

The Blood Covenants
A High-Level Study of the First and Last Blood Covenants

A Caleb's Promise Ministry Teaching

Origin of the Blood Covenant

The first blood covenant is between God and Abram in Genesis 15. However, blood covenants have been around since shortly after the beginning of man with evidence they were in effect before the covenant struck between God and Abram in Genesis 15. It appears it may have started as early as Genesis 3:21 when God made Adam and Eve coats of skins to cover their nakedness and the shed blood as atonement for their sin before they were expelled from the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3:24. Because there is evidence blood covenants were in effect before Abram, it had to be God-given.

Why a “Blood” Covenant?

According to God, the life of the flesh is in the blood, and blood makes an atonement (first covenant) or redemption (second covenant) for the soul. So, it is “blood to blood” or “life to life.” Blood is precious to God. Blood covenants are for eternity and breach of the covenant is punishable by death.

Leviticus 17:10-11

¹⁰ And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set My face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

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.

The “life” in the blood of the substitute animal covers the sin(s) for a spiritually dead individual and a spiritually dead Israel.

How the Blood Covenant Works

The blood covenant, in the traditional sense, is not practiced in the Western world any longer. You may find it still practiced in parts of Africa, the rural Middle East, and the rural Orient. It is important for us to understand how the blood covenant works. If one doesn't understand the blood covenant God made with Abraham and with Jesus Christ, they don't fully understand grace, their position in Christ, their inheritance and heritage, and their power and authority.

The first blood covenant between God and man was in Genesis 15. God made other covenants with man, but this was the first blood covenant between God and man. God made a promise to Abram to make him the father of many nations and to give he and his descendants an inheritance of land to live upon peacefully. Abram asked the question we would all have asked at that time:

Genesis 15:8

And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?
We can see in Genesis 15:18 God made a blood covenant with Abram:

Genesis 15:18

In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

Let's examine the covenant ritual.

Two families come together in a marriage covenant or two tribes come together in a mutual association covenant. The two families or two tribes drew up the terms of their agreement and discussed them article by article until there was mutual agreement. The families or tribes chose two representatives and the location to cut the covenant.

Three large animals, maybe more, were sacrificed. The animal's bodies were split in half and the two sides of the carcass were laid opposite each other. Between the halves of the animals was a trail of blood.

The covenant ceremony would begin with the two representatives exchanging coats, symbolic of a mutual exchange of authority. This signified "all that I do, all that I have is yours." Next, the two representatives would exchange weapons, symbolic of an exchange of strength and signifying "my strength is now your strength, and your enemies are now my enemies." The "walk of blood" occurred next. Each representative would walk through the "way of blood" twice, stopping in the middle to proclaim pledges of loyalty to each other – promises that could NEVER be broken. This was known as the "blessing of the covenant." Conversely, curses were also spoken, which were to fall upon whomever broke the covenant. The blessings and curses were sworn by God making God the third party to the covenant. **Ultimately, and this is VERY important to us understanding our blood covenant through Christ, breaking the covenant is punishable by death.**

The concluding act of the blood covenant ritual was for the representatives to cut their wrists and hands and bind their arms together by rope, so the blood intermingled. The families or tribes then joined their names together as a permanent sign they were now one. The last act was to have a covenant meal together of bread and wine. The bread symbolized their flesh and the wine their blood. The meal symbolized their willingness to lay down their lives for each other – give their bodies and their blood for each other.

Purpose of the Blood Covenant Between God and Abram

The blood covenant between God and man was necessary because of Adam's transgression. The purpose of the first covenant was to make a way into the earth for the Son of man, Jesus Christ. God had to work through a man, Abram, to make a covenant which would provide for Jesus Christ to come into the earth. Remember God had given the title deed of the earth to man, and Adam had lost it to Satan. God now had to work through man to take back the title deed. God, as a Spirit, had no legal authority in the earth. To operate in the earth purely as the Spirit,

without man's permission, was spiritually illegal for God. Jesus was 100% man and 100% God. However, Jesus could not operate as the Son of God and had to set aside His Godhead and operate as the Son of man. To do otherwise was illegal according to God's Word.

Again, I feel it bears explanation why God wanted to get Jesus Christ into the earth. It was ALL ABOUT US – Mankind. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son....” God wanted Abram to see that without a doubt, punishable by death, God loved Abram dearly and his seed after him. God wanted Abram to know that He desired this relationship and that He, God, would exchange His power, His riches, His wisdom, His strength, His honor, His glory, and His Blessing with Abram and his seed, after him – unto a thousand generations. Are you saying, “wow” yet?!

God's Blood Covenant with Abraham

We understand “why” the covenant was cut between God and Abraham. Let's look more closely at the covenant itself. There are two events that take place in Genesis 15 and Genesis 17, but one blood covenant.

Genesis 15:9-10

⁹ And He [God] said unto him [Abram], Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

¹⁰ And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

Genesis 15:17-18

¹⁷ And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

¹⁸ In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

We can see the “trail of blood” established by the halves of the animals set against each other in Genesis 15:9-10. The smoking furnace and burning lamp are symbolic of God walking the trail of blood.

The blood covenant of Genesis 15 was the first of a two-part event between God and Abram. In Genesis 17 there is the second blood covenant event cut between God and Abraham. The events of Genesis 15 and Genesis 17 creates confusion for some. The two events are the one blood covenant. In Genesis 15, God's substitute, the slain animal's blood mingles with the blood of Abraham's circumcision in Genesis 17 to create one blood covenant. In Genesis 15, God is bound to Abram, but Abram doesn't have to be bound to God. In Genesis 17, the blood covenant is completed by Abraham being bound to God. With the circumcision, the blood is mingled. The circumcision is a seal and visible “cut” scar of the covenant. Now, God and Abraham as both bound to each other in blood covenant.

As part of this new covenant, God changed Abram and Sarai's names to Abraham, “Prince of God, Father of Many Nations, Father of Princes” and Sarah, “Princess of God, Mother of

Nations, Mother of Princes.” In both names, God inserted His name into Abraham’s and Sarah’s. The “h” in Abraham and Sarah’s name signified God’s name. In Genesis 14 we see in the Hebrew God “call things that be not as though they were” by calling Abram, “Blessed be Abram of God, the possessor of Heaven and earth.” God was calling Abram His son, His prince. God placed Abraham and Sarah in the royal family BEFORE He cut the covenant with them.

Genesis 17:4

As for Me, behold, My covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Notice God says, “As for Me..” God is saying, I’m bound in blood covenant to you. Abraham didn’t have to bound himself to God, but God had already bound Himself to Abraham.

Genesis 17:7

And I will establish My covenant **between Me and thee and thy seed after thee** in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

REVELATION: This is so important. God not only cut a blood covenant with Abraham, but He also cut a blood covenant with Jesus Christ in Heaven at the same time. Jesus would fulfill His part of the covenant years later with His sacrifice and death.

Galatians 3:16

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.

Genesis 17:10-11

¹⁰ This is My covenant, which ye shall keep, between Me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

¹¹ And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token [seal] of the covenant betwixt Me and you.

Circumcision became the seal of the Old Covenant between God and the nation of Israel. God commanded every Israeli male to be circumcised. Thereafter, every Israeli male at 8 days of age was circumcised.

In Genesis 17:1, God refers to Himself as “Almighty God.” In Hebrew it translates to “El Shaddai,” the “more than enough God.” In Hebrew, “El” means “supreme,” and “Shaddai” means “the breasty one.” God promised to be the supreme provider of everything for His children – to be their father, their mother, their nurse, their provider, their prosperer, their healer, their deliverer, and their protector.

What did the Blood Covenant with Abraham Mean to the Nation of Israel and the Jew?

The blood covenant between God and Abraham brought all the power, riches, might, and position of God to His people. God was bound by covenant to deliver Israel from Egypt. This has never happened in history to any other nation. As long as Israel kept the covenant, there were no sick, no barren wombs, no babies died, no enemy armies could even conquer a village,

no Israeli soldiers were slain in battle, and there was plenty of water, grain, livestock, oil, and wine. Israel and its people were protected, delivered, healed, and prospered. God was bound to perform this for Israel and its people if they kept the covenant.

How Powerful Was the Blood Covenant to Abraham?

The Word tells us in Romans 4:21 the blood covenant between God and Abraham completely convinced Abraham that God was and always would be true to His Word, to the blood covenant He cut with Abraham. God swore a loyalty oath to Abraham:

Romans 4:21

¹⁹ And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:

²⁰ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

²¹ And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

The blood covenant was the reason Abraham had absolutely no issue when God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. We can see this with complete certainty in Genesis 22.

Genesis 22:2-3

² And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

³ And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

I hope you notice Abraham's attitude in these verses and the rest of Genesis 22. When God told Abraham to sacrifice his only son, did Abraham argue or plead with God not to do this? NO!! Abraham got up early the next day and headed out. If Abraham had any misgivings, he certainly would not have gotten up early and there would have been arguments or pleadings with God.

Genesis 22:5

And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

Ha, I laugh in joy, confidence, surety, certainty, trust, and love. Abraham was SO SURE of God's covenant promises to him, he had no issue sacrificing his son because Abraham was so convinced that even if Abraham did kill Isaac, God would raise him from the dead. Else, if God did not keep His covenant with Abraham, God would have to die. Isn't this truly amazing!!!! MY GOD. This is MY GOD!! Abraham told the two young servants to wait and Isaac and he would return when they were done worshipping. I just love it. I am overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit as I write this. MY GOD!! He is MY GOD!!

Hebrews 11:17-19

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

¹⁸ Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

¹⁹ Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

Now, I'm going to blow your mind with what you read next. It certainly blew my mind. When Abraham laid down his son Isaac on the altar of sacrifice and had every intention of sacrificing him, Abraham opened the way for his covenant partner, God, to do the very same thing with His Son Jesus Christ years later on the cross. God had Abraham sacrifice a ram, caught in a thicket, as Abraham's sacrifice in the blood covenant "walk of blood." God would sacrifice Jesus for His "walk of blood."

God had found in Abraham a true covenant-keeping man. One that would keep God's covenant even if it meant his son's or his death. Because of Abraham's faith in his covenant with God, God swore Himself to Abraham.

Genesis 22:16

¹⁶ And said, By Myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

¹⁷ That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

¹⁸ And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice.

Please note in Genesis 22:17, God says, "...thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;". We see this happen in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and the scriptures tell us in Revelation 1:18 that Christ possessed the gate of His enemies.

Revelation 1:18

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Notice in Genesis 22:17, God says, "thy seed shall possess the gate..." In Revelation 1:18, Jesus Christ "possesses" the "keys" to the gate of "hell and death."

Abraham Became Mankind's Intecessor Because of the Blood Covenant

When Abraham entered into the blood covenant with God, he gained the right to be the arbiter between man and God. We see this in Genesis 18 when Jesus Christ and two angels visited with Abraham on their way to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. What's important to note is it was the two angels that carried out the sentence on Sodom and Gomorrah. So, where was Jesus Christ? Jesus had returned to the Father. He came to visit with Abraham to make Abraham aware of His plans and allow Abraham, His blood covenant partner, to intercede for the wicked cities.

Abraham established the covenant relationship of man as intercessor to God on behalf of the saved man and woman. We see this in Jesus Christ, who, as part of His covenant responsibilities, stands before God as a Man, and as our Intercessor.

Read Genesis 18:17-19.

Read Genesis 20:17

What Israel Gained As Part of the Blood Covenant

With the blood covenant between God and Abraham, the nation of Israel became the Blood Covenant Nation. We see plainly God set up Israel to be above all nations of the earth and receive unusual blessings:

Exodus 19:5-6

⁵ Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

⁶ And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

- A. **Deliverer** – God promised to deliver His children from Egypt, a picture of the world (Genesis 15:13-16; Exodus 2:23-25; Deuteronomy 4:29-31; Deuteronomy 7:8; Psalm 91:3; Psalm 91:11). By covenant, God had to deliver them.
- B. **Protector** - God promised physical protection from enemies, pestilence, and disease (Exodus 13:21-22; Exodus 14:13-14, 19-20, 30; Exodus 15:26; Deuteronomy 8:4; Psalm 91:4-7, 10-11). By covenant, God had to protect them.
- C. **Healer** - God promised to heal all their diseases and afflictions (Exodus 23:25; Psalm 103:3; Deuteronomy 7:15; Psalm 107:20; II Chronicles 30:20; Psalm 30:2; Psalm 91:11). By covenant, God had to heal them.
- D. **Provider** - God promised to provide for them (Exodus 11:2-3; Exodus 12:35-36; Exodus 16:4-5, 11-15; Exodus 17:6; Deuteronomy 6:10-11; Deuteronomy 8:7-10; Psalm 91:11).
- E. **Law** - God promised His children He would set them “on high above all nations of the earth.” The Law set Israel apart from all the rest of the earth. It protected the lineage of the “Seed” and made possible Christ’s entry to the earth as the Son of man. The Law made Israel a “peculiar people” upon whom God could bestow unusual blessings. It is important to understand the Law existed from before the foundation of the world. The Law is the standard of God’s righteousness. For Christ to fulfill the Law on earth, it had to be introduced in the earth. Once Christ fulfilled it, the Law was not set aside because it will be used to judge the unsaved at the Great White Throne Judgment. The Believer cannot be accused by the Law because Christ fulfilled it on the Believer’s behalf.
- F. **Priesthood** – Because of the Law, there was a need for a divinely appointed priesthood to oversee God’s Law on earth. Again, for Christ to become the High Priest of the New Covenant, the priesthood had to be introduced into the earth. Remember the order of things according to Christ in Matthew 18:18-19. It must be done on earth before it can be done in Heaven.
- G. **Sacrifices** – Along with the priesthood came sacrifices; especially the “atonement” sacrifice which was introduced with the Law. Prior to the atonement sacrifice, the only sacrifices the Israelites had known were the Peace Offering, Meal (or Meat) Offering, and the Whole Burnt

Offering. These were offerings for fellowship. With the introduction of the Law, the Atonement Offerings of Trespass and Sin were introduced. Trespass was for sins against your brother and Sin was for sins against the Holy things of God. (See Leviticus 1-7 for the offerings).

- H. **Blessings** – God promised to bless them (Genesis 12:2-3; Deuteronomy 6:10-11; Deuteronomy 8:7-10; Deuteronomy 28:1-14; Psalm 112). By covenant, God was obligated to bless them.
- I. **Judgment** – When Israel departed from the covenant, God promised to judge them (study Leviticus 26).

Why Did God Choose Circumcision As The Seal Of The Blood Covenant?

Why circumcision? The seed passes through the seal of the covenant. Remember God's promise to Abraham. When the seed of a covenant man passed through the seal, God remembered His promise to Abraham and his seed.

Genesis 12:7

And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

Genesis 15:5

And He brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

Genesis 15:18

In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

Genesis 17:7

And I will establish my covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

And we see through scripture God's plan was to bring the Seed, Jesus Christ, through Abraham's generations. But, it had to start with Abraham and the first covenant. Remember I mentioned earlier that God not only made covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15, but He also made covenant with Jesus Christ, Abraham's Seed, in Genesis 15. As Abraham fulfilled his part of the covenant in Genesis 17, Jesus fulfilled His part of the covenant at Calvary. Praise God forevermore!! Thank you Father!

Galatians 3:16

¹⁶Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

In closing on the Abrahamic Covenant, God prepared His people, physical in the Jews, spiritual in the Jews and the Gentiles, for the coming of Jesus Christ, the New Covenant. In doing so, God gave the nation of Israel the Law of the Covenant, the priesthood of the Covenant, the

atonement of the Covenant, and the sacrifices and offerings of the Covenant. These all were a “type” and a “shadow” of the greater things to come in the New Covenant.

It is important to understand the New Covenant, which we will study next, is built upon the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant did not go away. God built upon the Abrahamic Covenant with the Covenant of Jesus Christ.

Extra Nuggets of Learning From the Old Covenant

Moses could not go into the Promised Land because he misrepresented God to the children. The first time Moses was told to strike the rock. It was a type and shadow of Christ, the Seed, which would be struck, and living water would come out of Him. Jesus spoke to the woman at the well saying I have living water which you haven't yet drank. The next time Moses was told to speak to the rock. Jesus was not going to be struck twice. God was trying to teach Moses a principle. In John 16:24 Jesus tells His disciples, “hitherto ye have asked nothing in My name; ask and ye shall receive that your joy be full.” Jesus will be struck once and then we shall speak to the rock in the name of Jesus. Amen! It cost Moses to misrepresent God's Word.

God introduced the blood covenant to the world through Abraham. Deuteronomy in the Greek means “the second law.” It's not a “second law,” but it is the second reading for a generation that never heard it because they were not at Mt. Sinai. In Exodus 19:5-8, at Mt. Sinai, God says, “if you keep My covenant...”. The law hadn't been given yet. These were the first instructions given. The covenant spoken of is the covenant of Abraham, the covenant of faith, be ye justified by faith. Deuteronomy 27 is the re-telling of the covenant to the children that had grown up the 40 years in the wilderness. They needed to be reminded of the covenant. There were sons of Jacob in Mt. Gerizim, in the south, speaking the blessings and in Mt. Ebal, to the north, speaking the curses. Mt. Ebal, had the sons of Jacob with the maidservant and the blessing mountain to the south had Jacob's sons with Rachel and Leah. The Kingdom splits after David into a south and north. The sons on Mt. Gerizim were the Promise Seed of Abraham which we as Believers have been grafted into as a Son. We are not a maidservant.

We are given a picture in Joshua 8:29-35 of what is to happen in the future with the New Covenant, through Jesus Christ, to remove the curse. Joshua has the sons of Jacob, represented by the tribes, stand on Mt Gerizim, in the south, the mountain of blessing, and Mt. Ebal, the mountain of cursing, in the north, to pronounce the blessings and the curses, and erects an altar at the base of Mt. Ebal, the cursing mountain. The altar was built at the base of the cursing mountain to remove the curse, not curse half of Israel and bless the other half as is wrongly interpreted by many churches. The king of Ai, a gentile, is hung on a tree between the two mountains to remove the curse because cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree. Jesus became the curse for us. The body was taken down before the evening just as it would happen to Jesus. The Hebrew word for sin, chattah'ah,” is also the same Hebrew word for sin offering. Where there is sin, there is always a sin offering.

In Genesis 4:7, when God said to Cain, “sin lieth at the door...,” He is saying we have a choice to do well and have a sin offering, or we have a choice not to do well and have sin. Romans 5:20 “..but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”

Joshua and Caleb had “covenant” on their minds. That is why they knew they could take the land from the giants.

You can't understand Deuteronomy 28 if you don't understand Deuteronomy 27. And you can't understand 27 if you don't understand Exodus 19 - under the covenant of faithful Abraham. Exodus 23:25. You will serve the LORD your God. STUDY!!!!

Joshua 8. Jericho is the first fruits. All the spoil belongs to God. The spoil of Ai, the next city conquered in the Promised Land, belongs to the children of Israel. This is covenant.