

What the Scriptures Teach About the Blood

by Andrew Murray

Andrew Murray's sermon emphasizes the centrality of the blood of Jesus in scripture as essential for redemption and relationship with God.

Scripture: Matthew 26:28, John 6:53, Romans 3:25, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 9:7-10, 1 Peter 1:19, Revelation 5:9, Revelation 12:11

Topics: "Redemption", "The Power of the Blood"

Description

Andrew Murray emphasizes the centrality of the blood of Jesus in Scripture, illustrating its significance from the Old Testament through the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles, culminating in the Book of Revelation. He highlights that the blood is essential for redemption, forgiveness, and fellowship with God, asserting that there is no access to God without it. Murray explains that the blood signifies life and sacrifice, and it is through the blood that believers are cleansed and made righteous. He encourages believers to recognize the power of the blood in their lives and to trust in Jesus to reveal its full significance. Ultimately, the blood of Christ is portrayed as the foundation of God's relationship with humanity, from creation to redemption.

Transcript

"Not Without Blood"-Heb. ix. 7 and 18.

GOD has spoken to us in the Scriptures in divers portions and in divers manners; but the VOICE is ever the same, it is always the WORD of the same GOD.

Hence the importance of treating the Bible as a whole, and receiving the witness it gives in its various portions, concerning certain definite truths. It is thus we learn to recognise the place these truths actually occupy in Revelation, or rather in the HEART OF GOD. Thus, too, we begin to discover what the foundation truths of the Bible are, which above others demand attention. Standing as they do, so prominently, in each new departure in God's revelation; remaining unchanged when the Dispensation changes, they carry a divine intimation of their importance.

It is my object, in the chapters which follow this introductory one, to show what the Scriptures teach us concerning THE GLORIOUS POWER OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS, and the wonderful blessings procured for us by it; and 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 which 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 then is what the Scriptures teach us about THE BLOOD.

FIRST, IN THE OLD TESTAMENT;

SECONDLY, IN THE TEACHING OF OUR LORD JESUS HIMSELF;

THIRDLY, IN WHAT THE APOSTLES TEACH; and

LASTLY, WHAT ST. JOHN TELLS US OF IT IN REVELATION.

1. LET US LEARN WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT TEACHES. Its record about THE BLOOD begins at the gates of Eden.

Into the unrevealed mysteries of Eden I do not enter.

But in connection with the sacrifice of Abel all is plain. He brought of "the firstlings of his flock" 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 (xi. 4) that it was "by faith" Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice, and his name stands first in the record of those whom the Bible calls "believers." He had this witness borne to him "that he pleased God." His faith, and God's good pleasure in him, are closely connected with the sacrificial blood.

In the 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 favour, apart from THE BLOOD.

Scripture gives but short notice of the following sixteen centuries. Then came THE FLOOD, which was God's judgement 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 must be baptised used also 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 with Abel, so 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 Abram, 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.

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. Yet he must learn that Isaac, the son of promise, who belonged wholly to God, can be truly surrendered to God only by death.

Isaac must die. For Abraham, as well as for Isaac, only by death could freedom from the self-life be obtained.

Abraham must offer Isaac on the altar.

That was not an arbitrary command of God. It was the revelation of a divine truth, that it is only through heath, that a life truly consecrated to God is possible. 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 see, his life was spared, and a ram was offered in his place. Through the blood that then flowed on Mount Moorish his life was spared. He and the people which sprang from him, live before God "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD." By that blood, however, he was in a figure raised again from the ahead. The great lesson of substitution is here clearly taught.

Four hundred years pass, and Isaac has become, in Egypt, the people of Israel. Through her deliverance from Egyptian bondage Israel was to be recognised as God's first-born among the nations. Here, also, it is "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 Moorish for one person, who was the Father of the nation, must now be experienced by that nation. By the sprinkling of the door frames of the Israelites with the BLOOD of the Paschal lamb; by the institution of the Passover as an enduring ordinance with the words-"When I see the BLOOD I will pass over you," 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 appropriated 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 must now be established, but as it is expressly stated in Hebrews ix. 7, "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD." The Sacrificial BLOOD must be sprinkled, first on the altar, and then on the book of the Covenant, representing God's side of that Covenant; then on the people, with the declaration, "This is THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT" (Exodus xxiv).

It was 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 marked 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 door posts of the houses ; but at Sinai, it was sprinkled on the persons themselves. The contact was closer, the application more powerful.

Immediately after the establishment of the covenant the command was givers, "Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them " (Exod. xxv. 8). They were to enjoy the full blessedness of having they God of the Covenant abiding among them. Through His grace they may find Him, and serve Him in His house.

He Himself gave, with the minutest care, directions for the arrangement and service of that house. But notice that THE BLOOD is the centre 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 till 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 always, and for everything, THE BLOOD is the one thing needful. 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 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 till our Lord came to make an end of all shadows by bringing in the substance, and try establishing a fellow ship with the Holy One, in spirit and truth.

II. WHAT OUR LORD JESUS HIMSELF TEACHES ABOUT THE BLOOD.

With His coming old things passed away, and all things became new.

He came from the Father in Heaven, and can tell us in divine words the way to the Father.

It is sometimes said that the words "NOT WITHOUT BLOOD" belong to the Old Testament. But what does 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 that taketh away the sin of the world" ; and then as "the One who would baptize with the Holy Spirit." The outpouring of the BLOOD of the Lamb of God must take place, before the outpouring of the Spirit could be bestowed. Only when all that the Old Testament taught about THE BLOOD has been fulfilled, can 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 of the redemption and life which He came to bring. He clearly states that in connection with His death the shedding of His BLOOD was necessary.

In the Synagogue at Capernaum He spoke of Himself as "THE Bread of Life"; of His flesh, "that He would give it for the life of the world." Four times over He said most emphatically, "Except ye . . . drink His BLOOD ye have no life in you." "He that drinketh my BLOOD hath everlasting life." "My BLOOD is drink indeed." "He that drinketh my BLOOD dwelleth in me and I in him" (John vi.). 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, can do this in no other way than by dying for us; by shedding His blood for us; and then 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 that eternal life which He has procured for us, save by the shedding of His blood, and causing us to drink it. Marvellous 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," He instituted the Holy Supper, saying-"This cup is the New Testament in MY BLOOD that is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins. Drink ye all of it." (Matt. xxvi. 28). "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." 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 in the Atonement, which frees us from the SIN, the guilt of sin; and from death, the punishment of sin; the blood, which by faith we drink, bestows on us His life. The BLOOD He shed was, in the first place FOR us, and is then given TO us.

III. THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLES UNDER THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

After His Resurrection and Ascension, our Lord is not any longer known by the Apostles "after the flesh." Now, all that was symbolical has passed away, and the deep spiritual truths expressed by symbol, are 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 emphasise 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.

We read concerning our Lord that "by His own blood he entered into the holy place" (Heb. ix. 12).

"The Blood of Christ-shall purge your conscience" (ver. 14).

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. x. 19).

"Ye are come-to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling" (xii. 24).

"Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood suffered without the gate" (xiii. 12, 23).

"God-brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus-through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (xiii. 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.

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 writes of "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus . . . through faith in his blood" (Rom. iii. 24, 25), Of "being now justified by his blood" (v. 9).

To the Corinthians he declares that the "cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the Blood of Christ" (I Cor. x. 16).

In the Epistle to the Galatians he uses the word "CROSS" to convey the same meaning, while in Colossians he united the two words and speaks of "The Blood of his Cross" (Gal. vi. 14 ; Col. i. 20).

He reminds the Ephesians that "We have redemption through his blood" and that we "are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. i. 7 and ii. 13).

Peter reminds his readers that they were "Elect . . . unto obedience and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus" (I Pet. i. 2), that they were redeemed by "the precious blood of Christ" (ver. 19).

See how John assures his "little children" that "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John i. 7). The Son is He "who came not by water only but by water and blood" (v. 6).

All of them agree 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.

IV. But perhaps this is merely earthly language. What has Heaven to say? WHAT DO we LEARN FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION CONCERNING THE FUTURE GLORY AND THE BLOOD?

It is of the greatest importance to notice, that in the revelation which 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" (Rev. v. 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" (vers. 8 and 9).

Later on when he saw the great company which 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."

Then again, when he heard the song of victory over the defeat of Satan, its strain was, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb" (xii. 11).

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; can be gathered up and expressed save this-"THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB." 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.

i. God has no other way of dealing with sin, or the sinner,
save 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." 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, that spared not itself but surrendered itself to death; the righteousness, which could not forgive sin till 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, thus made possible; renewed fellowship with God; together with the cleansing, and sanctification, to fit 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"; all these are but rays of the wonderous light which are reflected upon us from "THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS."

ii. The blood must have the same place in our hearts which 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 heart will never rest, nor find salvation, till 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 experience 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, and joy, and glory, as living in constant, spiritual view of that blood.

iii. 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 the divine wisdom. Let us not imagine that we can easily grasp its meaning. God thought 4,000 years 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 definite taking of sacrificial trouble. Sacrificial blood always meant 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 to .spare us from the sacrifice of our lives. No, indeed 1 but to make the sacrifice of our lives possible and desirable.

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 like spirit of self-sacrifice. We learn to give up ourselves and our lives, so as to press into the full power of that new life, which the blood. has provided.

We give our time in order that we may become acquainted with these things by God's Word. We separate ourselves from sin and worldly-mindedness, and self-will, 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 as possessing nothing save what He bestows. Then He reveals to us the glorious and blessed life which has been prepared for us by the blood.

iv. We can rely upon 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 never, in thought, separate the blood from the High Priest who shed it, and ever lives to apply it.

He who once gave His blood for us, will, oh I so surely, every moment, impart its efficacy. 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.

Trust Him above all, 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, hearken to the invitation of your Lord. Come nearer. Let Him teach you; let Him bless you. Let Him cause His blood to become to you spirit, and life, and power, and truth.

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.

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