

Safety Through The Blood; Or, Israel in Egypt

Pasture for the Flock of God · Exodus 12

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Safety Through The Blood; Or, Israel in Egypt For 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 the Lord. And the blood shall be to 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 (Ex. 12:12, 13).

God's sentence of judgment had gone forth. Death was declared against the firstborn throughout all the land of Egypt. His testimony by Moses had been again and again rejected; and now God's hand must smite and cut off. His long-suffering had ran its course. He had repeatedly manifested His displeasure, but it had been unheeded. His patience could no longer endure. He said, All the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die . . . and there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt {Ex. 11:5, 6}.

Thus death was threatened throughout all the land. God declared it should be. This was enough. His word must stand. The result we know. And so now the word of God speaks of coming wrath and judgment. God's message of abounding grace in the gospel has been sounding for a long time in men's ears. Many have rejected it. Few believe the record God has given of His Son; and inevitable judgment is pending. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness {Rom. 1:18}.

The solemn verdict has been announced, Now is the judgment of this world {John 12:31};

and the Executioner is coming. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

It is certain, then, that the wrath of God is coming, and that it is only a question of time as to its execution. Then surely will be sudden and everlasting destruction, and they shall not escape. Nor could it be otherwise; for men are not only by nature unclean, but practical transgressors, rebellious, unfit for God's presence. Every trial has only proved their unclean and insubject condition. God tried man first in innocence; then as having a conscience and without law; then under law with many privileges, priesthood, prophets, kings; after this by the personal ministry of His beloved Son; and now by the ministry of divine grace by the Holy Ghost. But all have proved man to be evil and insubject to the will of God. Early in man's course

God's testimony was, that the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man are only evil, and that continually {see Gen. 6:5};

and still the divine declaration is, that the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom. 8:7, 8).

This is God's verdict, and the sentence is final. Whether men agree with it or not, it is God's righteous estimate of fallen man. And if men in their natural state do not and cannot please God, how can they be fit for His holy presence? The ways of men invariably prove the wilful and insubject state of their hearts; for if God commands, he disobeys; if God loves, man hates. If God sends His Son to bless and save, they hate Him without a cause; they reject Him, saying, This is the heir; come, let us kill Him, that the inheritance may be ours {Luke 20:14}.

If God preaches peace and remission of sins, they will not believe. As, therefore, the judgment of God upon the Egyptians could no longer be withheld because of their hatred of God and His people, and rejection of His word, so the coming wrath is inevitable because of man's enmity, and wilfulness, and continual insubjection to God and His truth. But let us not fail to notice that before the judgment actually came upon the firstborn in Egypt, God did, in His great love and pity, proclaim by His servant the way of safety. So He does now by the gospel, blessed be His name! The people of Israel were told to search for and take a lamb without blemish. This was the first thing. It must be without a spot, in order to be a fit type of Him it was intended to represent, who would hundreds of years after this be found here as the holy, pure, and perfect Lamb of God. Then, observe, this spotless, unoffending lamb must be killed, because nothing could meet our need less than the death of the holy Son of God. Most pure and perfect as His life was, yet had He stopped short of death, whatever other sufferings He had endured, no one could have been saved. It was absolutely, imperatively necessary that Jesus should die; for the wages of sin is death; and, blessed be God, Jesus did die -- He died for the ungodly {Rom. 5:6}.

This was His perfection, He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross {Phil. 2:8}.

For this, too, He came down from heaven; for He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death {Heb. 2:9}.

Then, on the cross bearing sins, and forsaken of God because our sins were upon Him, He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. However precious the life of Jesus was -- and most precious it was to God, and is to us -- yet His

death, the shedding of His blood, the laying down of His life, became necessary to meet the holy and righteous claims of a just God against sin to deliver us from its guilt and condemnation, in order, too, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him {2 Cor. 5:21}.

But all this in the antitype God has provided. He has found a Lamb without spot, and according to His own purpose and counsel He has been slain. He died that we might live -- "The Prince of life in death hath lain, To clear me from all charge of sin; And, Lord, from guilt of crimson stain Thy precious blood hath made me clean."

And it is the death of Jesus that the apostle Paul first calls attention to when speaking of the gospel which he preached -I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3).

But true and blessed as it is that Christ has been delivered for our offences, died for our sins, and shed His blood for many, it may now be asked what benefit has it been to us? Many will tell you that they know that Christ died, and shed His blood; but if you press them as to what it has done for them, they will perhaps be unable to say. Why is this? Because they only know these points as historical facts, and have never availed themselves of that precious blood for their own soul's safety. Hence we are further told that the Israelites used the blood. This was their faith. God told them to take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood, and sprinkle the lintel and the two sideposts of their houses with the blood, and then to go inside and rest in perfect peace. This is the vital point in this most beautiful narrative. We should not fail to notice the places where the blood was to be sprinkled -- the lintel and side-posts of the doors. It was to be exalted by them, looked up to as is certainly the case now with all who really value the blood of Christ. We know that mere professors would put it on the threshold, because, with all their boasted profession, they practically trample under foot the Son of God, and count His precious blood unsanctifying. The Israelite had to place it as it were between him and God, and to know its protecting power also, both on the right hand and on the left. And what can be more assuring to the true believer now, than knowing that he looks to the blood of Christ as between him and God, and that God looks upon him as under its precious sin-cleansing and justifying safety? But suppose they had said, "The blood is not enough," or, "It cannot be expected that they would be sheltered only by it," would it not have betrayed rank unbelief? But they believed God. They availed themselves of the blood. They gratefully took God's way of shelter. Their safety was in the blood. They sprinkled the lintel and door-posts of their houses, and were safe -- unquestionably, perfectly safe. However sinful, ignorant, and unworthy, yet being underneath the shelter of the blood they were safe. However pious they might have been, their safety was not in their piety, but in the blood. Kind and benevolent acts and self-sacrificing ways, however commendable in their place, did not in the least help their

security; for it was only through the blood. For God had said, The blood shall be to 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 {Ex. 12:13}.

Thus their safety was wholly in the blood; it was to be to them "for a token." And God declared that when He saw the blood He would save all who were under its blessed shelter. How charming and how simple this is! God did not say, when I see your doings, or feelings, or hear your prayers -- no; but "when I see the blood." No bars or locks, however numerous or powerful, could have excluded the messenger of God's judgment; but the blood on the lintel and side-posts was enough. The people might have been young or old, moral or immoral, learned or ignorant, but, having taken refuge beneath the blood-sprinkled lintel, they were perfectly safe. How anxious every believing Israelite must have been to get all his household inside the house marked with the blood! Cannot you imagine some of them asking why they might not go outside the door? and the loving parents saying, "Because God's terrible

judgment is coming, and He has promised safety to those only who are in houses which have been marked with the blood of the lamb.” Again, you may easily conceive there were some inside the blood-stained door-posts who were the subjects of doubts and fears, and otherwise lacking comfort. Why? Because they forgot that all their safety was in the blood. If they were taken up with self, their own doings, feelings, fitness, and the like, they would surely be unhappy; but if their minds and hearts rested on the two things God had given them -- the blood for a token, and His word for assurance -- they would find it an effectual remedy for all doubts and fears. Trusting, then, wholly in the blood, and relying only on what God said about it, would be enough to keep them in perfect peace. And so now, God declares that Jesus has made peace by the blood of His cross, and He now proclaims peace to every one that believeth. And those who do believe, trusting only in the blood of Christ, and relying on what God says, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish {see John 3:15 16},

they have peace with God. Oh yes, God’s testimony to the allcleansing virtue of the blood of Jesus is the remedy for all doubts and fears. That precious blood withers up all fleshly confidence, and silences every accusing of conscience; for it tells of sins judged and cleansed. The blood speaks to us of God’s perfect love, even when we were dead in sins; it tells us of peace made, of redemption accomplished, of a new and living way into the holiest, of title to everlasting glory. Being sheltered by the blood is the vital point. Many stumble here, and the mistake is fatal. They are lost, for ever lost, because they reject the blood of Jesus as the only ground of peace and safety; for “Nothing can for sin atone, But the blood of Christ alone.”

They say they are sinners, and that Christ is the Savior; but they do not avail themselves of the value of His death. They do not take shelter in His blood as the alone way of safety. This

is unbelief. It is refusing to hear Him that speaks from heaven, God has declared that without the shedding of blood is no remission {see Heb. 9:22};

that it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins {Heb. 10:4};

that in Christ we have redemption through His blood {see Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14};

and that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin {1 John 1:7}.

Therefore it is clear that no sin is too black for that precious blood to wash away. Oh no; it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul {Lev. 17:11};

and happy indeed are those who, taking shelter before God in the blood of Jesus, so rely on His testimony to its perfect efficacy as to be unquestionably assured of perfect safety. Oh the blessedness of God saying to us, Ye are NOW JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD {Rom. 5:9}!

Remember, then, what God said to those who took Him at His word, and relied on the sheltering power of the blood of the lamb. He told them two things. First, that the blood (mark, not their feelings, nor opinions, nor even prayers, but the blood), and the blood only, was to be the token to them of their perfect safety. Come what might, they were to think of the blood, and be in peace, because they were sheltered by it. The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are {Ex. 12:13}.

This is most blessed. It is the perfect cure for every doubt, or question, or suggestion of the enemy. The divine assurance was of perfect safety, because of the blood. Secondly, God said, 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 {Ex. 12:13}.

Thus God acted in virtue of the blood. He did not say, when I see your feelings or doings. Oh no; but “when I see the blood, I will pass over you.” Thus we see that the blood answers every claim of God, as well as meets every need of our souls. They were not only in their houses perfectly safe, but they were also entitled to know it, and to be in perfect peace about it. And what then? Did God leave these people thus safe to do their own will, follow their own opinions, and live as they liked? Or did He prescribe occupation for them as thus secure and separated off for Himself by the blood? Most assuredly He did. He set three things before them, all of which have a solemn voice of instruction to us. First, they were to put away all leaven out of their houses. Now leaven in Scripture will always be found to represent what is evil. They were thus to separate themselves from all evil. They were to hold to nothing that was unsuitable to God.

His word is, Be ye holy: for I am holy {see Lev. 11:45, also 1 Pet. 1:16}.

So now, being purchased by the blood of Jesus, we are God’s; to be for Him always; to show forth the characteristics of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. We are to depart from iniquity, to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God. Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do all for the glory of God. Secondly, they were to eat of the flesh of the lamb roast with fire {see Ex. 12:8}.

This was their happy occupation, and it loudly admonishes us as to the need of communion with Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us {see Gal. 2:20}.

Nothing can go right with us if communion be neglected. We are called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. They might have remembered the sufferings, death, and bloodshedding of the lamb, they might rejoice in their present safety, but they were to be occupied with and feed on the lamb that had been slain. Particular parts of the lamb were specially noticed as provided for them -His head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof (Ex. 12:9).

And we cannot fail to notice in these words of the Holy Ghost, that it is our privilege to have communion with our blessed Lord as to His mind, as we understand “his head” teaches us. Thus should we be not ignorant, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Intelligently entering into His counsels, purposes, and thoughts, as revealed to us in the word and by the Holy Ghost, is one of our highest present privileges. To be able to say, without fear of contradiction, that we have the mind of Christ {1 Cor. 2:16},

and know the things that are freely given to us of God {1 Cor. 2:12},

because the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God {1 Cor. 2:10},

was what an apostle was wont unhesitatingly to pronounce as characterizing the saints of God. Oh the blessedness of thus having communion with the Lord as to His mind and will! By “his legs” we understand His walk. This also, by the Spirit, through the word, it becomes us to enter into; for He hath left us an example that we should follow His steps -- walk as He walked. And I ask, Can any exercise exceed the blessedness of tracing the steps of the blessed Son of God while here? At one time we see Him in a solitary place, or spending a whole night in prayer; at another preaching early in the temple. Sometimes we behold Him disputing with doctors, or in controversy with rationalistic Pharisees, or infidel Sadducees. Again, He is found by the side of the lake of Gennesaret or walking Jerusalem’s streets, exposed to the temptations of Satan or the hatred of wicked men; He is sitting down in a Pharisee’s house to meat, or talking to a crowd of

thousands; or sitting alone on Samaria’s well with an enquiring sinner, or sailing along the sea of Galilee in a boat. In public or in private, every step was obedience to the Father’s will; every word that escaped His holy lips the Father gave Him to say; every act was such a manifestation of the Father that He could say, He that hath seen me hath seen the Father {John 14:9}.

Ah, this was true and perfect; all was fruit in due season; but to enter into it, enjoy it, and gather comfort and strength from the believing contemplation of it, is a privilege indeed! But they were to feed on the “purtenance” also -- the inward part. And so the affections of Christ are laid open to us in the precious word of God, and the Spirit delights to take of the things of Christ and show unto us. We know that He did love indeed; that whom He loved when He was in the world, He loved them unto the end; that He loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; and that it was when we were enemies, ungodly, sinners, that He so loved us as willingly to die for us. We know that His heart is so set upon us that He is always in spirit with us, and will never leave nor forsake us; that the same loving heart, though now beating on the throne of God, is ever and unceasingly occupied in ministering to us and caring for us. And so ardently does He long to have us in the glory with Him, that He has not only promised to come again to receive us unto Himself, that where He is we may be also, but His heart still says, Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory (John 17:24).

It is thus entering into the affections of Christ, and enjoying His love, that our hearts are lifted up in adoring worship, and rise superior to all the distressing circumstances which may cross our path. Let us not fail to see, then, that during this present time, before the coming of our Lord, it is our happy privilege to be occupied with the thoughts, the walk, and the love of that Lamb who is now in the midst of the throne as it had been slain. Thirdly, there is also another point of deep practical importance. They were to eat it in haste; not as those who were settling down in Egypt. On the contrary, they were to be ready to move at the Lord’s command. Their position was to be one of entire subjection to the will of God, ready to go at His bidding. We read: Thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord’s Passover {Ex. 12:11}.

They had to feed on the lamb with girded loins, staff in hand, and shod feet. They were a distinct and practically separated people from the Egyptians -- consciously the Lord’s, and in a position ready

for whatever He pleased. True it is there was no singing in Egypt as there was afterwards on the other side of the Red Sea, nor was there fighting as when beyond Jordan; but there was conscious peace, shelter from judgment, separation from evil, feeding on the lamb, and the expectation of leaving Egypt for ever and dwelling in the land flowing with milk and honey.

And how is it, dear fellow-Christians, with our souls? Are we peacefully enjoying the shelter of the blood, and resting on the precious assurance of God's unerring word? And in the sweet comfort of this, is Christ everything to our hearts -- our strength, our joy, our never-failing resource? Are we truly realizing that because we are the redeemed of the Lord we are ready to go, to stay, to wait, to serve, to be wholly and unreservedly His? Oh the blessedness of this rest of soul! nay, more, the enjoyment of the thoughts, the love, the ways of Christ Himself! And though all our joys here, however pure and spiritual, are mixed with human elements of bitterness -bitter herbs -- yet we must find Him to be the spring of joy, the strength of life, the true never-ending source of all that is pure and blissful. Thanks be unto God for the precious blood of Christ {1 Pet. 1:19}! "The perfect righteousness of God Is witnessed in the Savior's blood; 'Tis in the cross of Christ we trace His righteousness, yet wondrous grace. "God could not pass the sinner by; His sin demands that he must die: But in the cross of Christ we see How God can save, yet righteous be. "The sin is laid on Jesus' head; 'Tis in His blood sin's debt is paid; Stern justice can demand no more, And mercy can dispense her store! "The sinner who believes is free, Can say, 'The Savior died for me'; Can point to the atoning blood, And say, 'This made my peace with God.'"