

The Blood of the Lamb Exodus 12

by John Nelson Darby

The blood of the Lamb is a token of God's love and righteousness, and faith in it brings salvation and the new life.

Scripture: Exodus 12:12

Topics: "Deliverance", "The Blood of Christ"

Description

John Nelson Darby emphasizes the significance of the Passover in Exodus 12, illustrating how the blood of the lamb served as a protective sign for the Israelites during God's judgment on Egypt. He draws parallels between Pharaoh's oppression and Satan's hold over humanity, highlighting that just as the Israelites were delivered from bondage, believers are freed from sin through Christ's sacrifice. The sermon underscores the necessity of faith in the blood of the Lamb, which signifies God's righteousness and love, and the importance of living as pilgrims in a world that is not our home. Darby also stresses that true deliverance requires both faith and repentance, as believers partake in the body of Christ while remaining vigilant against the dangers of the world.

Transcript

On the paschal night, when Jehovah struck the firstborn of the Egyptians, and passed over those of Israel, a groundwork was laid for the deliverance of Israel from their bondage to Pharaoh, a lively image of Christ, the Passover sacrificed for us; for we were slaves of Satan, as Pharaoh, king of Egypt, was prince of this world, and the people of God his bondsmen. But God was taking notice of the state of His people, visiting them, and about to deliver them.

In one sense Satan has rights over us as sinners, and the justice of God is against us, because He had said, "In the day that thou eatest [of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil] thou shalt surely die." Thus Satan can accuse man, though he had said on the contrary, "Ye shall not surely die"; your case is not so utterly desperate as these Christians say. Satan is always the same liar as he was. God cannot say to the sinner as such, Thou shalt not die; but to deliver He must take notice of sin, and lay a righteous foundation, of which faith can avail itself by grace.

Pharaoh had power enough to keep the Israelites, and the more as they were accustomed to slavery, and latterly of the bitterest kind. Pharaoh had no real rights, any more than Satan. Meanwhile he deceives. Such is the state of the world. This is so true, that the higher one's place is in the world, the more one is really enslaved. A poor man may do many things in the street without any one taking notice of it: the rich

man dares not to wound its conventionalities and usages. Our will contributes also to our slavery. If one were to tell us that we are directed, led, retained by Satan, we should not agree to it. In fact he employs the things of the world to drag us into sin. Judas was drawn into his sin because he loved money. Satan entered into his heart to harden his conscience, and to strengthen him in sin, by taking away from him all hope of the mercy of God. Thus there is first the lust, or desire; next the enemy furnishes the occasion or means of satisfying it; then he enters into us. Satan tries to retort the sin on others, and teaches us to do the same. So Adam said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat," making of his heart an excuse for what his hand had done.

9 In Egypt Israel became the object of controversy between God and Pharaoh, who represents Satan. The enemy says God has no right to claim them, for they are sinners. It is true that they are sinners; and it is necessary that man should completely bow to the justice of God which condemns him. If one is convinced of being lost, it is impossible that one should not seek salvation, perhaps blindly; still one seeks it every time that conscience is awakened. Without this, people content themselves with saying that God is good, that is, that He must take no account of sin. But ought God to make heaven like what the world is? And is not this just what would be if sin were to enter heaven? Could one give a measure to indicate up to what, and how much, people might sin? But our consciences also accuse and tell us that we cannot get rid of sin; and sin begets death.

God has already been dishonoured by sin, and it is in this world from day to day that God is yet dishonoured. It is here, on the earth, that the angels learn what it is that God is dishonoured. It is here that we see Satan degrade all the creation.

Jehovah says, "I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am Jehovah. And the blood shall be unto 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" (v. 12, 13). This was not the deliverance of Israel, like the passage of the Red Sea, but it was the ground of it; and of the two, the Passover was really the more solemn morally, though the Red Sea displayed God's saving power more gloriously on behalf of His people and against their foes. But on the paschal night it was a question how God could pass over the guilty, even if His people; and the blood of the lamb sprinkled on Israel's doorposts declared that God, though expressly judging, could not touch those screened thereby. His truth and justice were stayed and satisfied before that blood. The destroyer was kept from entering. Not an Israelite perished within the blood-sprinkled lintels. It was a question of arresting God's judgment here, of destroying Satan's power in the type of the Red Sea; but the blood of Christ laid the foundation for the victory displayed in His resurrection.

10 Once the Red Sea is crossed, Israel are pursued no more. They are redeemed - they can sing. It was not so when they supped on the lamb in Egypt; yet were they screened from God's judgment of their evil. Their deliverance from Pharaoh followed.

But must not I see the blood? says many a distressed soul. It is well for me to estimate its value aright, and growingly; but no person could have solid peace on this ground. Nor was it what God told His people. It was indeed a token to them; but their assurance was built on this, that "when I [Jehovah] see the blood, I will pass over you." The Israelite's business was not to look at it for his safety, but to keep within the shelter of the sprinkled blood to which God had thus pledged Himself. It is He who sees the blood and passes over. God alone estimates perfectly the blood of the Lamb; and faith means not our estimate of it,

but our confidence in Him. The blood is the token which recalls to us the love of God, as well as His righteousness, but what is shed for sin looks to God and is for God to look on.

Christ thus presents God to us under three aspects: His righteousness that strikes the substitute for us; His love that provides the Lamb for us; and His glory that has raised Him up when all was clear for us. There is thus entire deliverance. We are in Christ before God. The greatest expression of divine hatred of sin is found in His cross. The stroke of judgment fell; the thunder and lightning are exhausted; the sky is pure and calm for those who believe.

But he who is under the shelter of the Lamb's blood must eat of the Lamb's body. It is no question of appetite for it. Doubtless he who has appetite for it enjoys more; and it is so much the worse for him who cares not for it. But it is no condition to do so. What accompanies the act of eating the lamb is the bitter herbs and the unleavened bread. On the one hand repentance attends faith and characterises the new life, as it takes cognisance of all one has done and is; and in Christ one tastes, on the other hand, of what is absolutely without sin. One delights in the Holy One; one judges self, and it is a bitter thing.

There is need also of having the loins girt, shoes on the feet, and staff in hand. The attitude of strangers and pilgrims is the only one for those who are under the blood of the Lamb. Whilst we are here in the world, we cannot let out all that is within. There is danger within and without. We must be ever on the alert and watch. We have no longer a home in the Egypt world. We are bound for the heavenly land. But we are no more slaves. It is the Lord's Passover we are keeping, and we are His for ever, though not yet in the rest that remains but only on the way, while in another sense we are seated with Him in heavenly places.

11 The fact that the Passover was to be eaten at night, and burnt, or nothing left to the morning, seems to intimate that it was entirely apart from the whole course and scene in which nature and sense are conversant, a matter between God and the soul, abstractedly in the undistracted claim and holiness of the divine nature. No circumstances entered into it, no question of compassionate apprehension of sin and misery. It was sin, and the holy judgment of God, where nothing else was.

So, as a sign of this deep and infinite truth, all was darkness for three hours with Christ: nature hidden; all between God and Him.

Then all was to be burnt. There was no mixing the lamb with anything common. Israel was sanctified by it like the priests, so that he ate it; but it could not be mixed with other food.

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