

A Hebrews Search for the Blood



One spring evening in San Francisco elderly Jewish gentleman related the following experience to a meeting of Jews. He said: "This is Passover week among you my Jewish brethren, and as I sat here I was thinking how you will be observing it. You will have put away all leaven from your houses; you will eat the 'matzoth' (unleavened wafers) and the roasted lamb. You will attend the synagogue services, and carry out the ritual and directions of the Talmud, but you forget, my brethren, that you have everything but that which Jehovah required first of all. He did not say, 'When I see the leaven put away, or when I see you eat the matzoth, or the lamb, or go to the synagogue,' but His word was, 'When I see the blood, I will pass over you.' *Exodus 12:13*. Ah, my brethren, you can substitute nothing for this. You must have blood, blood, BLOOD!"

As he repeated this word with increasing emphasis, his black eyes flashed.

"Blood, that is an awful word for one who reveres the ancient oracle, and yet has no sacrifice. Turn where he will in the Book, the blood meets him, but let him seek as he may, he cannot find it in the Judaism of the present.

"I was born," he went on, "in Palestine, nearly seventy years ago. As a child, I was taught to read the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets. I attended the synagogue and learned the Hebrew from the Rabbis early in life.

"At first I believed what I was told, that ours was the true religion, but as I grew older, and studied the Law more intently, I was struck by the place the blood had in all the ceremonies outlined there, and equally struck by its utter absence in the ritual in which I was brought up.

"Again and again I read Exodus 12 and Leviticus 16 and 17. The latter chapters especially made me tremble as I thought of the great Day of Atonement and the place the blood had there. Day and night one verse would ring in my ears, 'It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul!' *Leviticus 17:11*. I knew I had broken the law. I needed atonement. Year after year, on that day, I beat my breast as I confessed my need of it, but it was to be made by blood, and there was no blood!

"In my distress, at last, I opened my heart to a learned and venerable rabbi. He told me that God was angry with His people. Jerusalem was in the hands of the Gentiles, the temple was destroyed, and a Mohammedan mosque was reared up in its place. The only spot on earth where we dare the blood of sacrifice in accordance with Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17 was

desecrated, and our nation scattered. That was why there was no blood. God had Himself closed the way to carry out the solemn service of the great Day of Atonement. Now, we must turn to the Talmud and rest on its instructions. We must trust in the mercy of God and the merits of the fathers.

"I tried to be satisfied, but could not be. Something seemed to say that the law was unaltered, even though our temple was destroyed. Nothing else but blood could atone for the soul. We dared not shed blood for the atonement elsewhere than in the place the Lord had chosen. Then we were left without any atonement at all!

"This thought filled me with horror. In my distress I consulted many other rabbis. I had but one great question, 'where can I find the blood of atonement?'

"I was thirty years of age when I left Palestine and came over to Istanbul, with my still unanswered question ever before my mind, and my soul exceedingly troubled about my sins.

"One night I was walking down one of the narrow streets of that city when I saw a sign telling of a meeting for Jews. Curiosity led me to open the door and go in. Just as I took my seat, I heard a man say, 'The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.'
1 John 1:7

"This was my first introduction to Christianity, but I listened breathlessly as the speaker told how God had declared that 'without shedding of blood is no remission,' *Hebrews 9:22*, that He had given His Son, the Lamb of God, to die, and that all who trusted in His blood were forgiven all their iniquities. This was the Messiah of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah – the Sufferer of Psalm twenty-two.

"Ah, my brethren, I had found the blood of atonement at last. I trusted it, and now I love to read the New Testament and see how all the shadows of the law are fulfilled in Jesus. His blood has been shed for sinners. It has satisfied God, and it is the only means of salvation for either Jew or Gentile."

Have you found the blood of atonement? "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." *John 1:29*. Are you trusting in God's smitten Lamb, the supreme sacrifice?

God says: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

"...we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
Colossians 1:14.