

*A Hebrew's Search
For the Blood of
Atonement*



*"Thy Word
Is
Truth"*



The Apostolic Faith

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A HEBREW'S SEARCH FOR THE BLOOD OF ATONEMENT

IN the spring of 1898 I was holding some Gospel meetings in San Francisco, and several times addressed the Jews attending a "Mission to Israel." On one occasion, after I had concluded my discourse, the meeting was thrown open for discussion with any Hebrews who desired to ask questions or state difficulties, and also for any who had been brought to Christ to tell of their conversions.

The experience of one old Jew interested me greatly, and as nearly as I can give his remarks in his own words, though not attempting to preserve the inimitable Hebrew-English dialect, this is what he said:

"This is Passover week among you, my Jewish brethren, and as I sat here, I was thinking how you will be observing it. You will have put away all leaven from your houses; you will eat the matzoth (unleavened wafers) and the roasted lamb. You will attend the synagogue services and carry out the ritual and directions of the Talmud; but you forget, my brethren, that you have everything but that which Jehovah required first of all. He did not say, 'When I see the leaven put away, or when I see you eat the matzoth, or the lamb, or go to the

synagogue'; but His word was, 'When I see the blood, I will pass over you.' Ah, my brethren, you can substitute nothing for this. You must have blood, **blood, BLOOD!**"

As he reiterated this word with ever-increasing emphasis his black eyes flashed warningly, and his Jewish hearers quailed before him.

"Blood! It is an awful word for one who reveres the ancient oracle, and yet has no sacrifice. Turn where he will in the Book, the blood meets him, but let him seek as he may, he cannot find it in the Judaism of the present."

After a moment's pause, the patriarchal man went on somewhat as follows: "I was born in Palestine, nearly seventy years ago. As a child I was taught to read the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets. I early attended the synagogue and learned Hebrew from the rabbis. At first I believed what I was told, that ours was the true and only religion; but, as I grew older and studied the Law more intently, I was struck by the place the blood had in all the ceremonies outlined there, and equally struck by its utter absence in the ritual to which I was brought up.

"Again and again I read Exodus 12, and Leviticus 16, 17; and the latter chapter especially made me tremble as I thought of the great Day of Atonement and the place the blood had there. Day and night one verse would ring in my ears, 'It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul!' I knew I had broken the Law. **I needed atonement.**

Year after year, on that day, I beat my breast as I confessed my need of it; but it was to be made by blood, and there was no blood.

“In my distress, at last I opened my heart to a learned and venerable rabbi. He told me that God was angry with His people. Jerusalem was in the hands of the Gentiles, the temple was destroyed, and a Mohammedan mosque was erected in its place. The only spot on earth where we dare shed the blood of sacrifice, in accordance with Deuteronomy 12 and Leviticus 17, was desecrated, and our nation scattered. That was why there was no blood. God had Himself closed the way to carry out the solemn service of the great Day of Atonement. Now we must turn to the Talmud and rest on its instruction, and trust in the mercy of God and the merits of the fathers.

“I tried to be satisfied, but could not. Something seemed to say the Law was unaltered even though our temple was destroyed. Nothing else but blood could atone for the soul. We dared not shed blood for atonement elsewhere than in the place the Lord had chosen. Then we were left without an atonement at all!

“This thought filled me with horror. In my distress I consulted many other rabbis. I had but one great question – **‘Where can I find the blood of atonement?’**

“I was over thirty years of age when I left Palestine and came to Constantinople, with my still

unanswered question ever before my mind, and my soul exceedingly troubled about my sins.

“One night I was walking down one of the narrow streets of that city when I saw a sign telling of a meeting for the Jews. Curiosity led me to open the door and go in. Just as I took a seat I heard a man say, ‘The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ It was my first introduction to Christianity, but I listened breathlessly as the speaker told how God had declared that ‘without shedding of blood is no remission’; but He had given His only begotten Son, the Lamb of God, to die, and all who trusted in His Blood were forgiven all their iniquities. This was the Messiah of the fifty-third of Isaiah: this was the sufferer of Psalm 22. Ah, my brethren, I had found the Blood of Atonement at last! I trusted it, and now I love to read the New Testament and see how all the shadows of the Law are fulfilled in Jesus. His Blood has been shed for sinners. It has satisfied God, and it is the only means of salvation for either Jew or Gentile.”

Reader, have you yet found the Blood of Atonement? “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Are you trusting in God’s smitten Lamb – the sacrifice of God?