

THE
POWER
OF THE
BLOOD OF
Christ

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Christ

ANDREW MURRAY



WHITAKER
HOUSE

Publisher's note:

The author's selection of Bible versions has been retained whenever possible, including the Revised Version when it was originally cited. The text of this book, however, has been updated for the modern reader. Words, expressions, and sentence structure have been revised for clarity and readability.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible. Scripture quotations marked (RV) are taken from the Revised Version of the Holy Bible.

THE POWER OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

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Note by Translator

It is necessary to remember that, throughout these chapters, Dr. Murray refers only to “sacrificial blood.”

The blood in the Bible is always that.

It should be noted when reading chapter three that, in the Dutch Bible that Dr. Murray used, the word *verzoening* is used for “propitiation.” *Verzoening* means “reconciliation,” and that is the word used in this translation.

Preface

Preface

This book is a translation of a portion of a series of addresses by my late father, the Reverend Andrew Murray, M.A., D.D., on "The Power of the Blood of Jesus."

The translator is the Reverend William M. Douglas, B.A., who for many years was my father's close friend, having been associated with him in connection with the South African Keswick Convention Movement. During my father's lifetime, he permitted Mr. Douglas to translate his book, *The Prayer Life*, and he became the biographer of my father after his death.

I have read the manuscript and think the translation is excellent. He has reproduced the thoughts of my father exactly.

I feel sure that much blessing will result from the prayerful and thoughtful reading of these chapters.

Trusting you may learn to value and to live in the experience of the power of the precious blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I remain,
Yours in the blessed Master's service,
—M. E. MURRAY

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What the Scriptures Teach about the Blood

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What the Scriptures Teach about the Blood

Not without blood.
—Hebrews 9:7

God has spoken to us in the Scriptures in many different portions and in various manners, but the voice is always the same. It is always the Word of the same God.

Hence, we see the importance of treating the Bible as a whole and receiving the witness it gives in its various portions concerning certain definite truths. In this way, we learn to recognize the place these truths actually occupy in revelation, or rather, in the heart of God. Also, in this way, we begin to discover which foundational truths of the Bible demand our attention above all others. Standing so prominently as they do in each new departure in God's revelation, remaining unchanged when the dispensation changes, they carry a divine indication of their importance.

It is my objective, in the chapters that follow this introductory one, to show what the Scriptures teach us concerning the glorious power of the blood of Jesus and the

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wonderful blessings procured for us by it. I cannot lay a better foundation for my exposition, nor give a better proof of the superlative glory of that blood as the power of redemption, than by asking my readers to follow me through the Bible and thus see the unique place that is given to the blood from the beginning to the end of God's revelation of Himself to man, as recorded in the Bible.

It will become clear that there is no single scriptural idea, from Genesis to Revelation, more constantly and more prominently kept in view than that expressed by the words *the blood*. Our inquiry, therefore, is what the Scriptures teach us about the blood:

- First, in the Old Testament
- Second, in the teaching of our Lord Jesus Himself
- Third, in what the apostles taught
- Fourth, in what John told us of the blood in Revelation
- Last, in the lessons we can learn about the blood from Scripture

What the Old Testament Teaches

The scriptural record about the blood begins at the gates of Eden. I do not enter into the unrevealed mysteries of Eden, but in connection with the sacrifice of Abel, all is plain. He brought "*the firstlings of his flock*" (Genesis 4:4) to the Lord as a sacrifice, and there, in connection with the first act of worship recorded in the Bible, blood was shed. We learn from Hebrews 11:4 that it was "*by faith*" that Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice, and his name stands first

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in the record of those whom the Bible calls *believers*. He had this witness given to him, “*that he was righteous*” (Hebrews 11:4). His faith, and God’s good pleasure in him, are closely connected with the sacrificial blood.

In light of later revelation, this testimony, given at the very beginning of human history, is of deep significance. It shows that there can be no approach to God, no fellowship with Him by faith, no enjoyment of His favor, apart from the blood.

The new earth had to be baptized with blood.

Scripture gives only a brief account of the following sixteen centuries. Then came the flood, which was God’s judgment on sin, by the destruction of the world of mankind. But God brought forth a new earth from that awful baptism of water.

Notice, however, that the new earth also had to be baptized with blood, and the first recorded act of Noah, after he had left the ark, was the offering of a burnt sacrifice to God. As it was with Abel, so was it with Noah at a new beginning; it was “*not without blood.*”

Sin once again prevailed, and God laid an entirely new foundation for the establishment of His kingdom on earth.

By the divine call of Abraham and the miraculous birth of Isaac, God undertook the formation of a people to serve Him. But this purpose was not accomplished apart from the shedding of the blood. This is apparent in the most solemn hour of Abraham’s life.

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God had already entered into covenant relationship with Abraham, and his faith had already been severely tried and had stood the test. It was reckoned, or counted to him, for righteousness (Romans 4:9). Yet he had to learn that Isaac, the son of promise, who belonged wholly to God, could be truly surrendered to God only by death. Isaac had to die. For Abraham, as well as for Isaac, only by death could freedom from the self-life be obtained.

Abraham had to offer Isaac on the altar. (See Genesis 22:1–18.) This was not an arbitrary command of God. It was the revelation of a divine truth, that only through death is it possible for a life to be truly consecrated to God. But it was impossible for Isaac to die and rise again from the dead, for on account of sin, death would hold him fast. But the Scriptures tell us that Isaac's life was spared, and a ram was offered in his place (verse 13). Through the blood that then flowed on Mount Moriah, his life was spared. He and the people who sprang from him lived before God "*not without blood.*" By that blood, however, he was, in a sense, raised again from the dead. The great lesson of substitution is taught clearly here.

Four hundred years passed, and Isaac became, in Egypt, the people of Israel. Through her deliverance from Egyptian bondage, Israel was to be recognized as God's firstborn among the nations. Here, also, it was "*not without blood.*" Neither the electing grace of God, nor His covenant with Abraham, nor the exercise of His omnipotence, which could so easily have destroyed their oppressors, could dispense with the necessity of the blood.

What the blood accomplished on Mount Moriah for one person, who was the father of the nation, now had

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to be experienced by that nation. By the sprinkling of the door frames of the Israelites with the blood of the Paschal lamb, and by the institution of the Passover as an enduring ordinance with the words, "*When I see the blood, I will pass over you*" (Exodus 12:13), the people were taught that life can be obtained only by the death of a substitute. Life was possible for them only through the blood of a life given in their place, and this life could be taken hold of by the sprinkling of that blood.

Fifty days later, this lesson was enforced in a striking manner. Israel had reached Sinai. God had given His law as the foundation of His covenant. That covenant now had to be established, but as it is expressly stated in Hebrews 9:7, "*not without blood.*" The sacrificial blood had to be sprinkled, first on the altar; then on the book of the covenant, representing God's side of that covenant; then on the people, with the declaration, "*Behold the blood of the covenant*" (Exodus 24:8).

In that blood, the covenant had its foundation and power. It is by the blood alone that God and man can be brought into covenant fellowship. That which had been foreshadowed at the gate of Eden, on Mount Ararat, on Moriah, and in Egypt was now confirmed at the foot of Sinai in a most solemn manner. Without blood there could be no access by sinful man to a holy God.

There is, however, a significant difference between the manner of applying the blood in the former cases as compared with the latter. On Moriah the life was redeemed by the shedding of the blood. In Egypt it was sprinkled on the doorposts of the houses; but at Sinai, it was sprinkled on the persons themselves. The contact was closer, the application more powerful.

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Immediately after the establishment of the covenant, the command was given, “*Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them*” (Exod. 25:8). They were to enjoy the full blessedness of having the God of the covenant abiding among them. Through His grace, they could find Him and serve Him in His house.

Nothing can dispense with the necessity of the blood.

He Himself gave, with the minutest care, directions for the arrangement and service of that house. But you will notice that the blood is the center and reason of all this. Draw near to the vestibule of the earthly temple of the heavenly King, and the first thing visible is the altar of burnt offering, where the sprinkling of blood continues, without ceasing, from morning until evening. Enter the Holy Place, and the most conspicuous thing is the golden altar of incense, which also, together with the veil, is constantly sprinkled with the blood. Ask what lies beyond the Holy Place, and you will be told that it is the Most Holy Place where God dwells. If you ask how He dwells there and how He is approached, you will be told “*not without blood.*” The golden throne, where His glory shines, is itself sprinkled with the blood once every year when the high priest alone enters to bring in the blood and to worship God. The highest act in that worship is the sprinkling of the blood.

If you inquire further, you will be told that, for everything, the blood is always the one necessary thing. At the consecration of the house or of the priests, at the birth of a child, in the deepest penitence on account of sin, in the

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highest festival—always and in everything—the way to fellowship with God is through the blood alone.

This continued for fifteen hundred years. At Sinai, in the desert, at Shiloh, in the temple on Mount Moriah, it continued—until our Lord came to make an end of all shadows by bringing in the substance and by establishing a fellowship with the Holy One, in spirit and truth.

What Our Lord Jesus Himself Taught about the Blood

With the coming of Christ, old things passed away and all things became new (2 Corinthians 5:17). He came from the Father in heaven, and He told us the way to the Father in divine words.

It is sometimes said that the words “*not without blood*” belong to the Old Testament. But what did our Lord Jesus Christ say? Notice, first, that when John the Baptist announced His coming, he spoke of Him as filling a dual office: as “*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29), and then as “*He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost*” (verse 33). The outpouring of the blood of the Lamb of God had to take place before the outpouring of the Spirit could be bestowed. Only when all that the Old Testament taught about the blood had been fulfilled could the dispensation of the Spirit begin.

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself plainly declared that His death on the cross was the purpose for which He came into the world, that it was the necessary condition for the redemption and life that He came to bring. He clearly stated that, in connection with His death, the shedding of His blood was necessary.

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In the synagogue at Capernaum, He spoke of Himself as the “*bread of life*” (John 6:35, 48); of His flesh, He said that He would “*give [it] for the life of the world*” (verse 51). Four times over He said most emphatically, “*Except ye... drink [my] blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso...drinketh my blood, hath eternal life....my blood is drink indeed. He that...drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him*” (verses 53–56). Our Lord thus declared the fundamental fact that He Himself, as the Son of the Father, who came to restore to us our lost life, could do this in no other way than by dying for us, by shedding His blood for us, and then by making us partakers of its power.

Our Lord confirmed the teaching of the Old Testament offerings—that man can live only through the death of another and thus obtain a life that, through resurrection, has become eternal.

But Christ Himself cannot make us partakers of the eternal life that He has procured for us except by the shedding of His blood and by causing us to drink it. Marvelous fact! “*Not without blood*” can eternal life be ours.

Equally striking is our Lord’s declaration of the same truth on the last night of His earthly life. Before He completed the great work of His life by giving it as “*a ransom for many*” (Matthew 20:28), He instituted the Holy Supper, saying, “*Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*” (Matthew 26:27–28). “*Without shedding of blood is no remission [of sins]*” (Hebrews 9:22). Without remission of sins, there is no life. But by the shedding of His blood, He has obtained a new life for us. By what He calls “the drinking of His blood,” He shares His life with us. The blood shed

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in the atonement—which frees us from the guilt of sin and from death, the punishment of sin—the blood, which we drink by faith, bestows His life on us.

The Teaching of the Apostles under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit

After His resurrection and ascension, our Lord was no longer known by the apostles “*after the flesh*” (2 Corinthians 5:16). All that was symbolic had passed away, and the deep spiritual truths expressed symbolically were unveiled.

But there is no veiling of the blood. It still occupies a prominent place.

Turn first to the epistle to the Hebrews, which was written purposely to show that the temple service had become unprofitable and was intended by God to pass away, now that Christ had come.

Here, if anywhere, it might be expected that the Holy Spirit would emphasize the true spirituality of God’s purpose, yet it is just here that the blood of Jesus is spoken of in a manner that imparts a new value to the phrase.

Concerning our Lord, we read that “*by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place*” (Hebrews 9:12). “*The blood of Christ...[will] purge your conscience*” (verse 14). “*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*” (Hebrews 10:19). “*Ye are come...to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling*” (Hebrews 12:22, 24). “*Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate*” (Hebrews 13:12). “*God...brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of*

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the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant” (verse 20).

By such words, the Holy Spirit teaches us that the blood is really the central power of our entire redemption. “*Not without blood*” is as valid in the New Testament as in the Old.

The blood still occupies a prominent place.

Nothing but the blood of Jesus, shed in His death for sin, can cover sin on God’s side or remove it on ours.

We find the same teaching in the writings of the apostles. Paul wrote of “*being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...through faith in his blood*” (Romans 3:24–25), and of “*being now justified by his blood*” (Romans 5:9).

To the Corinthians, he declared that the “*cup of blessing which we bless, is...the communion of the blood of Christ*” (1 Corinthians 10:16).

In the epistle to the Galatians, he used the word *cross* to convey the same meaning (see, for example, Galatians 6:14), while in Colossians he united the two words and spoke of “*the blood of his cross*” (Colossians 1:20).

He reminded the Ephesians that “*we have redemption through his blood*” (Ephesians 1:7) and that we “*are made nigh by the blood of Christ*” (Ephesians 2:13).

Peter reminded his readers that they were “*elect...unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*” (1 Peter 1:2), that they were redeemed by “*the precious blood of Christ*” (verse 19).

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See how John assured his *“little children”* (1 John 2:1) that *“the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin”* (1 John 1:7). The Son is He *“that came...not by water only, but by water and blood”* (1 John 5:6).

All of these writers agreed together in mentioning the blood and in glorying in it as the power by which eternal redemption through Christ is fully accomplished and is then applied by the Holy Spirit.

But perhaps this is merely earthly language. What does heaven have to say? Let us examine the book of Revelation.

What the Book of Revelation Says concerning the Blood

It is of the greatest importance to notice that, in the revelation that God has given in this book of the glory of His throne and the blessedness of those who surround it, the blood still retains its remarkably prominent place.

On the throne John saw *“a Lamb as it had been slain”* (Revelation 5:6). As the elders fell down before the Lamb, they sang a new song, saying, *“Thou art worthy...for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood”* (verse 9).

Later on, when he saw the great company that no man could number, he was told in reply to his question as to who they were, *“[They have] washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb”* (Revelation 7:14).

Then again, when he heard the song of victory over the defeat of Satan, its words were, *“They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb”* (Revelation 12:11).

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In the glory of heaven, as seen by John, there was no phrase by which the great purposes of God, the wondrous love of the Son of God, the power of His redemption, and the joy and thanksgiving of the redeemed could be gathered up and expressed besides this: “*The blood of the Lamb*” (Revelation 12:11).

Lessons to Learn from the Scriptures

From the beginning to the end of Scripture, from the closing of the gates of Eden to the opening of the gates of the heavenly Zion, there runs through Scripture a golden thread. It is the blood that unites the beginning and the end, that gloriously restores what sin had destroyed.

It is not difficult to see what lessons the Lord wishes us to learn from the fact that the blood occupies such a prominent place in Scripture.

The Only Means of Dealing with Sin

God has no other way of dealing with sin, or the sinner, except through the blood. For victory over sin and the deliverance of the sinner, God has no other means or thought than “*the blood of Christ*” (1 Corinthians 10:16). Yes, it is indeed something that surpasses all understanding.

All the wonders of grace are focused here: the incarnation, by which He took upon Himself our flesh and blood; the love, which did not spare itself but surrendered itself to death; the righteousness, which could not forgive sin until the penalty was borne; the substitution, by which He, the Righteous One, atoned for us, the unrighteous; the atonement for sin; and the justification of the sinner. In this way, renewed fellowship with God was made possible, together

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with the cleansing and sanctification to equip us for the enjoyment of that fellowship; the true oneness in life with the Lord Jesus, as He gives us His blood to drink; the eternal joy of the hymn of praise, "*Thou...hast redeemed us to God*" (Revelation 5:9). All these are but rays of the wondrous light that are reflected upon us from "*the precious blood of Christ*" (1 Peter 1:19).

The Right View of the Blood

The blood must have the same place in our hearts that it has with God. From the beginning of God's dealings with man, yes, from before the foundation of the world, the heart of God has rejoiced in that blood. Our hearts will never rest, nor find salvation, until we, too, learn to walk and glory in the power of that blood.

It is not only the penitent sinner, longing for pardon, who must thus value it. No! The redeemed will see that just as God in His temple sits upon a throne of grace, where the blood is ever in evidence, so there is nothing that draws our hearts nearer to God, filling them with God's love, joy, and glory, as living in a constant, spiritual view of that blood.

The Blessing and Power of the Blood

Let us take time and trouble to learn the full blessing and power of that blood. The blood of Jesus is the greatest mystery of eternity, the deepest mystery of divine wisdom. Let us not imagine that we can easily grasp its meaning. God thought four thousand years were necessary to prepare men for it, and we also must take time if we are to gain a knowledge of the power of the blood.

Even taking time is of no avail unless there is also the effort of making a sacrifice. Sacrificial blood always meant

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the offering of a life. The Israelite could not obtain blood for the pardon of his sin unless the life of something that belonged to him was offered in sacrifice. The Lord Jesus did not offer up His own life and shed His blood in order to spare us from the sacrifice of our lives. No, indeed! Rather, He did so to make the sacrifice of our lives possible and desirable.

The hidden value of His blood is the spirit of self-sacrifice.

The hidden value of His blood is the spirit of self-sacrifice, and where the blood really touches the heart, it works out in that heart a similar spirit of self-sacrifice. We learn to give up ourselves and our lives, in order to press into the full power of that new life that the blood has provided.

We give our time so that we may become acquainted with these things by God's Word. We separate ourselves from sin, worldly mindedness, and self-will so that the power of the blood may not be hindered, for it is just these things that the blood seeks to remove.

We surrender ourselves wholly to God in prayer and faith so as not to think our own thoughts, and not to hold our own lives as a prize, but rather to possess nothing except what He bestows. Then He reveals to us the glorious and blessed life that has been prepared for us by the blood.

The Revelation of the Power of the Blood

We can rely on the Lord Jesus to reveal to us the power of His blood. It is by this confident trust in Him that the blessing obtained by the blood becomes ours. We must

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never, in thought, separate the blood from the High Priest who shed it and who ever lives to apply it.

He who once gave His blood for us will surely, every moment, impart its effectiveness. Trust Him to do this. Trust Him to open your eyes and to give you a deeper spiritual insight. Trust Him to teach you to think about the blood as God thinks about it. Trust Him to impart to you, and to make effective in you, all that He enables you to see.

Above all, trust Him in the power of His eternal high priesthood to work out in you, unceasingly, the full merits of His blood so that your whole life may be an uninterrupted abiding in the sanctuary of God's presence.

Believer, you who have come to the knowledge of the precious blood, listen to the invitation of your Lord. Come nearer. Let Him teach you; let Him bless you. Let Him cause His blood to become spirit, life, power, and truth to you.

Begin now, at once, to open your soul in faith, to receive the full, mighty, heavenly effects of the precious blood, in a more glorious manner than you have ever experienced. He Himself will work these things out in your life.