

Life Is In the Blood

Anyone, whether of the house of Israel or of the aliens residing among them, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice without bringing it to the entrance of the tent of meeting to offer it to the Lord, shall be cut off from the people. As for anyone, whether of the house of Israel or of the aliens residing among them, who consumes any blood, I will set myself against that individual and will cut that person off from among the people, since the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement on the altar for yourselves, because it is the blood as life that makes atonement. That is why I have told the Israelites: No one among you, not even a resident alien, may consume blood. (Lev 17: 8-13.)

... make sure that you do not eat of the blood, therefore, but pour it out on the ground like water. Do not eat of it, that you and your children after you may prosper for doing what is right in the sight of the Lord. However, any sacred gifts or votive offerings that you may have, you shall bring with you to the place which the Lord chooses, and there you must sacrifice your burnt offerings, both the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the Lord, your God; of your other sacrifices the blood indeed must be poured out against the altar of the Lord, your God, but their flesh you may eat. (Deut 12: 23-28.)

The Sacred Books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy outline God's laws for His chosen people regarding ritual sacrifice and atonement for sin and the covenant God made with His Chosen People and sealed in blood. The Hebrew Torah forbids the drinking of blood, for it is simply understood that life is in the blood and life belongs to God alone. We see this concept of the sacredness of blood, the sacredness of life, in both the shedding of blood and in the giving of blood. When blood is shed in sacrifice to the one true God, it is drained from the animal and poured out on the altar of God. That offering of blood brings ritual purity and forgiveness on the people for the sin that was laid upon all humankind with the sin of Adam, and for personal sin; that offering also brings the promise of blessing and life. We see the power of blood to save life from harm at the Passover when God's people were to sacrifice an unblemished lamb and smear its blood on their doorposts and lintels to protect their households from the Angel of Death. Sacred covenants were sealed in blood. Blood was shed in the rite of circumcision of Hebrew males, the sign of their obedience to God. When blood is shed contrary to God's laws, it brings chastisement and judgment, as with Cain who spilled his brother's blood in the murder of Abel. Judgment came to Herod the Great for the massacre of the Holy Innocents, the murder of members of his own family, and so many wicked deeds. Herod died a despicable death after ruling with an insane kind of madness in life that consumed him with a fitful fear of losing his throne, even to his own sons. It was said that it was better to be Herod's dog than his son.

Since sin came to humankind through the sin of Adam, it is important to see the significance of Adam's name in Jewish etymology and thought. Adam is taken from the

word “Adamah’ which means “ground,” “of the earth.” It also has roots in the word “Edom” which means “blood,” “red,” and speaks to the red clay of the earth from which Adam was formed, or the color of blood that would seal God’s covenant with His people. (Ref: <http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/emagazine/001.html>) Red also prefigures the cups of wine in the Seder meal that recalls the Passover and anticipates the Eucharist as a memorial of the Blood of the Lamb of God poured out on the altar of the cross. It is Christ, the new Adam, not of the earth but come down from heaven, Whose sacrifice on the cross seals the New Covenant between God and the new Israel, Christ’s Church, His Mystical Body, and creates a new Jerusalem in the City of God. Christ’s sacrifice is the only sacrifice that can make perfect atonement for sin and put an end to all animal sacrifice. It is said that red is the first color a baby sees; hence, formed from the red clay of the earth, it may have been the first color Adam saw in the first days of his existence as God breathed life into Adam, created in the image of the Logos, the definitive Word of the Father’s love Who would redeem the world with His own most Precious Blood. Red speaks to the flaming fire of the Holy Spirit that was breathed into the body of the New Adam, the Church, on that first Pentecost.

Understanding the mindset of Jewish tradition and law, it is no surprise so many could not accept Jesus’ teachings on the Eucharist.

“Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever.” (Jn 6:53-59.)

The message of Our Lady of America speaks strongly to the importance of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as a means of reaching out and touching the wounded hand of our Savior and living out our immersion into the Paschal Mystery of Christ through our Baptism. Our Lady spoke thus to Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil:

Beloved daughter, to many the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass no longer has meaning. These have lost that spiritual sensitivity of reaching out and touching the wounded hand of my Son. In a special way, during the Holy Sacrifice Jesus comes in close contact with those who meet Him in a profound act of faith in a deep sense of His Divine and human presence. It is a great loss when one loses the spiritual sight of the Son that the Father sent to guide us into the Eternal Vision.

(Sister Mildred Mary Neuzil, The Diary, OUR LADY OF AMERICA©, Fostoria, OH, Pg. 40, April 3, 1981.)

Let us participate in this Holy Sacrifice and memorial banquet that is a foretaste of the wedding feast of heaven with hearts fixed on the Eternal High Priest and the Lamb of God Who is one and the same, Priest and Victim, at every altar on earth. Let us ponder these words of our Lord to Sister Mildred on July 13, 1981. They should tear at our hearts with their tone of sadness and appeal, begging us to understand the infinite love God, enfleshed in Jesus, Who laid down His life in perfect humility and obedience to atone for the pride and disobedience of sin in order to save us from eternal death at the price of His own Blood. May the Holy Spirit breathe His fire into the depths of our beings and rouse there some fitting response.

“My faithful spouse, the world does not know me. My people do not know me. I am a stranger to them. Many claim to love me yet hate and kill their neighbor and say they do it in My Name. These listen to the false prophets who are manipulated by the powers of evil. Me they do not follow, Me they do not hear. The Bible, the Gospels are to them just so many words that they throw out to those hungering to know about the real Christ who seeks their love, who holds out the true meaning of the Gospel, the only One who can lead them to the Father. With the same tongue with which these benighted souls praise and proclaim their love and dedication to Me they curse and condemn their neighbor whom I redeemed as I did them. ...

My dearest one, many false doctrines are being taught and for many the true Christ is never made known. The false prophets and self-proclaimed Messiahs are drawing many away from Me, the Way, the Truth and the Life. I am the true Messiah who was sent and the only one proclaimed as such by My Father. Seek Me for I only am truth, I only am the Christ.” (The Diary, Pg. 40, July 13, 1981.).

It was the Immaculate Virgin-Mother Mary who gave her life-giving blood to Jesus, and it was Jesus Himself who ordered that all the grace merited for us by His suffering and death, and the promise of eternal life, should flow to us through her hands. The promise of the triumph of her Immaculate Heart was given to us already in the Garden of Eden when God promised a woman, the new Eve, at the side of the new Adam, would crush the head of the ancient serpent. Our Lady of America renewed that promise, so let us stand with Mary at every altar, spiritually, and plead the saving Blood of Jesus upon every soul upon the earth, that His Blood be not in vain for even one more soul from now until the end of time.

May the Precious Blood of Jesus be a divine transfusion for the life of our souls!

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