

Life Is in the Blood

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood”
(Acts 20:28).

Facts about Blood

Blood sustains life. It is the life fluid of the body. It takes nourishment to the body and carries away waste. We seldom think of blood until we see a nosebleed or a wound. Otherwise, the blood silently continues its work. Sixty thousand miles of blood vessels link every living cell in the body. The heart pumps five quarts of blood through the body every twenty-three seconds.

The Bible and Blood

The Bible treats blood as a sacred fluid symbolic of life. The word “blood” is used more than four hundred times.

Blood circulates through every page and verse of God’s Word. From Genesis to Revelation we see a stream of blood that imparts the very life of God.

The Old Testament and the Blood

In the Old Testament the writers outline in detail blood sacrifices.

Just as blood represents life and feeds every cell in the body, the blood of Jesus represents eternal life to the Christian.

Deep in the Jewish understanding was an association of blood with life.

“But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat” (Genesis 9:4).

During the time of Moses, God established His command for all generations.

“It shall be a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood” (Leviticus 3:17).

“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” (Leviticus 17:11).

Since blood represented life, the Jews were not allowed to drink blood or use it in any foods. Every Jewish housewife would check her meat to make sure that no blood remained. The rule was unconditional: Do not eat blood for it contains life. No Jew would ever digest blood. It was always poured out as an offering to God.

Before their exodus from Egypt, the children of God were instructed to place the blood of a lamb on their doorposts. The Lord passed over each home protected by the blood.

“And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt” (Exodus 12:13).

The New Testament and the Blood

Much later, when the leaders of the early church had to decide what had to be observed by the Gentile Christians, two out of four rules had to do with blood.

“That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well” (Acts 15:29).

The apostles did not permit the drinking of blood and meat that was not properly butchered. In strangled animals the blood would not have been drained.

Blood of Christ

References to the “blood of Christ” refer to Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross.

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).

“Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me” (John 6:53-57).

Jesus taught that we should “drink his blood” (John 6:53). Jews were taught that if they

drank the blood of a lamb, the life of the lamb entered into them. Jesus was telling them that if they drank His blood, then His life entered them.

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

God put something in Adam that made him come alive. It was (the breath of God) and blood that gave him life. Blood cleans away harmful wastes from the body. When Adam and Eve sinned, they died spiritually.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

Sin stops the blood of Jesus from flowing in our lives. A blood transfusion takes the blood from a healthy individual and puts it into the veins of an unhealthy suffering person. Through repentance and water baptism in Jesus’ name, Christ’s blood cleanses away sin (waste).

The blood of Jesus is so powerful because our Redeemer did not partake of Adam’s blood. He did not have a drop of Adam’s blood in His veins. An unborn baby’s blood is not taken from the mother, but from the father. Jesus was conceived of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:20).

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Ephesians 2:13).

Jesus made the once and for all sacrifice.

“For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matthew 26:28)

Jesus ascended into heaven and made atonement for us. In the Tabernacle the priest sprinkled blood over and over. There were six pieces of furniture in this portable church. Not one was a chair. The priest could not sit down because his work was never complete. Jesus offered one sacrifice for our sins and then sat down. His work was complete. “It is finished” (John 19:30), He said from the cross.

“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Hebrews 10:12).

No Blood, No Remission

“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22).

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4).

“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10).

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Ephesians 1:7).

Study Questions

1. What does blood do for the body?

2. What is blood symbolic of in the Word of God?

3. What was the unconditional rule that Jews adhered to concerning blood?

4. Before they left Egypt, what were the Israelites instructed to do?

5. What did the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) decide?

6. Why did Jesus teach we should (symbolically) drink His blood?

7. What stops the blood of Jesus from flowing in our lives?

8. How does the blood of Jesus cleanse us from sin?

9. How is the blood of Jesus untainted by sin?

10. Why did the priest not sit down in the Tabernacle?

11. Why was Jesus, our High Priest, able to sit down?

12. According to Hebrews 10:4, what was not possible?

13. How many miles of blood vessels link every living cell in the human body?
