

The Weapons of Our Warfare Part 3

THERE IS POWER IN THE BLOOD - COVENANT

Why all that Blood? (Heb 9:19-22, Lev 17:11)

Without the SHEDDING of BLOOD, there is no FORGIVENESS.

- * We UNDERESTIMATE the HORROR of SIN in the eyes of a holy God.

Can you describe how the 'scarlet thread' weaves through the whole Bible? What stands out to you in these verses about the necessity of blood for forgiveness?

Why do you think modern Christians often underestimate the seriousness of sin in the eyes of a holy God? In what ways do we tend to soften or minimize sin today?

- * All those Old Testament SACRIFICES had to be made to ATONE for all that SIN.
- * The trouble is, atonement was only TEMPORARY: It could COVER sin, but it couldn't TAKE IT AWAY.

OT sacrifices could 'cover' sin but not 'take it away.' What's the difference, and why does it matter?

- * God provided a LAMB for Abraham & Isaac (Gen 22:6-8) and God provided a LAMB for us 2000 years later (John 1:29, 3:16, Eph 1:6-7).
- * All that ritual Old Testament blood FORESHADOWED the final, ultimate, once-and-for-all SACRIFICE that fully satisfied & fulfilled the Law.

How does all that Old Testament blood 'foreshadow' Jesus' sacrificial death? How would our understanding be diminished without the foreshadowing?

- * Jesus therefore CUT a NEW covenant with mankind: this one was far BETTER, based on BETTER PROMISES (Heb 8:6-12).

What makes the new covenant 'better' than the old?

COVENANT

Defⁿ: A formal, legally-binding AGREEMENT which redefines the RELATIONSHIP between two parties setting out mutual OBLIGATIONS, including the BENEFITS of keeping it & the consequences of BREAKING it.

- * Covenant is the FRAMEWORK God uses to ESTABLISH & DEFINE His RELATIONSHIP with His people.
- * 2 tribes would cut covenant for PROTECTION, EQUALITY & demonstrate bonds of FRIENDSHIP & COMMITMENT.

How would you explain 'covenant' to someone unfamiliar with the concept? How does knowing you are in a legally-binding, God-initiated covenant affect the way you think about your relationship with Him?

ELEMENTS of Covenant Signing Process

1. SLAUGHTER ANIMAL
2. Cutting Wrists: Mix blood & create a SCAR
3. Determine Covenant TERMS
4. Exchange of ROBES
5. Exchange of NAMES
6. Giving of GIFTS
7. Celebratory MEAL
8. Plant a MEMORIAL

Which element helps you understand Jesus' work in a deeper way, and why? How does seeing these ancient rituals fulfilled in Christ enrich your worship?

The SIGNIFICANCE: We are in COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP with God Almighty, negotiated by mediator Jesus, signed & sealed with the only power in the universe that could deliver what it promised
= JESUS' SHED BLOOD

When we face the Enemy, we do so not with mere hope, wishful thinking or mustered determination, but with delegated authority & covenant power: the legal rights we possess as God's adopted children, co-heirs with Christ, & the bold assurance that comes from His unbreakable promises

Why was Jesus' shed blood the 'only power in the universe that could deliver what it promised?'
How does this truth shape your confidence when facing spiritual opposition?

DAVID & GOLIATH: Goliath to David is not enormous, invincible or terrifying. Goliath is UNCIRCUMCISED.

- * No CIRCUMCISION means no COVENANT & therefore, no CHANCE.

Why is David focused on Goliath being 'uncircumcised?'
How does seeing the story through a covenant lens explain David's unusual confidence?

Twofold Message

1. Your relationship with God (& thus everything else) is defined by the STRENGTH of your COVENANT.
2. Your STANCE of FAITH is based upon the POWER of that covenant.

Where, in general, do you need to stand in covenant confidence rather than fear, uncertainty or self-effort?

What area of your life would look different if you truly acted upon the authority and identity you have as a covenant child of God?