

Why Is God So Obsessed With Blood?

Like it or not, the Bible is a bloody book. From beginning to end it revels in blood.

Within just the first few chapters of Genesis, a blood sacrifice is implied as God used animal skins to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:21). In the deliverance of the Hebrew people from the grip of Egypt, God instructed them to make a blood sacrifice from a spotless lamb and then coat their doorposts with this blood (Exod. 12:13).

Shortly thereafter God instituted a law requiring a yearly sacrifice of untainted goats and lambs. The blood from this act was of utmost importance. It needed to be sprinkled around the altar by a high priest in order for Israel to maintain relationship with God.

The New Testament reveals that these bloody sacrifices were the prefigurement of Jesus Christ, who came to the earth as a spotless Lamb and endured horrific mutilation on the cross as the final, once-and-for-all sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. In fact, the event was so bloody that the Bible describes that Jesus wasn't even recognizable as a man (Isa. 52:14). And just as blood was used in Israel's deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, the Bible concludes by affirming Christ followers in their sustained victory over the clutches of Satan through the blood of the Lamb—Jesus (Rev. 12:11).

Offended by the Blood

Make no mistake: God is obsessed with blood. And this offends many people, causing the contemporary church to skirt around the topic. Just observe the bulk of today's sermons and you'll notice that the blood is all but drained from the modern gospel. Some have deemed it irrelevant. I've even heard

parents complain when their children are taught about Christ's crucifixion—in a Christian school. "It might cause nightmares," they protest.

With the general lack of teaching about the importance of blood throughout the Scriptures, often I hear God accused of being gory.

You must understand that to God blood isn't gore. Sin is what has made it gory. When you hear of a murder, often you picture a tragic blood slaughter. Where there's a car accident, there's almost always great bloodshed. And so we view blood as the most disgusting representation of everything that's wrong with the world. None of these are God's original design, but the results of sin. As I explore in my book *Silence Satan: Shutting Down the Enemy's Attacks, Threats, Lies, and Accusations* the devil loves to perpetuate this image. Through things such as movies and media he keeps gore front and center so that we're repulsed by blood, and thus, turned off to a God who he portrays as cruel and bloodthirsty.

A Different View of Blood

Indeed, sin is what perverted blood and equated it with death. God, however, created blood to represent life. This is what Scripture affirms:

(For the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev. 17:11, NRSV).

More than anything else in the body, blood is essential to life. It's what carries the fuel and oxygen to the billions of cells in our bodies. Blood supplies the brain and the heart with the necessary nourishment to function. It also carries carbon dioxide and other waste materials to the digestive system, where they are then removed from the body. Without blood we couldn't keep warm or cool, fight infections, or get rid of our own waste products. Additionally our very identity—our DNA—is located in our blood.

We must understand this: *God is so obsessed with blood because He's so obsessed with life.*

Covered With Life

Blood shouldn't be equated with death. The Bible reveals, rather, that it's sin that's equated with death (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 6:23). And because we've all sinned, death is the default spiritual condition of each of us. It's only blood that can reverse this. The only act that can resuscitate something from death is to infuse it with life. I often illustrate this point by replacing the word *blood* with *life* and the word *sin* with *death* in one of the most popular New Testament verses regarding the need for blood for the forgiveness of sins. Here's how it reads (the original words are in brackets): "Everything is purified with life [blood], and without life [blood] there is no forgiveness of death [sin]" (Heb. 9:22, nrsv).

Equating blood with life will change the way you read the Bible, and thus, how you think about God. The coverings He provided Adam and Eve after their sin were coverings of *life*. The blood on the doorposts of the Hebrew people at Passover was the protection of *life*. The yearly sacrifice God instituted for Israel was intended to restore them with *life*.

Like Adam and Eve and Israel, we too are offered a covering of blood. But not anymore through participating in a yearly sacrificial ritual. Rather, we are given the blood of Jesus, which was shed so lavishly at Calvary, once and for all. The DNA of Jesus is offered to us in order to completely cover our old lives with His new, spotless *life*. It's incredible! The application of Jesus's life completely dissolves our guilt and shame, protects us from the enemy, and allows us to enjoy daily relationship with our Creator—forever.

God's intention for blood isn't gory—it's beautiful! And I'm certainly not offended or scared by it. After all, there's no

forgiveness, healing, deliverance, or salvation without it. Rather than question how little blood I can get by with, I'd rather stand under the cross to be covered in all that I can get!

Kyle Winkler is the founder of Kyle Winkler Ministries, a media and teaching ministry through which thousands have been impacted by his broadcasts, resources, and speaking engagements. His latest book, *Silence Satan: Shutting Down the Enemy's Attacks, Threats, Lies, and Accusations*, from which this article was adapted, is in stores now. Kyle holds a master of divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Get daily encouragement from Kyle on Facebook and Twitter.