

THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL

LEVITICUS 17:11 • TV139B

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By
HENRY T. MAHAN

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Leviticus 17:11

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”

Our subject today is: **“THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL.”**

I’m reading from the book of **Leviticus chapter 17, verse 11**. This is a Scripture that ought to be marked and studied, **Leviticus 17:11**:

It declares the means and way of salvation; *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”*

Now, my friend, if you read the Word of God, you are going to encounter several prominent and persistent subjects, among these are the main subjects that you are going to encounter if you read the Word of God, very prominent and persistent subjects:

First of all: The attributes or character of the living God! *“In the beginning God;”* that’s the way the Bible starts, God was in the beginning. *“All things were made by him and for his glory.”* And the Scripture says: *“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty.”*

He says: *“I am the Lord; I change not.”* He’s immutable. God is eternal: *“in the beginning God.”* God is holy, God is unchangeable, God is immutable and God is sovereign. He is omnipotent.

“The Lord ruleth in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of this earth and giveth it to whomsoever he will. None can stay his hand or say unto him “what doest thou?”

The heathen asked David: *“where’s your God?”* They said, *“Our gods are in the shrines and temples and altars where we place them.”* David said: *“Our God in the heavens (and he earlier said; ‘the heavens of heavens won’t contain him’) the earth is his footstool.”*

But, *“Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, earth, the seas, and in all deep places.”*

So, if you read the Bible, you are going to encounter prominently, the character or attributes of the living God.

Secondly: You are going to see from Genesis to Revelation, the sinfulness and depravity of man!

The Scripture says: *“There is none good, no not one. There is none that seeketh after God. The Lord God looked down from heaven, upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did good, any that seek God.”*

He said: *“They are all together become unprofitable. They have all gone out of the way.”* He said: *“Every imagination of man’s heart is only evil continually.”*

The prophet Isaiah wrote: *“From the sole of man’s feet to the top of his head; there’s no soundness in him. He’s nothing but open, running, sores that have not been bound up, neither cared for by ointment.”* Paul said, *“In the flesh, dwelleth no good thing.”*

So, you are going to see that all the way through the Scriptures, the fall of man, the utter, total, complete ruin, by sin of all men. You are going to see death in men and death about men, and death upon men. Man is a dying creature.

Thirdly: You will encounter this all the way through the Scripture and that is the presence and power, (not almighty power) but power of Satan in this world. *“He walketh about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.”* He’s subtle, he’s deceptive, and he’s corrupt and evil. *“He’s the father of lies.”* You are going to encounter him. The Scripture says: *“We don’t wrestle against flesh and blood. Our warfare is not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers and rulers in the darkness.”*

Satan is a subtle creature: *“He comes as a minister of light, as an angel of light.”* He can change himself, disguise himself, and camouflage himself.

He will use imitation, he will use counterfeit, and he will use religion. He will use anything in his subtlety to corrupt your mind from the simplicity of Christ. You are dealing with an archenemy and a clever enemy and a powerful enemy, and that is Satan.

There is no one who can adequately or effectively deal with him but the Lord God; you are no match for him. You will have to turn your battle over to Christ. You will have to turn your needs over to him in reference to this enemy of mankind and enemy of God. He is there; he's there.

Fourthly: You will run into and this is the subject of the Bible: if you take the whole Bible and compress it and condense it and get one word that is the essence, substance, and truth of the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation; if you break it down to one word, it will be this: Jesus Christ; He's the message of the Bible, the person and work of Jesus Christ!

The Bible my friend is true to science, God's science, but it's not a book of science. It's true to love but it's not a book of love. It's true to history, but it's not a book of history. The Bible my friends, is a book of redemption.

The essence of the Scriptures is Jesus Christ: He said, "*Moses wrote of me.*" It's all about Christ from Genesis to Revelation. It's a story of how God loves sinners, chose them in Christ, redeemed them in Christ and will glorify them in Jesus Christ.

There are three things about Christ that sum up what the Bible says about Him:

First of all: His redemptive character; He's the God-man! He was from the beginning. All things were made for His glory. He's the God-man; He's the God who became man, God in human flesh, His redemptive character.

Secondly: His redemptive work! His life was a perfect life, an obedient life, a submissive life to God's law and holiness and righteousness. He is the righteousness of God. By His life and by His death, He redeemed His people. By His perfect life He gave us a perfect righteousness and holiness toward the Lord God.

Thirdly: By His death He satisfied God's justice! That He might be just and the justifier.

Fourthly: His redemptive glory! It is all for his glory "*that no flesh should glory in his presence.*"

You are going to encounter those four things: God, His attributes and character, man and his fall, sinfulness, and Satan, his subtlety and deceptiveness and power and evil and the Lord Jesus Christ, His person and work.

Here's my subject today from **Genesis 3:21** to the last chapter of **Revelation** you are going to encounter **the blood (b-l-o-o-d) of Jesus Christ.**

Now, when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden and they discovered to their shame and to their fear and condemnation that they were naked. They took fig leaves, huge fig leaves, and platted

them and sewed them together to cover their sin and their shame; they were embarrassed; they were fallen creatures.

Before, they were without clothes. They were not embarrassed; they were not ashamed. They didn't know anything about sin. They didn't know anything about evil. They didn't know anything about fear, and they didn't know anything about hate.

They tried to cover themselves. God came and told them the consequences of their fall, the suffering and death and sorrow that had come upon them because of their fall.

Then, God slew an animal. In slaying that animal the animal's blood was shed. That's the first blood ever shed; that is in actuality. Christ was the lamb slain in the purpose of God, in the promise of God, before the world began.

But, this is the first drop of blood that was ever shed. You see, man didn't eat meat in the Garden and no animal died. There was no such thing as death.

But, this animal suffered first, the first death, and the first blood. The first drop of blood was shed and that animal died to cover man's sin, to cover his shame. That's the first mention of blood there in the Bible; that's the first example.

It goes all the way through now, from there to the last chapter of **Revelation**, you have the blood, the blood was shed that sin might be covered. If it hadn't been for sin, there would be no blood shed, no death, no suffering, and no sorrow. But, the first drop of blood was to cover man's sin.

All the way through the Bible we see our text: *"it's the blood that maketh atonement for the soul."* **Exodus 12:3**; God said to Israel and Egypt: *"when I see the blood I will pass over you."*

In **Hebrews 9:22** it says: *"Almost all things under the law were purged by blood and without the shedding of blood there is, no remission (no forgiveness whatsoever); there is no remission without the shedding of blood."*

In **1 Peter 1:18 and 19** Peter writes: *"for as much as you know."* You know he's writing to the church, he's writing to believers and he is writing to those who know God.

He says: *"You know this; that you were not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold (nor with laws, traditions, works, deeds ceremonies, ordinances and rituals) but with the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without blemish and without spot."*

1 John 1:7 says: *"The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth us from all sin."* That's the message through the Book; you can count on the blood. If you study the Bible, if you read God's Word, you are going to read about the blood. You can't read it without reading about the blood.

My friends; if I have any apology to make in reference to preaching about the blood of Christ (I know today that it is thought upon, looked upon, and talked about as a slaughter-house religion, a first-

century doctrine, a distasteful thing) but if I have any apology about preaching about the blood of Jesus Christ, it's this, that I don't preach it as often as I should.

Paul said: *"We preach Christ and him crucified"* and the crucifixion was a bloody scene. There was blood from His hands, and blood from His head, His back, and blood from His feet and blood and water from His side. *"We preach Christ and him crucified."*

Paul said: *"God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world."*

He said: *"I'm determined, (even to the great city of Corinth, even to that city of philosophy, and that city of science, and that city of learning, and that city of arts and culture), to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified."*

I warn the churches and the preachers of this day: if you are successful as many are attempting to do, if you are successful in removing the blood of Christ from your hymn books and from your sermons and from your pulpits and from your classroom, you have stripped the Gospel of its glory.

You have stripped the Gospel of its power, its saving power. You have stripped the Gospel of its effectiveness, for if there's no blood, there is no remission. If there's no blood, there is no forgiveness. If there's no blood atonement, there's no mercy seat. No blood atonement, no sacrifice. No blood atonement, no approach to God.

When our Lord Jesus Christ sat down at the table with His apostles for the Last Supper before He went to the cross, He broke the bread in their presence and He said: *"this is my body broken for you; take it and eat it."*

Then he took the wine and He handed it to them in a glass and He said: *"this is my blood; the blood of the new covenant (New Testament) which is shed for your sins. This is my blood; drink ye all of it."*

Paul said: *"As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death until he comes:"*

**"There is a fountain
Filled with blood
Drawn from Emanuel's veins
And sinners plunged
Beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.**

**The dying thief
Rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day,
And there may I**

Though vile as he
Wash all my sins away.

Dear dying lamb
Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Til all the ransomed
Church of God
Be saved to sin no more.

Ever since by faith
I saw that stream
Thy flowing wounds supply
Redeeming love, Redeeming blood
Has been my theme
And shall be til I die.”

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 1:7**: *“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace.”*

Now, my friends, there are dozens of points that we can emphasize in a message on the blood of Christ. *“It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul. I have given you the blood upon the altar to make atonement for your soul.”*

But, I want to leave you with four main thoughts. I believe that if you understand these four main thoughts that you will, to some degree, understand the Gospel. You will to some degree, understand the redemptive work of Christ.

You will to some degree, understand the Gospel of saving grace and you will to some degree know the living God in His redemptive grace, these four things concerning the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ:

First of all: This is true all the way through the Word of God: the blood atonement was always, without question, always without exception, always before the Lord.

Listen to these Scriptures talking about killing the bullock, killing the lamb, and offering the sacrifice; **in Leviticus 4:4**: *kill the lamb before the Lord.*” **Leviticus 4:6**: *“Sprinkle the blood seven times before the Lord.”* **Leviticus 4:7**: *“Put the blood on the horns of the altar before the Lord.”* It’s always *“before the Lord.”*

When that great high priest in that solemn, sacred hour, in the tabernacle in the wilderness; when that great high priest took the blood of the lamb and went into the holy place and then slipped under the veil into the Holy of Holies, which signified the presence of God, the awesome, fearful, holy presence of God. There on the mercy seat, the golden mercy seat, covering the Ark of the Covenant; he placed that blood. There wasn’t the eye of any human being that saw it, not one human eye saw it.

He went in with his incense burning and the smoke filled the place and the blood of that lamb was spread over that mercy seat which covered the broken law, which was in the Ark of the Covenant, that atonement was made before the Lord.

When Israel was down in Egypt, God told them to take the blood and put it on the outside of the door. The people were on the inside; they were all in the house. The blood was on the outside.

God said: *“When I see the blood, (not when you see it, not when you keep looking at it, not when you are conscience of it; your faiths in me, your confidence is in me); when I see the blood I will pass over you.”*

I know that most preaching today presents the death of Christ as an example or presents the death of Christ as an effort at reclamation or perhaps an offer. There’s no question but that the death of Christ is an example to all of His people: *“let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.”* We are to follow Christ. We are to be willing to lay down our lives.

But, in the Old Testament every sin offering and every sacrifice and atonement which were types of Christ, were always before the Lord, not before men, not to be seen of men, not to impress men but they were always before the Lord.

You go and read these references throughout the Old Testament: the blood was sacrificed, the blood was sprinkled and the blood was put on the mercy seat before the Lord. It was unto the Lord, it was unto the Lord.

Secondly: The blood was before the Lord in reference to us, in reference to us! It had to do with us; it had to do with our acceptance to God. It had to do with making peace toward God for us. It had to do with reconciling us to God who was angry, whose wrath was upon us, whose judgment was upon us because of our sins.

Romans 3:25; *“Whom God hath ordained, (talking about Christ), Christ hath God foreordained to be a mercy seat through faith in his blood, to declare and God’s righteousness (God’s holiness) that God might be just and justify the ungodly.”*

You see, my friend, the blood of Christ did not change the nature of God from wrath to love. The blood of Christ didn’t change God’s nature from wrath to love; God is love. Christ died because God loved us.

Listen to **John 3:16**. Here is a favorite and familiar passage of Scripture: *“for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”*

You see, the love of Christ preceded the death of Christ, preceded the giving of Christ, and preceded the coming of Christ. God loved us and sent His Son. His love sent His Son.

His love was not caused by His Son coming, His love is the reason why His Son came. His Son came as a result of His love.

You see, the law of God has a claim on every man. *“What the law saith it saith to them who are under the law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God.”*

That holy law of God must be honored, it must be! God cannot save a man or receive a man or accept a man at the expense of His holiness and in righteousness and the truth of His law.

His justice must be satisfied. *“The soul that sinneth, must, shall surely die. The wages of sin is death.”* So, Jesus Christ came before the Lord as a sin offering, atonement, and sacrifice, in reference to us for our acceptance.

The publican in the temple who smote upon his breast and cried: *“God be merciful to me a sinner,”* do you know what all of the old scholars say what he was saying or laying claim to? He was looking back to that blood on the altar, on the mercy seat, and he was saying this, “Lord, be propitiated to me. Let thy blood be propitiation and be merciful unto me.” For they all knew the only way God could be merciful is if God could be propitiated, that God could be reconciled, God’s law could be honored and His justice satisfied. Be thou propitiation to me through the blood.

Our Lord once again, the Lord’s Table, when our Lord distributed the broken bread and the wine, he said: *“this is my body broken, the blood shed; drink ye all of it.”*

And Paul later said to the church, *“now let a man examine himself and so let him eat.”* Examine himself for what, to see if he’s perfectly holy? No; we know he’s not? To see if he’s worthy to take the Lord’s Table? We’re not worthy and we never will be worthy.

It’s to see if he discerns the Lord’s broken body and shed blood. Do you know what the word discern means? It means to understand, to judge; it means to see. Do you understand the blood of Christ and the body of Christ, the broken body of Christ?

If you understand it, if you judge or discern or see what it’s all about, that Christ’s body was broken and His blood was shed that God’s justice might be honored, that God’s justice might be satisfied.

Thirdly: The blood was before the Lord. The sacrifice of Christ was not toward men, not as just an example for men or not to impress men; it was before the Lord, it was before the Lord to satisfy His justice, to satisfy His righteousness

A criminal is never turned loose until his debts paid. A man is never released justified from prison until he served his sentence.

You and I as sinners, criminals in God’s kingdom, are not going to be released, we are not going to be justified, we are not going to be accepted of God until our debt is paid until the law has been honored and satisfied. That’s what Christ did in reference to us.

Now, notice this about the blood, the blood before the Lord was in reference to us and it gives power and efficacy to the intercession of Christ.

Now then; there is one God; **1 Timothy 2:5** says this: *“There is one God and there is one mediator between God and men.”* A mediator is an advocate, an intercessor, and one who pleads the cause of another. There’s one Mediator.

Now, my friend; you better learn this. It doesn’t matter whether you are Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, or what you are. You better learn this; the Word of God plainly says: *“there’s one God and one mediator between God and men and that’s the man Christ Jesus.”*

Now, a mediator is one who can deal with both sides. Jesus Christ is the only Mediator. He is God and he became a man identified with us. A mediator has to have something to plead. A mediator has to have something to offer. He has to have bargaining power. He has to meet the law’s demands and justice claimed.

When the Lord Jesus Christ goes before the Father on behalf of His people, on behalf of sinners, He’s got to have something to present, something to plead. What does He present and what does He plead?

He pleads His blood. Listen to this in **Hebrews 9: 11-12**: *“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”*

By His own blood He entered in once into the holy place (not made with hands, like on the earth), the figures of the truth, but into heaven itself, once in the end of the world hath Christ appeared and entered heaven, the holy place, with His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

My friends; the very fact that Christ had blood, shows that He was identified with us, He had to be a man to have blood. God became a man and that shows His identification with us: *“He was numbered with the transgressors;”* He became a man.

So, my Mediator, my Advocate with the Father, is also the man Christ Jesus who had blood. Paul told the elders at Ephesus, *“you feed the church of God which was purchased with his own blood.”*

He had blood. That shows that He was identified with us, the fact that it’s the blood of God’s Son, the fact that it was the blood of God’s Son gives His blood infinite value.

You say: “There are so many sinners, there are so many sins.” There’s only one Saviour, only one Mediator. Who is that Mediator? Who is that Saviour?

It’s the Son of God; it is God Himself. He has infinite power, infinite efficacy, and infinite sufficiency. *“He is able to save to the uttermost all that comes to God by him. The blood of Jesus Christ is able to cleanse us from all sin.”* because of who He is.

Are you learning? The fact that His blood was promised and prophesied, and pictured and typified throughout the Scriptures, gives me assurance to trust Him.

**“Under the blood of Jesus
Safe in the shepherd’s fold
Under the blood of Jesus
I’m safe while the ages roll.**

**Saved though the worlds may crumble
Saved though the stars grow dim
Under the blood of Jesus
We are secure in him.”**

The fact that He had blood identifies Him with me. The efficacy and infinite value of His blood is because He is God’s Son and He’s the Mediator. He brings me to God and reconciles all who believe.

Fourthly: The blood of Christ before the Lord gives acceptance to my worship!

Listen to **Hebrews 10:19**: *“Having therefore, brethren, boldness (people like you and me,) to enter into the holiest.”* Do you mean into the presence of God? Yes sir! Do you mean into the direct throne room of God? Yes sir!

Do you mean that I don’t have to send somebody else in my place? No more! *“The veil and the temple is rent in twain:”*

**“Come ye sinners
Poor and needy
Weak and wounded by the fall.”**

Come to Christ; come unto the throne of God. Come before the presence of the Lord. How? Come by the blood of Jesus.

Hebrews 10:19 says: *“Having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.”* We will be accepted in the blood of Christ and only in the blood of Christ.

My friends; there is so much flesh in all that we are and so much sin in all that we do and so faint the best praise and so wandering the best prayer. We need the cleansing, redeeming, atoning, sanctifying blood of the Lord Jesus Christ at all times.

Having a High Priest over the house of God who has opened for us into His presence by His blood a new and living way; let us come.

And remember this: Our worship is accepted, in proportion as it is offered in the blood of Christ, His precious blood:

**“What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.”**