

***Covered to the Max***

January 31, 2013

*“Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with **His garments stained crimson**? Who is this, robed in splendor, striding forward in the greatness of His strength? ‘It is I (the Lord the Avenger), speaking in righteousness, mighty to save’” **Isaiah 63:1.***

This is an amazingly dramatic passage in Scripture and the only other one in the Old Testament that resembles it is Joshua’s encounter with the angelic captain of the Lord’s army just before the fall of Jericho in Joshua 5:13-6:5. This majestic, solitary figure appears to the watchman, and **His garment is spattered crimson.** This is the Lord (Anointed One—Jesus), dressed in crimson, and appearing to His people, not as their judge, but as their **Savior.**

But long before Jericho, back in the second book of Scripture, the Israelites are slaves in Egypt—a place where God led them years earlier to escape famine, sending Joseph ahead as deliverer. Now they are being oppressed and God is going to bring them out using Moses. Egypt is ‘nine-plagues-down’ and Pharaoh will still not let God’s people go. God tells Moses, who tells the people, to get ready to **Exit:** In Exodus 12:5-8, we read—*“The animals you choose must be **year-old males without defect**, and you may take them from the **sheep or the goats.** **6Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight.** **7Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. **8That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast.”*****

The night before—**Exodus 12:11** *“This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; **it is the LORD’S** (Covenant Father) **Passover.***

*<sup>12</sup>“**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.** <sup>13</sup>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.”***

When I see the blood, I will pass over you—the LORD’s **Passover!** Remember that blood is red, crimson, scarlet—it stains, but God will cause the blood of His accepted sacrifice to de-stain the **scarlet and crimson stains of SIN**, and make them white—as wool. Is that not amazing as well? Isaiah 1:18 *“‘Come now, let us reason together,’ says the LORD (Covenant Father), ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.’”*

The Israelites were to remain under cover of the houses with the blood-stained doorframes. Charles Spurgeon speaking of God said, “Spread Thy wings over us, and we, like little chickens, will cower down beneath Thee, and feel ourselves safe!” Remember that the Old Testament is the ‘story’ Hi(s)story of a nation that God raised up for Himself, and through that nation He would bring Messiah, and Savior to the whole world, in the New.

When we’re reading a book, don’t we love to have a look at the final pages to see how it all ends? Let’s do it now—look at the last mention of ‘blood’ in Revelation 19:13-16 (speaking of Jesus, the Rider on the White Horse). *“He is **dressed in a robe dipped in blood**, and his name is the Word of God. **14The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen; white and clean.** **15**Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. ‘He will rule them with an iron scepter.’ He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. **16**On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**”*

And for those in the armies of Jesus Christ—what will make us conquerors?

Revelation 12:11           *“They overcame him **by the blood of the Lamb**”*  
 Revelation 7:14           *“And made them white **in the blood of the Lamb.**”*  
 Revelation 5:9           *“with **your blood** you purchased men for God”*  
 Revelation 1:5           *“and has freed us from our sins by **His blood,**”*

And this blood covering happened in the New Testament—New Covenant—just as the prophets in the Old had foretold. Jesus was born to die! And die He did, shedding His precious blood to provide covering for the sins of the whole world—salvation to sinners’ who accept. 1 Peter 1:10 *“Concerning this salvation, **the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care,** **11**trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.”* Scripture adds that “even angels long to look into these things.”

The piercing of Jesus side was only recorded by ‘one’ of the twelve disciples who was actually attendant at the crucifixion. John in 19:33-37 testifies: *“But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. **34**Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, **bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.**”* And then John added, in case we question:

***35**“The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true.*

*He knows that he tells the truth, and  
 he testifies so that you also may believe.*

*<sup>36</sup>These things happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled: 'Not one of his bones will be broken,' <sup>37</sup>and, as another Scripture says, 'They will look on the one they have pierced.'"*

The medical reason for the flow of blood and water out His side is called hypovolemic shock. Jesus had been flogged and battered; received the 39 stripes from the cat-of-nine-tails which rarely left anyone alive, and to that add the crown of thorns, the large spikes in His hands and feet and the fact that He'd been bleeding for hours. This state causes fluid to gather in the sack around the heart (pericardial effusion) and around the lungs (pleural effusion), and its victim would likely suffer the following:

- 1) heart race to pump blood that was not there;
- 2) collapse or faint due to low blood pressure;
- 3) kidneys shut down to preserve body fluids, and
- 4) extreme thirst as the body fought to replenish fluids.

John speaks spiritually about the water and the blood in his first letter. 1 John 5:6-8 *"This is the one who came by **water and blood**—Jesus Christ. **He did not come by water only, but by water and blood.** And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. <sup>7</sup>For there are three that testify: *the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.*"* Late manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate say <sup>7</sup>testify in heaven: the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. <sup>8</sup>And there are three that testify on earth.

It is the Spirit of God who testifies; He alone, as ultimate truth and interpreter of sacred writ, can bear witness in our hearts as to the Son of God. We cannot believe in Jesus Christ on our own. The Spirit must be involved—giving us understanding to believe. No human being is capable of understanding the 'redemption' Christ rendered to sinners. Just like the birth of Jesus (announced by angels), and His resurrection (announced by an angel), the miracle of redemption can only be announced. But this time it is not made known by angels but by the Spirit of God!

*The Expositor's Bible Commentary* gives valuable input on this most precious passage: "The Spirit bore witness historically in Jesus' baptism by coming down from heaven as a dove and remaining on him (John 1:32). At Jesus' death on the cross, the 'blood and water' that flowed from His side bore witness and led to the following statement: *'The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true.'* John can say this unequivocally because, though he saw with his own eyes, the Spirit revealed to him what he saw. John wants us, today, to know that the Spirit still witnesses truth to us from the written Word of God.

So the three witnesses today are the 1) Spirit; and also the 2) water and the 3) blood as we witness new believer's baptism, and partake of the Lord's supper, which we do in remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember that Jesus was baptized as an example to us. And in preparation for the cross, Jesus took the Lord's supper with His disciples. Listen in: **Matthew 26:28** "*This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*" **Mark 14:24** "*'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,' he said to them.*" **Luke 22:20** "*In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.'*"

•Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche—German philosopher, poet, composer, cultural critic and atheist (proclaiming God dead), said mockingly: "If you want me to believe in your Redeemer, you're going to have to look a little more redeemed." But one so committed to atheism is probably not going to respond to what he claims he will respond to—implying that a redeemed one appearing more redeemed would persuade him to believe in the Redeemer. But his statement should cause us to 'step up' our confidence in our Redeemer, reflect Him consistently and be the witness to the dying lost of this world around us.

Similar to Nietzsche's statement is that of King Agrippa, equally mockingly, made to the apostle Paul in Acts 26:28 "...Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" And before Agrippa there was Felix who had come with his Jewish wife, Drusilla, to listen to Paul speak about his faith in Christ Jesus. Acts 24:25 "*As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, 'That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you.'*" Famous last words—as two years went by and Felix didn't send for Paul, and then he was succeeded by Porcius Festus and we never hear another word from him.

"Of all things that are to be known, this is most evident, that God is to be feared, to be revered, served, and worshipped; this is the beginning of knowledge—and those know nothing who do not know this," said Matthew Henry. We know the atheist has no regard to God much less fear of him, and Scripture has rightly said, "The fool has said in his heart there is no God." •**Voltaire**, said to be the most influential atheist of all time, said these words upon his death: "I am abandoned by God and man...I shall go to hell."

"We believe that God will never suffer this world, which has once seen Christ's blood shed upon it, to be always the devil's stronghold" said Charles Spurgeon. "Jesus must clothe his people in His own garments, or He cannot admit them into His palace of glory; and **He must wash them in His own blood**, or else they will be too defiled for the embrace of his fellowship."

**Where is the blood of Jesus Christ today?** Did it fall to the ground? Is it on Jesus (Avenger in Isaiah/Rider in Revelation) or the Mercy Seat in heaven? The Bible does not give us a definite answer. Jesus prayed just prior to His arrest: “*And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground*” in Luke 22:44. Though Scripture paints a picture, we do not know if His sweat reached the ground or just looked like it did. So what may we conclude for the blood? As our High Priest, Christ entered into the reality that was prefigured by the Tabernacle and the Temple in the Old Testament, where the blood sacrifice was put on the altar (for Christ the cross) and the Mercy Seat. We know that whether literally or figuratively every believer is covered with Christ’s blood, so that when God sees us, He sees the blood of His Son!

Hebrews 9:11-15 explains: “*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. <sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>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 (what the old covenant required). <sup>14</sup>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!*

<sup>15</sup>“*For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*”

The blood of Christ is the basis of the New Covenant; and Charles Swindoll says, “The blood of Christ is the expression of the sacrificial death and full atoning work of Jesus on our behalf.” **For God so loved that He gave His very own Son...!** Some have charged Christianity with being a ‘bloody’ faith—and they are correct! **Hebrews 9:22b** “...and without the *shedding of blood* there is no forgiveness.” If we have received Christ’s atonement for our sins, God has us covered—in His love—by His own Son’s blood! Revelation 1:6-7 “**To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood**, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. <sup>7</sup>**Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him**; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.”

“I hear the words of love, I gaze upon the blood,  
 I see the mighty sacrifice, and I have peace with God.  
 ‘Tis everlasting peace sure as Jehovah’s name,  
 ‘Tis stable as His steadfast throne, for evermore the same;  
 The clouds may go and come, and storms may sweep the sky,  
 This blood-sealed friendship changes not, the cross is ever nigh.”

Charles Spurgeon