christ!

Q: Have you ever thought about the fact that you are a slave to Christ if you are a Christian?

Q: What type of things does that phrase bring to mind; ‘slave of Christ’?

Q: How does He being our master differ from our former master Satan?

# V. THURSDAY

## “THE BLOOD AND FORGIVENESS OF SIN”

“ *In Him we have redemption through His blood,  
the forgiveness of our trespasses,  
according to the riches of His grace* ”

*Eph. 1:7*

### **Read: Ephesians 1**

Forgiveness means to pardon and release, to let a person go free, as if their sin had never been committed at all.

As one preacher from the past stated, “Forgiveness is to man the plainest of duties; to God it is the profoundest of problems.” How does a perfect Holy God release sinners from their sin? A wholly righteous and impartial Judge cannot simply overlook sin. Anselm of Canterbury observed in the eleventh century that if anyone imagines that God can simply forgive as we forgive others, that person “has not yet considered what a heavy weight sin is.”

In the upper room at the last Passover of Jesus’ earthly ministry, He established the Lord’s Supper. As He spoke of the cup and what it represented, He said, “*for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out/or*

*many for forgiveness of sins.*” *Matt 26:28*. The blood of Jesus secures our forgiveness.

In Revelation 7:14, some particular Christians are identified: “*These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*” Perhaps that is exactly what you long to have in your own personal experience – to be washed, white, and clean. Perhaps something in your past haunts you. Perhaps you cannot ever seem to feel that clean. Realize, that kind of forgiveness, that type of cleanliness cannot come from your past or your performance, it only flows from the blood of Jesus Christ!

“*Come now, and let us reason together,*” Says the LORD, “*though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool.*” *Isa 1:18*

Q: Why are we like God the most when we forgive?

Q: What does the forgiveness of sins really say about how God views us?

Q: Why does Revelation say we are washed white with red blood? What does that mean?

## VI. GOOD FRIDAY

### “THE BLOOD AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD”

“*For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.*”

Col. 1:19-22

#### Read: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

Reconciliation is when two friends have become estranged; enemies even, and then, restore the friendship. Our sin makes us the enemies of God. Leon Morris observes:

“It is plain the New Testament speaks of God and sinners as enemies. Now an enemy is not simply someone who falls a little short of being a good and faithful friend. He belongs in the opposite camp. He is opposed to what the one is doing. Sinners are putting their effort into the opposite direction of God. We should be clear on this. The sin we do inevitably arouses the hostility of God.”

Yet it was “*while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*” Rom 5:10. Even though He was the offended party, God took the initiative. He has removed the offense that separated us sinners from His holiness. As Colossians 1:22

says, “*..He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.*”

Before we were saved, we could never have had a relationship with God. Yet the miracle is that He has provided a way for us to enter His very presence and be His people, and He, be our God.

• “*Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*” Heb 10:19-22

• “*But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*” Eph 2:13

Q: What do you think when you realize that before believing in Jesus, you were an enemy of God?

Q: Now that we are saved, who is our enemy?

## VII. SATURDAY

### “THE BLOOD AND OUR VICTORY OVER SATAN”

“*And they overcame him (Satan) because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.*”

*Rev. 12:11*

#### **Read Colossians 2:12-15**

In a dream, Martin Luther found himself being attacked by Satan. The devil unrolled a long scroll containing a list of Luther's sins and held it before him. The devil read the list of sins one after another. When he reached the end of the list Luther asked him, "Is that all?" "No!" came the angry reply and a second scroll was put in Luther's face. Then, after the second scroll there was a third. But now the devil had no more of Luther's sins to list. Luther replied, "You've forgotten something. Quickly write on each of them, "The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanses us from all sin!" The devil let out an awful cry, cursed, and disappeared.

This story of the dream is closer to reality than some may realize. William Gurnall in his puritan classic, *The Christian in Complete Armour*, states that Satan has two main designs, or strategies, in attacking

the Christian:

1. His first main design is to draw us into sin.
2. The second is to accuse, vex, and trouble us because of our sin.

Scripture celebrates the time when Satan, "*he accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.*" *Rev 12:10*. Jesus became a human being so "*that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil ...*" *Heb 2:14*. Jesus "*disarmed the rulers and authorities (demonic powers), He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him (on the cross).*" *Col 2:15*

Jesus' victory is our victory and His blood won that victory for each and every true believer and follower of Christ!

Q: How do you feel knowing that no matter what is done to you on this earth, you have victory in the blood of Jesus Christ?



## VIII. EASTER SUNDAY

### “THE BLOOD AND CHRIST’S REIGN OVER HISTORY”

“*And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain ...*”

Rev. 5:6

#### Read Revelation 5

A slain lamb standing... quite an odd portrait. Not a slain lamb on the ground... bleeding... or dead... but standing! Slain lambs don't stand. Unless, of course, there has been a resurrection...

In Revelation 5 John has a vision concerning how God will wrap up history. There is in heaven a sealed book with God's decrees for its conclusion, but the seals must be opened and the one who opens them must be qualified to do so. Verses 2-3 describe the future scene: “*And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?”* And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it.” No one could do it! The implications are enormous. How will all the wrongs of history be righted? Final justice established? Peoples saved? How will God receive the glory He deserves? It was so upsetting to John that he wept.

Then in verse 5 we read, “*one of the elders said to me, “Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.”* A Lion... the Son of the King... a Victor! He can do it.

Verses 6-7 tell what happened next: “*And I saw between the throne and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain ... And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.*” You might think this sounds strange; He doesn't look like a lion, but like a lamb... who calmly walks before the throne of holy

God and, in effect, confidently says, “I'll do it.” It is a sacrificial lamb who will open the book's seals and bring history to its rightful conclusion.

We see it again in Revelation 7:17: “*the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.*” The Lamb is at the center of the throne-at the very center of the seat of power! A sacrificial Lamb and a sovereign Lamb!

Finally, we see it in Revelation 19, where the glorious return of the Lord Jesus is described:

11. “*And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.*”

12. “*His eyes are aflame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.*”

13. “*He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.*”

14. “*And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.*”

15. “*From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.*”

16. “*And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”*”

## IX. FINAL REFLECTION

### “FAILING TO VALUE THE BLOOD”

“How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?”

*Heb. 10:29*

The blood of Jesus gives offense to some. The Bible even speaks of “*the offense of the cross*” (*Galatians 5:11*). Its not just the gore and the blood that people find offensive. It is what the cross represents... what it is saying to us and about us. The cross tells us about our sinful state. We are an offense to God! It shouts out loud, how appalling our sins are. It tells us what we deserve to have happen to us. We often think of ourselves as being good people; the cross says, “You deserve to be punished!” All this offends our pride and we naturally bristle at the hard truths it speaks forth.

The cross tells us what God thinks of our sin; it also tells us what God thinks of us. God hates our sins, but He loves us! The cross is how far God would go in His love for us. The cross is how far God would go to make us His own.

So there are two kinds of people: those who consider the cross to be foolishness (I Corinthians 1:23-24) and those who glory in the cross (Gala-

tians 6:14). There are those who are so offended by what it says about them, who are so unwilling to humble themselves before God’s Word, that they will not come to the cross. And there are those who “get it,” who see the weight of their sins and the extravagance of Gods mercy. These people rejoice in the cross and sing about it, for they don’t see gore; they see love and mercy.

Many have heard of the cross. They know about it. In a purely intellectual sense, they may believe in the cross. Yet they have failed to throw themselves upon the mercy of God and trust Christ’s work on the cross to count for them. God became a human being, left Heaven, came to earth, lived a life without recognition or worship, and finally was rejected and crucified. Jesus did that and they are wanting to stand on their own record?! By their casual neglect, or their outright rejection, they have “*regarded as profane the blood of the covenant.*”

Don’t let that be you!

