

Towers ministry short reads

Releasing the power of the blood

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Introduction

Towers intercessors need this weapon above all weapons. So many intercessors do not understand it or how to use it.

I read this in the diary of a Missionary -

"I felt a great sense of oppression from the enemy. So I covered my body, mind and emotions with the blood of Jesus. I began to feel really inadequate, hopeless, small, and ineffective. Was the power of the blood failing me? But then I realised that this was the enemy, increasing his attack because he was afraid - of the power of the blood of Jesus to defeat him, and set people, cities, and nations free. I took authority over the enemy, and each time I did that in the power of the blood, the oppression lifted. The attacks got weaker and weaker, until they stopped - all because of the power of the blood of Jesus."

Key verses

This is a key passage to hold in mind as intercessors pray into the blood -

"But when the Messiah arrived, high priest of the superior things of this new covenant, he bypassed the old tent and its trappings in this created world and went straight into heaven's "tent"—the true Holy Place—once and for all. He also bypassed the sacrifices consisting of goat and calf blood, instead using his own blood as the price to set us free once and for all.

If that animal blood and the other rituals of purification were effective in cleaning up certain matters of our religion and behaviour, think how much more the blood of Christ cleans up our whole lives, inside and out. Through the Spirit, Christ offered himself as an unblemished sacrifice, freeing us from all those dead-end efforts to make ourselves respectable, so that we can live all out for God." (Hebrews 9:11-15)

This is the victory verse on which all teaching on the blood stands.

"They defeated him through the blood of the Lamb and the bold word of their witness."
(Rev 12:11. Message version)

Both these passages teach that the blood has incredible power. It will break the enemy, break every scheme, overcome all unforgiven blood, and set creation free.

The history of the blood.

This is the biblical history of the blood.

*** Abel - the blood and the problem**

Adam lay with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, "With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man" Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favour on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favour. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. (Genesis 4: 1-5)

Two men prepare a sacrifice for the Lord. Cain brings fruits of the soil, but has forgotten that God has already cursed the land. (Genesis 3:17) Abel brings an animal sacrifice. This situation is explained later in the Bible, and is vital to the blood -

"For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life."
(Leviticus 17:11)

Blood carries the essence of life in it. So to make an offering which involves sacrifice and the shedding of blood is something very powerful. The fruits of the earth have no blood and no life in them.

Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"

The Lord said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is more than I can bear. Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."

But the Lord said to him, "Not so; if anyone kills Cain, he will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. So Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.
(Genesis 4:8-16)

At this point, two more principles concerning blood are clear -

1. Blood is to do with life and sacrifice.

“The life is in the blood” will finally lead to the sacrifice of Jesus.

2. Innocent blood has the power to damage the spiritual flow of blessing in any heart or any nation.

It has to be dealt with, or creation is forever trapped at the moment of its spilling.

The blood of Abel stands as a great warning to subsequent spiritual history. It was innocent blood, and it remained unrepented of. Cain did not repent, but only complained at the unfairness of God’s punishment. From this original act of shedding of innocent blood and the unrepentant heart of Cain, things only got worse. Further down Cain’s generational line, we meet Lamech, who shows that repentance has become arrogance -

“Lamech said to his wives, “Adah and Zillah, listen to me; wives of Lamech, hear my words. I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me. If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times.”” (Genesis 4:23-24)

Lamech is saying, “Who is this God? If he has to avenge Cain seven times, he will have to avenge me seventy seven times.” No repentance, just arrogance, but an arrogance which would deeply damage humanity.

*** Passover – the power of the blood**

“On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn—both men and animals—and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.” (Exodus 12:12-13)

Moving on many centuries, the great plague of the firstborn was very frightening from a human point of view. There was a way to prevent it entering the house - by sprinkling the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of the house. This blood “spoke” to God, being sufficient to turn away his judgment. This is a massive development in understanding of the blood, and its power. Even animal blood, offered within the covenant setting, could be effective. The writer of Hebrews, taught that if animal blood could do this, how much more precious is the blood of Jesus.

*** Covenant - the guarantee of the blood**

Then he said to Moses, “Come up to the Lord, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. You are to worship at a distance, but Moses alone is to approach the Lord; the others must not come near. And the people may not come up with him.”

When Moses went and told the people all the Lord's words and laws, they responded with one voice, "Everything the Lord has said we will do." Moses then wrote down everything the Lord had said.

He got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the Lord. Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and the other half he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, "We will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey."

Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words."
(Exodus 24:1-8)

The Siniatic covenant, the culmination of a number of covenants, and certainly the foundation covenant as far as Israel was concerned, was sealed with the sprinkling of blood. The blood marked out this event, protecting it from Satan's attack, and making it, in effect, everlasting. The new sanctuary was also sealed with blood, (Exodus 29) making it an acceptable place for the Lord, and the ceaseless sacrifices were blood offered to God for forgiveness.

*** Blood - the pollution**

"Do not pollute the land where you are. Bloodshed pollutes the land, and atonement cannot be made for the land on which blood has been shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it." (Numbers 35:33)

In many ways, this verse needs to be considered along with one we have already looked at:-

"What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground," (Genesis 4:10,11)

Despite all the teaching about the blood, and despite all the animal sacrifices, the issue remains unresolved in the pre-Christian era. Animal blood cannot atone for innocent human blood. The innocent blood of so many people continues to cry out to the Lord for justice and revenge. No amount of Temple sacrifice, or law following can change this basic theological principle. The New Testament provides the answer.

Jesus and the perfect sacrifice

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

The New Testament brings a new understanding. In order to deal with the blood, a better blood was needed. That blood was the blood of Jesus. The New Testament writers give many pictures of Jesus, which help understand what he did about the blood -

*** He was "the lamb of God"**

The Old Testament saw the sacrificial lamb as essential to the issue of blood. Moses said:-

Then Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go at once and select the animals for your families and slaughter the Passover lamb." (Exodus 12:21)

Isaiah went further:-

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. (Isaiah 53:7)

But the Gospel writers saw things much more clearly. They saw that a better blood was needed, a sacrifice provided by God and acceptable to God, who would break the curse of the blood:-

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

*** He was the perfect offering**

The Old Testament writers knew this –

"The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats." (Exodus 12:5)

But the New Testament takes things a lot further:-

"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." (1 Peter 2:22)

"but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect." (1 Peter 1:19)

*** Intercessors have to be identified with that blood.**

The Old Testament people knew this to an extent. The blood was on the doorposts, so they were sheltering behind it. (Exodus 12:1-13) They sprinkled it, and were sprinkled with it. (Exodus 24:1-8). Jesus takes us a lot further, showing the need to be identified with the blood - with his perfect blood of sacrifice. This is a big step forward in understanding -

Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.” (John 6:53)

*** The blood has to be identified with intercessors.**

If intercessors identify with the blood of Jesus, then it is identified with them. This is another massive step forward in understanding. The blood of the Old Testament could be sprinkled on his people. The blood of Jesus is, in a biblical sense, in his people.

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take it; this is my body.” Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,” he said to them. “I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.” (Mark 14:22-25)

The blood which is “in” has great power – and God’s people need to know this. In a few verses, Matthew shows the power:-

At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people. (Matthew 27:51-53)

The blood was so powerful that it established its control over sin, (the curtain was torn) over nature, (the rocks split) and over death. (The tombs were opened.) The sacrifice of the blood was complete. A greater sacrifice than that of bulls and goats had accomplished its mission. But where does this leave his people?

The New Testament writers teach extensively about the blood. Here are a few key examples:-

“and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” (Colossians 1:20)

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God. (1 Peter 1:18-21)

When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! (Hebrews 9:11-14)

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. (Revelation 12:11)

This is a lot of theology to absorb, but the truth is easily understood, from these and other verses. Put quite simply, the death of Jesus redeems from the curse of sin. “Redeem” is the beautiful Greek word “lutros”, which means to be ransomed. The blood of Jesus paid the price to set people free from imprisonment to sin. That which had captured is paid off – once and for all. Now people are free to be the people God intended. All the teaching on the blood in the Old Testament has finally come to its perfect conclusion in the perfect blood of Jesus.

When John Wesley was converted, he wrote a comment in his diary:-

“In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while the leader was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.”

This testimony summarises everything the Bible teaches about the freedom which comes from the perfect blood of Jesus - the blood better than that of Abel.