

# Upon The Head

Leviticus 1:1-5

**FOCAL Read Responsively** Leviticus 1:2-5 ... If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, [even] of the herd, and of the flock. {3} If his offering [be] a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD. {4} **And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. {5} And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that [is by] the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

God saved Israel from Egypt through the shedding of Blood. The children of Promise were held in bondage by a man who thought himself to be god. The Almighty warned foolish Pharaoh, **"Israel is My firstborn - let my firstborn go or I will kill your firstborn"** (Exodus 4:22-23). Pharaoh refused and the firstborn of Egypt died while the firstborn of Israel lived. Why did one die and the other live? God's people were under the Blood of the Lamb. The Lamb of God must die, and His Blood must be shed. The Death Angel is coming, and "being good" will not save you. What will save? God said:

Exodus 12:13 ... .. **when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy** [you], when I smite the land of Egypt.

The Lamb of God must die, and its Blood must be shed.

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Israel left Egypt, carrying the jewelry of her captors as the spoil of war. God had originally intended that all of Israel be priests. The Lord told Moses **"ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6)**. But Israel failed God miserably while Moses was in the Mount. She took the jewelry that God gave her in Egypt and, melting it down, built a golden calf - a bloodless bullock - to worship. **"These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." (Exodus 32:4)**. The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. Here was a god they could be comfortable with. Abomination of abominations, the bloodless god was an easy god to believe in.

God's anger burned against His people. Moses - like a Divine mirror - reflected the anger of God on His chosen Nation. Moses shouted, **"Who is on the LORD's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him" (Exodus 32:26)**. Israel was not ready to become a nation of priests. Only the Levites gave their hearts to God. Only the Levites would be God's priests. While the other tribes of Israel were given land on the other side of the Jordan, the Levites were told **"the Lord is your inheritance" (Deuteronomy 10:9)**. God's priests are happiest when they are close to God. A bloodless golden calf does not interest the child of the Living God. Away with the idols and the icons! We must approach God through *the Blood*.

Israel has now passed from Egypt, her enemies now dead at the bottom of the Red Sea. She has been punished for

the golden calf. God writes a Book to her priests, a set of instructions on how His people can draw closer to Him. What is the first thing that God tells His Levites? Build a Temple, a Tabernacle, a piece of furniture? No, dear ones, no. If you want to draw near to God then **"kill the bullock before the Lord"**. **"Without the shedding of Blood there is no remission of sin" (Hebrews 9:22)**. The Sacrifice must die, else we cannot draw near to God. Our sin must be transferred to the Sin Bearer.

The bullock and the lamb of the Old Testament sacrifices were foreshadows of the Lord Jesus Christ. God wanted man to know that the shedding of Blood is necessary if sin is to be forgiven. Jesus Christ is the **Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)**. The Old Testament sacrifices were temporary until Christ came.

**Hebrews 10:4 For [it is] not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.**

Adam - not a bullock or a lamb - brought sin into the world, and death by sin **(Romans 5:12) - "and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"**. Sin is so terrible in God's sight that it can only be covered with the **voluntary shedding of Blood. Jesus Christ willingly came to die for our sins**. Our Lord taught His disciples **"how He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matthew 16:21)**. The Lamb of God must die, and

His Blood must be shed. Neither Jew nor Gentile can be saved apart from the Blood of the Lamb.

We who are saved have "put our hand on the Head of the Sacrifice". We believe that **God was manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16)** to pay the penalty of our sin. Christ had to die. We dare not stand before a Holy and Infinite God hoping that we are good enough to enter Heaven. We stretch out our hand and, in faith, place our sin on Jesus. Like the **woman with the issue of blood (Luke 8:43)** we who believe cling to Jesus for healing. **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18)**. Your eternal home will be Heaven or Hell based on whether you have believed on Jesus or not. Have you believed on Him?

May God touch your hearts with His Word.

### **1. The Shadow Teaches Us That It Was Essential That Christ Die**

**FOCAL** Leviticus 1:4-5 **And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. {5} And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD:**

There were herds of spotless bullocks and flocks of spotless lambs in the Valley of Sharon - but only the bullock or the lamb killed before the Lord made

atonement for sin.

The bullock without spot or blemish could be separated from the herd. This animal could be good natured, a kind creature. It could be strong, able to plow a hundred acres in a day without tiring. Yet it must die, else it is of no use to the Israelite. The Blood must be shed and it must be sprinkled upon the altar if God is going to be satisfied.

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.

**It is the Blood that makes atonement for sin, the Blood that acts as a covering for sin.** Christ had to die because Adam sinned.

I was asked just the other day if little babies are innocent of sin. What does the Bible teach? Is sin something you do, or something *you haven't done*?

When the first Adam sinned he *poured out sin* on all creation. His sons, his daughters, the animals – even the earth itself came under the condemnation of sin.

Romans 5:12 **Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin;**

and so death passed upon all men, for that **all have sinned**:

Adam's transgression brought *universal death*. Sin is grievous – and unforgivable *unless covered with Blood*. Blood was the one offering that God would accept as a covering for sin. God allowed man to offer an animal without spot or blemish as a *temporary atonement for sin* – but sin did not come through an animal's disobedience.

Why couldn't the blood of bullocks and of lambs make a permanent atonement for sin?

The bullock and the lamb did not eat of the forbidden fruit – man did this! **By one man sin entered into the world**. Sin came by **one man**, and sin had to be atoned for **by one man**. But what man? The atonement must be *without spot or blemish* – but the Scripture **says all have sinned**. Adam's action not only plunged the world under the fountain of sin's corruption, but his foolishness also *cut off any hope of rescue*.

God must rescue us – if we will be rescued!

We know that Jesus came forth from God. We know that **“God was manifest in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:16)**. We know that Jesus Christ is very God of very God. We know that Jesus:

Philippians 2:7 But **made himself of no**

**reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:**

We know that the Father said unto the Son:

Hebrews 1:8 But unto the Son [he saith], **Thy throne, O God, [is] for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness [is] the scepter of thy kingdom.**

We know that Jesus was perfect, pure, and holy, separate from sinners. Jesus Christ, very God of very God, took on Himself humanity.

Why was Jesus Christ alone qualified to be the Lamb of God, the Atonement or Covering for sin?

He was born of a virgin, untainted by sin, spotless and pure. He is the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world. Jesus Christ alone was..

Revelation 5:9 ... **slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood** out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

and we are told again:

Hebrews 9:12-14 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]. {13} For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: {14} How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**

His Blood that was shed for us is our covering. It is His Blood alone that gives us the right to enter into God's Heaven. We are told:

**Hebrews 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.**

Is Jesus beautiful? Yes! He was the Greatest Teacher Who ever lived. Like the woman at the well we who have met Jesus are delighted with Him.

**John 4:29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?**

How we are delighted in Him, in His ways, in His love, in His kindness. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus we declare:

**Luke 24:32 ... Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?**

None has been more lovely than Christ. Yet His loveliness does not save us. **Apart from the death of Christ there is no remission of sin. There must have been the shedding of His Blood!**

Though Christ lived a flawless life then ascended to the Father - had He not shed His Blood we would yet be dead in our sins. Though His teaching and preaching were flawless, and though He is altogether lovely - without shedding of Blood we would not have been saved.

As the Scripture says:

**1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.**

It is His sacrifice, His Blood that saved us - and not we ourselves. Secondly,

**2. If Jesus Had To Die, Our Works Cannot Save Us**

**FOCAL** Leviticus 1:3-5 If his offering [be] a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without

blemish: **he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD. {4} And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. {5} And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD:**

What work did the ancient Israelite do in order to be saved? What good thing did he or she do that atonement could be made?

God did not say “sing me a song” or “learn a catechism” or “dance a jig”. God gave no ritual incantation, no chant, no test to take. What was the offerer to do to make atonement for sin? **Offer a male without blemish; offer it of his own voluntary will.** The sacrifice was willingly brought to the altar. The offerer was not forced to do this. It was **whosoever will**. What else was done? The offerer **shall put his hand upon the head of the offering**. The offerer would willingly put his hand on the bullock or the lamb, transferring his sin to the sacrificial animal. Then the animal was killed and its blood shed. **He shall kill the bullock before the Lord.** The bullock or the lamb took the penalty of sin on itself.

Sin is such a horrible thing that God has appointed Blood to wash it away. **But your Blood will not suffice.** Why?

**Your blood is tainted. Your works will not work to get you into Heaven.** What has God appointed as your atonement for sin? **Put your hand on the Head of the Savior. Recognize Him as your atonement for sin.** I cannot force you to salvation. **He shall offer it of his own voluntary will.** You must hear the Scripture and believe that Christ is your atonement.

**John 3:14-15 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: {15} That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.**

Jesus Christ was lifted up on that Cross for you and for me. You must *voluntarily believe in Him, put your hand on His head.*

Jesus Christ died in our place, so that:

**John 11:26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in [Him] shall never die.** Believest thou this?

When God told ancient Israel to offer the bullock and the lamb, the Lord was giving a foreshadowing of the Cross.

**Acts 10:43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.**

What did any of us do to earn our salvation? Did we do a good work? Did we do something that no one else could do?

No! We laid our hand on the Head of the Son. We said to the Father, “Upon Christ be my sin, upon Christ be my curse – blessed be the Name of Christ!” It is the Blood of Christ that makes payment for my sin, faith in His Blood.

**Romans 3:25-27 Whom God hath set forth [to be] a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; {26} To declare, [I say], at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. {27} Where [is] boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.**

Where is our boasting? We who are saved **boast on Jesus Christ alone**. Though Christians may differ and may divide among denominational lines there is one thing we agree on, and that is it is Jesus Christ *alone*

**Revelation 1:5 ... that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,**

We who are saved are saved by faith in Him. We have placed our hand on His head, transferring our sin to Him. He, our Lord and our God, willingly took our sin upon Himself, bearing our penalty and our shame. Because of Him we sing triumphantly:

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

**Oh! precious is the flow  
That makes me white as snow;  
No other fount I know,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus<sup>1</sup>.**

C.H. Spurgeon stated:<sup>2</sup>

**“An awakened conscience will never be quieted with anything less than the blood of the Lamb: it rests at the sight of the great Sacrifice, but nowhere else. A conscience smarting under at sense of sin is an unequalled fountain of misery. Let conscience once begin to scourge the sinner, and he will find it to be the most terribly tormentor out of hell. I do not know whether the prophet Isaiah was really sawn asunder by Manasseh, but we know that some of the saints suffered that torture; yet surely a saw that should gradually cut a man in halves from head to foot is a faint picture of what conscience can, do when it begins to operate upon the mind with all its cutting**

1 Words & Music: Robert Lowry, in Gospel Music, by William Doane and Robert Lowry (New York: Biglow & Main, 1876)

2 sermon *Slaying The Sacrifice*, March 23, 1884

force. What a divine atonement; that must be which calms the storms of an accusing conscience and gives the soul a lasting peace. Some may trifle with their consciences, but where God is at work men dare not attempt it.”

What are my works toward salvation in comparison with His? My works for years *hindered* my salvation.

My righteousnesses – filthy as they were – gave me a false sense of security. Surely I was *good enough* or *moral enough* to get into God's Heaven! Yet the fact that Christ had to die shows all my works to be but an illusion and a lie! In **Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9)**. Consider the magnitude of His Person, and then consider that **Christ had to die for you**. Consider that **Jesus Christ is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens (Hebrews 7:26)**, and then consider that **He had to die for you**. He had to die the just for the unjust:

1 Peter 3:18 For **Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God**, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

He had to die. He did not die in His bed sleeping. He did not die of contagion. He did not die because He sinned and deserved the death of the criminal. He was taken by wicked hands, scourged, spit on, and nailed to a tree for

you and for me. “**Cursed is every one who hangs on a tree**” (Galatians 3:13). He bore Adam's curse for you and I, and did so willingly.

### **3. The Lord's Table Reminds Us What We Owe Him**

As we come to the close of our service today, we come to the Lord's Table. As we partake of this Table we will remember how:

**Luke 22:19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.**

The Lamb of God came voluntarily to give His Body for you. He was not forced to Calvary, but drawn the love of God for His fallen creation. His Body, nailed to the Cross, was given for you. We remember how Jesus took the cup, saying:

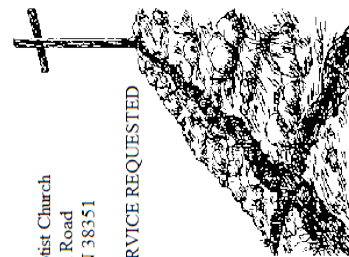
**Luke 22:20 ... This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.**

Jesus had to die. Listen, dear friends. If you have not placed your hand on the Head of the Sacrifice then you are yet dead in your sins. When the bullock was offered the atonement applied only to those who put their hand on its head. As we partake of the Lord's Table today we are remembering when we put our hand on the Head of the Son. We are remembering the day we surrendered our lives to Him, and believed on Him unto salvation.

May God touch your hearts with His Holy Word!

## **Prayer**

**LORD, how we desire to see Your face. Draw our hearts, dear Lord, and let us come unto You. Blessed Spirit, help us, we pray, for we are but dust. Come, Holy Spirit, and give right thoughts to us as we come to this Communion Table. Dear Savior, we put ourselves under Your sacred patronage. We thank You for being the Lamb of God. We thank You for offering up Your life for ours. We praise You for delivering us from the Egypt that is this world along with its false gods. We adore You for bringing us from the gulf of dark despair, wherein we wretched sinners once laid. You have set our feet upon the Rock, and put a new song in our mouths. Thank You, Blessed Lord, for the Cup of Your Blood and the Bread of Your Body. You are our Bread of Life. By faith we now once more put our hand upon Your head and ask that You put Your hand upon our lives. In Jesus' Name and for God's Glory we ask this. Amen.**



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED