

# H O U S E o f W I S D O M

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## The Purpose of the Blood of Jesus Christ

Recently, in a conversation with a friend, he used the term, 'We all are covered by the blood of Jesus Christ.' Intuitively, I agreed, but in my mind I wondered if we understood the term the same, or how that I might explain how I understood it. The various forms of 'to cover' translate the original in a sense of "to conceal, to protect, cover over," used in a literal as well as a figurative sense. The phrase "covered by the blood" is an abstract, or figurative term. While the actual phrase is not found in the Bible relating directly to the cross, it is revealed by types. However, a much more prevalent word associated with the blood of Jesus is the word "cleansed," which will also be discussed in the study. So, one might ask, "How does the blood cover or cleanse a person? Do the terms mean the same thing? If not, what is the difference?"

Covered: Only two times is the word 'cover' used in the New Testament where one might connect it with the blood shed at the cross: **Rom 4:7**: "*Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered*;" (rsv) The context is about how Abraham acquired his faith, which James connects with Abraham's works (Jam 2:21-22) in the offering of Isaac. **1 Pet 4:8**: "*Above all, hold unfailing your love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins*." (rsv) The second verse actually expands the first - the covering of sins is by love. With 'love' in view, many other scriptures can be connected, the most prominent being **Jn 3:16**: "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*." Paul and Peter are quoting from the Old Testament (Ps 32:1 & Pr 10:12 respectively). Three other verses make it clear that it is the blood of Christ that effects salvation, but how sins are covered is not explained. For this, we must go to Old Testament types.

The connection to the types is evident in the book of Hebrews: **Heb 2:17**: "*Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation*"<sup>(2433)</sup> *for the sins of the people*. The Greek word *hilaskomai*<sup>(2433)</sup> also carries the idea of "mercy" (Lk 18:13). This word, in most of the translations consulted, is rendered to expiate, which carries the idea of "to pay a penalty;" or, make propitiation, meaning "to appease." Some use "to atone," a word used often in the Old Testament, and is similar to the word expiate. Here, Jesus is said to be a merciful and faithful high priest. He is also in the fulness of the Father (Col 2:9), and therefore has the character of the Father. Jesus' mercy and faithfulness is the Father's, so why would the Father need to be appeased, or require a penalty for our sins? He doesn't! This would contradict the character of God, which Jesus has, and, into the fulness of whose character humanity is to come (Eph 3:19). It would also contradict what Paul told the Corinthians, below.

**2 Cor 5:18-21**: *18. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled*<sup>(2644)</sup> *us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation*<sup>(2643)</sup>; *19. that is, in Christ God was reconciling*<sup>(2644)</sup> *the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation*<sup>(2643)</sup>. *20. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled*<sup>(2644)</sup> *to God*. *21. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God*. (rsv) A different Greek word here is rendered "reconcile." The verb *katallasso*<sup>(2644)</sup>, and its derivative<sup>(2643)</sup> have the proper meaning of "to change, to make different." Notice too, that it is God doing the reconciling through Christ. When we learn and accept how we are saved, then as we listen to the voice of God in our conscience, He will make His appeal to others through us (verse 20).

Here is the type for 'covered by the blood:' **Ex 12:6-7: 6.** *And ye shall keep it (the lamb) up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. 7. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.* All are responsible for the death of the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29; Rev 5:6). The first feast day (Passover) is a figure of the time when we accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior. Eating the lamb and putting its blood on the door post are a figures of our receiving the understanding of the Son and the reason for the cross. As Israel was literally protected when they applied the blood, so we are spiritually protected when we accepted that Jesus died for our sake, concerning our sins.

There is another, more subtle concept of 'to cover' revealed in **2 Cor 5:19:** *...in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them...* This Proverb will help you see it: **Pr 17:9:** *Whoso is covering transgression is seeking love, And whoso is repeating a matter Is separating a familiar friend.* (Young) God does not talk about, i.e. charge you with your sins. When we do that to others, we set self above them, and the familiar friend from whom we separate is Christ.

Look one more time at the verse in Hebrews: **Heb 2:17:** *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation <sup>(2433)</sup> for the sins of the people.* "It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren" - who made Jesus like us? The Father did. Why? Not to appease Himself, nor to pay a penalty for our sins, as God is not even charging our trespasses against us. But God sent Jesus as an act of mercy to prove that He loves us as much as His only Son (Jn 17:23).

A noun derivative of *hilaskomai* <sup>(2433)</sup> (Heb 2:17) is used in another place in Hebrews: **Heb 9:5:** *above it were the cherubim of glory over shadowing the mercy seat <sup>(2435)</sup>.* *Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.* (rsv) The solid gold cover on the ark of the covenant represents in type, the 'place of reconciliation', an act of mercy by God toward mankind by means of the gift of His only Son. Christ became the author our salvation through suffering as a man (Heb 5:8-9) at the cross, and anyone listening to him will also be made a high priest. The tabernacle, its service and the priests are all an allegory of how this is accomplished.

There were seven appointed times, called 'holy convocations' (Lev 23:2) that Israel was to keep. The Day of Atonement, which should be called the Day of Reconciliation, was the sixth convocation wherein the holy and holy of holies were cleansed by sprinkling of the blood of the sacrifice (Lev 16:16) on the gold lid (mercy seat). **1 Pet 1:7: 6.** *In this you rejoice, though now for a little while you may have to suffer various trials, 7. so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold which though perishable is tested by fire, may redound to praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* (rsv) Peter likens gold, tested and purified with fire, to faith, which is tested and purified with spiritual fire (Jer 23:29). Taking gold as a symbol of faith, and then looking at the ark of the covenant, I see a box, made from the Acacia tree (black, thorny wood) which is a symbol of my fleshly heart, and which God covers with pure gold. He does this by putting the spiritual understanding of the law (Jer 31:33) in my heart. The gold lid, on which the blood was sprinkled seven times, represents the completion of the faith of Christ in me, or, his understanding by which I am cleansed of my iniquity. His faith is being taught only to the believer who has ears to hear (cf Mt 13:9-23).

There are two cherubim of 'beaten' gold sitting on the solid gold lid. Think figuratively of how the spirit of God hammers out the gold (Ex 25:18; Jer 23:29), the spiritual concepts (faith) of the cross in your mind. The cherubim represent your coming to this understanding, and then, YOU carry the message of the two witnesses (Rev 11:3-6), or the correct understanding of the purpose of the Son of God and the cross.

**Cleansed:** **Rev 1:5:** *...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood...* Cleansing is further defined as walking in the light (i.e. applying God's understanding in our lives) in **1 Jn 1:6-7: 6.** *If we say that we have fellowship with him (the Father), and walk in darkness (reject the truth), we lie, and do not the truth: 7. But if we walk in the light, as he (the Father) is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood (understanding of his cross) of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses (purges our old understanding) us from all sin (wrong action based on a faulty understanding of God and the cross).* Below are two verses that support the notes of explanation added into the verses.

Jesus told his disciples, who had been with him over three years: **Jn 15:3:** *already ye are clean, because of the word that I have spoken to you;* (Young) The purpose of Christ in giving his life was so that his church could be cleansed by words spoken to the heart. **Eph 5:25-27:** *...Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.* Our relationship to pastors and teachers is one of hearing them, and seeking the Lord through personal study and letting Him impress the heart as to what is truth (cf Mt 16:16-17). The words impressed on the heart by the spirit of Jesus Christ, when received, is what cleanses one from sin, by correcting their way of thinking.

**Summary:** To be covered by the blood is revealed in the antitypical Passover (cf Ex 12), the first feast. This is the beginning of one's spiritual journey when he separates from his worldly ways, and begins to wander in the wilderness of spiritual confusion and darkness, all the while seeking to come into unity with the Son, by receiving his faith and knowledge (Isa 53:11; Eph 4:13).

The Day of Reconciliation (Atonement, 6<sup>th</sup> feast - Lev 16) is synonymous with the sixth day of creation, when man is made into God's image. Overall, the entire tabernacle, with its services, represent a cleansing of the mind. When this antitypical service is completed, there are two groups of people cleansed - The 144,000 (the house of the High Priest) and the great multitude (the congregation of spiritual Israel). (cf Rev 7:4, 9; 14:1) **Lev 16:17:** *And there shall be no man in the [tent of meeting] when he goes in to make [reconciliation] in the holy (place), until he come out, and have made [reconciliation] for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.*

The high priest, who washed his flesh with water (cf Jn 13:5; Eph 5:26) and put on clean linen garments (cf Rev 19:9), comes to the mercy seat (place of reconciliation) and sprinkles the blood of the sacrifice with his finger seven times. Seven is a fulness of an understanding, to sprinkle is to teach (cp Eze 36:25 & Eph 5:26) and a finger is a symbol of faith (fingers and hand = faith and works, cp Lk 11:20 & Mt 12:28; Ex 31:18). Our High Priest sprinkles our hearts with the understanding of the Father, the Son, the purpose of the cross (Isa 52:15) and our own nature. Understanding all of this is necessary to overcome sin. **Jn 15:3:** *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.* The word we receive from the Father through Jesus is water from heaven (Dt 32:1-2), and it gives us the spiritual understanding of the cross that we need to be cleansed from our sins. It is the faith of Christ which we receive, but it is our works that perfects our faith (Jam 2:17-18), when we live and share the truth.

**Rev 12:11:** *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb (His faith received), and by the word of their testimony (works of sharing truth); and they loved not their lives unto the death (to self). **Rev 7:14:** *...These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes (character), and made them white (pure) in the blood of the Lamb. Amen.**