

THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB OF GOD IN THE BOOK OF JOHN AND THE REVELATION

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ABSTRACT

The Gospel of John and the book of Revelation contain more references to Jesus as the Lamb of God, whose blood was shed for redemption, than any other New Testament writings. The objectives of this paper are (1) to examine the redemptive purpose of the blood of the Lamb of God, (2) to examine the Passover theme, eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Passover lamb in John's Gospel (3) to examine passages that exposes redemption by blood in Revelation chapter 1, 5, and "the blood of the Lamb" in 6, 12 and 19, and finally (4) concludes with the agreement between John's Gospel and the Revelation which speaks of the Lamb's blood as the fulfilment of the Passover in Christ's death for redemption. Furthermore, the conclusion promotes the view that the Gospel of John and the Revelation have no place for the common practice of pleading the blood of Jesus Christ for material gains like protection from physical pains, healings, and personal earthly problems, as is commonly practiced in our society. It distinguishes true biblical prayers in the New Testament from the cultural practice often known as 'pleading the blood'.

KEYWORDS: Blood, Spiritual, Lamb, Passover, and Salvation.

INTRODUCTION

In the time past, the Lamb was often used for sacrifice as a peace or guilt offering. Why the Lamb for sacrifice? This is probably because of its innocent, submissive, and gentle nature compared to other domestic animals. The writer thinks John the Apostle had primarily the fulfilment of the Exodus Passover Ceremony in mind when he quoted the words of John the Baptist on two occasions. He drew the attention of his disciples to Jesus and said, "Look, the Lamb of God" in verses 1:29 and 1:36, pointing back primarily to the sacrificial Lamb in Exodus 12. When someone sinned, a lamb had to be provided for sacrifice because God could not ignore that sin; it had to be atoned for. There had to be the judgment of death for sin against God. John the Baptist's recognition of Jesus as the Lamb of God could not have come from his innate knowledge but was a revelation from God. Jesus was identified by John as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world," but what Lamb? Could the lamb be literal,

as it was done in the Old Testament? Burge suggested that the Lamb here refers to the Passover sacrifice, which could be a Lamb. This Lamb could also be the sacrificial Lamb of Isaiah 53:7, or even an allusion to the Lamb in Genesis 22:8, provided to Abraham to preserve Isaac's life (Burge 73-74). Another possibility would be the Lamb sacrifice done daily in the temple, both in the morning and evening (Exodus 29:38).

All these are possible, but it is reasonable to think that for a Palestinian Jew, all Lamb sacrifices were memorials of deliverance, forgiveness of sin, cleansing or atonement, and for looking ahead to messianic salvation, which is the centre of faith. Carson emphasizes that John the Baptist identifies Jesus (John 1:29) as the fulfilment of the Passover sacrificial system, portraying him as the ultimate Lamb provided by God to atone for humanity's sins. This recognition connects Jesus to the Lamb in Isaiah 53:4, 7, highlighting his role in bearing the sins of the world, who took our infirmities and carried our sorrows. Like a Lamb, he was led to the slaughter. The Lord has laid upon him the iniquity of us all (Carson 144-147).

PASSOVER BLOOD FULFILLMENT IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

This section focuses on the blood of Christ and Jesus as the Lamb of God in the Gospel of John. First, it examines John 1:29, "The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." Jesus as "the Lamb of God" is mentioned twice in John chapter 1 for emphasis (1:29, 1:36). This serves as an introduction to the saving works of Jesus in John's Gospel. Also it explains John chapter 6 on "Eat my flesh and drink my blood for eternal life", how it relates to the repetition of Passover in John 2:13, 6:4. It further explains the reason why John used the word Passover more than other Gospels (John 2:13, 23, 6:4, 11:55, 12:1, 13:1, 18:28, 39, 19:14). These references look forward to John 19:34-37, on the blood and water that pours out of Jesus' side on the cross. The blood, which was much like the blood in Exodus 12, is also studied.

The phrase "takes away the sins of the world" in John 1:29 underscores the universal nature of Jesus' redemptive work. Carson further explains that this indicates Jesus' mission beyond Israel by offering salvation to all humanity. One of the key things I see here is, we see Jesus as a gift provided by God to take away the sins of the world. As a lamb, he becomes a sacrificial animal whose death carries away the sin. So by this, it is logical to see Jesus in the Passover imagery, in line with the Jewish festival of Passover. We can also see Jesus in a bigger picture or context; Jesus is seen as the perfect representation of the Passover Lamb all over. Kostenberger saw Jesus' declaration by John the Baptist in John 1:29 with much interest. He observed it as the ultimate fulfilment of the yearly Passover Lamb, as it is in Exodus 12 and John 19:36. Verse 36 is a John quotation from Exodus 12 that confirms the blood from Jesus' side as fulfilment of the Passover blood, whose bones must not be broken, binds the

relationship of Exodus 12:7-12, and John 19:34, is that the blood that poured out of Jesus' side represents the Lamb's blood that rescued the Israelites from death in Egypt (Kostenberger 67). His Blood that was poured out (for the redemption of the world), was for the salvation of all who believe by faith in God.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal Life". This passage points to the Son given by God as the Passover sacrificial Lamb who redeemed and offers eternal life. The purpose for which he gave was for his son to die to save humanity from sin. The Lamb of God takes away sin by the special means of sacrificial and substitutionary death. Kostenberger refers to Borchert, commenting that the term "takes away" and is sacrificial atonement (135-136). This is better described in Leviticus 16 rather than Exodus 12. John uses 1:29, "take away the sins of the world," and Exodus 12:7, "the blood of the Lamb at the doorpost", and Leviticus 16:15:

Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it over the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat; thus he shall make atonement for the Holy place, because of the uncleanness of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions and their sins.

The Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world represents the Lamb's blood that saved the Israelites, and also the blood of the bull that atoned for the sins Israel's sins in Leviticus. The blood of the animals in the Old Testament and Jesus' blood served as a tool for the forgiveness of sins and salvation to Israel and to us today. More so, "sin" is in the singular, referring to the totality of the world's sin rather than to several individuals. However, as the God's Lamb, Jesus takes upon himself the sin of not only Israel as his own people but the sin of the entire world. I noted the phrase in John 3:16, "For whoever believes," and 1:26, "the sins of the world", to have similar implications; both phrases have no discrimination or boundaries for whoever believes, the Lamb has taken his or her sin away already. The lamb came to save the entire world (John 3:17). This affirms "takes away sins" because of the condemned nature of the world, yet in 1:12-13, all those who believe by faith in the redemptive work in v29 of the Lamb are not condemned but saved. Jesus is often referred to as the Passover Lamb, and this is really supported by the apparent identification of Jesus' sacrifice to die on behalf of everybody on earth with the Passover in John 19:36. Morris asserts that there is no doubt that the Passover was an expiatory sacrifice (Morris, p. 129). We should note that Exodus 12 Passover does not refer to taking away sin or forgiveness. Leviticus 16, Isaiah 53, and John 1:29 are the passages that speak of animal sacrificial atonement and the forgiveness of sins. The animals served as a sin offering to God. The Passover was sometimes viewed in the manner of Isaiah 53:7, "The Lamb led to the slaughter," which is pointing to the lamb that takes away sin by death in Jeremiah 11:19.

In John 6:53-57, “to eat Jesus’ flesh and drink his blood”, these words of Jesus confused the Jews because they were thinking of his literal flesh and blood. Jesus’ expression of eating his flesh and drinking his blood means trusting and believing in him, especially in his death for the sins of mankind. Jesus’ speech during the Passover season connotes that he expected the Jews to connect his Messianic signs with the Old Testament. The Old Testament demanded a fulfilment of the Passover Lamb in a person who would fulfill it in himself, the symbolism of the Passover ceremony. Jesus expected these Jews to make that connection with the Lamb who takes sin on himself, as written in Isaiah 53:4-6.

MacDonald added that eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Jesus is an assurance of everlasting life, and whoever does not partake will have no life. Whoever eats his flesh and drinks his blood believes in him and has eternal life; all those who believe in him will be raised on the last day (MacDonald 1505-6). This refers to those who have died believing and trusting in his redemptive work of salvation. The flesh of Jesus is food, and his blood is drink indeed. This is contrary to the physical food of this world, which is of temporary value. The value of Jesus’ death is never-ending; those who partake of him by faith receive life and go on forever. We should always keep in mind that a very close union exists between Jesus and those who believe in him, because whoever eats his flesh and drinks his blood abides in Him, and he abides in that person, which is nothing could be more intimate than

It is interesting and important to observe some Passover passages recorded in John’s Gospel (2:13, 2:23, 6:4, 11:55, 12:1, 13:1, 18:28,39), some reasons for his interest, and how it looks forward to John 19:14. In John 2:13, the Passover of the Jews was near and Jesus went up to Jerusalem there he found people selling and buying things in the Lord’s house. Lincoln asserts that the action took place against the backdrop of the festival and how Jesus is traditionally associated with the festival concern and its importance. By cleaning the temple, Jesus displayed passion for God’s house and was angry with the Jews for replacing commerce with worship (Lincoln 137).

In John 2:23, at the Passover feast, Jesus performed miracles, but something was wrong with the faith of those who believed at that particular Passover feast. Ramsey concludes that, even though the people trusted Jesus, He did not trust them; he did not accept their faith as genuine. They trusted him probably because of the fascination of what they saw made them believe. Jesus knew that the faith at this Passover miracle sign was mere human praise, not faith that gains eternal life (Ramsey 53). The eternal life in John 6:53-57, by eating and drinking the blood, is related to 3:16. Abiding is much like believing; both result leads to eternal life; believe, on the other hand, is what must be believed in, like Jesus taking away sins by his blood. Abiding by him relates to continuing and lasting results of believing that this faith does not stop. It progresses even when the believer is confused, as the disciples often were, and even when he

stumbles as all believers do from time to time, but they still abide and continue, like Peter did. A simple example is when we eat our normal literal food, it becomes part of our body same also applies to when we accept the Lord Jesus, our redeemer. He comes into our lives to abide, and we too abide continually dwelling in him forever. Unless we appropriate ourselves by faith the value of his death on Calvary, we can never be saved. In comparison, “eating the flesh and drinking the blood” and “take away the sins of the world,” thus by eating his body, we are believing in the sacrificial death (the offer of his body for sin), and by drinking his blood, we are believing in his shed blood for sin offering. Jesus now fulfils the Passover Lamb who offered Himself on behalf of humanity.

In John 6:4, as the Passover of the Jews approached, Jesus lifted his eyes and saw the crowd coming; they were coming directly towards Jesus and the apostles who were with him. Powel suggested that it is not possible that the people were on their way to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, that they were hungry, and Christ was by no means obligated to feed them, but a presence of need constituted a challenge that could not go unnoticed (Powel, p. 138). I suppose Jesus' act of charity was in line with the provision of food in the wilderness, like God did with the Israelites. Other Passover passages includes John 11:55, the Passover was near and the Jews had to go up to Jerusalem to purify themselves from any ceremonial uncleanness that would have prevented their participation, 12:1, six days before the Passover Jesus raised Lazarus from the death pointing to Jesus as the resurrection and recalling God's saving hands in Egypt, 13:1, Now before the feast of Passover, Jesus washed his disciples feet cleaning his new messianic community and portraying the humility of the Passover Lamb to be slain preparing them for redemption through his sacrificial death, 18:28, as it relates to 1 Corinthians 5:7 Jesus as the Passover Lamb. Jesus had already eaten the Passover meal with his disciples and was ready to be executed as the Passover Lamb. The people did not enter in order not to defile themselves here. Jesus became sin for our sake. At the Passover, it was a tradition to release one criminal. The people preferred the criminal to be released rather than the Son of God. This portrayed Jesus as the Passover Lamb given to be killed at the Passover.

All the above passages look forward to John 19:14, where Jesus used his final Passover meal to show that his sacrificial death would give new meaning to the Passover festival of the Jews. In John's Gospel, the cross became an altar where Christ, the Passover Lamb, was slain. Jesus' legs were not broken (19:33), this fulfilled the Passover quotation in 19:36, from Exodus 12:46. Blood ran freely from his wound in John 19:34, showing that his life was being exchanged for others; just as the Lamb died to save the lives of the Jewish families at the Passover in Egypt, so too the death of the Son of God on the cross serves to bring salvation to the sinful world no man can save himself because of the sinful nature. Bruner adds that the expression of the sixth hour,

twelve hours came about because John wished to present the death of Jesus similar to the Paschal Lamb (the Passover sacrifices were killed in the course of the afternoon), which could be his major motive for inserting the note of time (Bruner 1092). More to that is 1st Corinthians 5:7, giving exhortation to clean up and adopt a new life for Christ, our Passover Lamb, who has been sacrificed for our sins. This is so that we may be new in Christ; and 1st Peter 2:24, “For He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness, for by his wounds we became healed”.

There is no other sacrifice that can be more perfect than the offering of Jesus Christ. Keener observes the unique sequence of John’s Gospel when he said, “Jesus dies on the Passover.” He recognized the temple cleansing, which in the synoptic tradition is his final Passover. The Paschal Lamb here appears as the sacrificial Lamb “taking away the sins of the world”. John viewed the Passover as a form of sacrifice in which Jesus is portrayed in terms of the Passover Lamb in John 18:28, 19:36-37, and further explains as a quote from Exodus 12, a new redemption for the entire world (Keener 452).

The event in John 19:34-37 gives more credit to Jesus as the Passover Lamb. After the Passover feast, the next day was the Sabbath, and the Jews wouldn’t let the bodies of criminals hanging on the cross defile the land. As was the tradition of the Romans, after hanging victims on the cross, they broke the legs to hasten death. The squad of soldiers broke the legs of the two criminals hanging with Jesus, but when they came to Jesus, John made it clear that they did not break Jesus’ legs since he was already dead. This points to the Passover Lamb whose legs must not be broken, as it is in Exodus 12. Jesus was perfect for the sacrifice. One of the soldiers was probably in doubt whether Jesus was dead or not pierced Jesus’ side, and blood and water came out of the wound. A significant point of the piercing is the reversal that it is as the one pierced that Jesus becomes the source of salvation to those who look at him in faith. All humanity will look at the pierced Messiah at the last judgment to receive either deliverance or final condemnation (Zechariah 12:10). My presupposition is a related thought that is in John’s mind: the suffering servant in Isaiah 53:10 “Who was pierced for our transgressions.”

REVELATION PASSAGES ON THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

It is important to have it in mind that John the Apostle is the same author of John’s gospel and the Revelation given to him at Patmos Island. This section surveys the blood of the Lamb of God in the Book of Revelation, which concludes my interpretations from the Gospel of John. I focus on portraying Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb of God in John’s Gospel, whose redemptive work is made manifest in some of the Revelation passages. Some of the passages I considered are, Revelation 1:5, Jesus washing us from our sins in His own blood, 5:9, by His blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and nation, 7:14, those that washed their robes white in the blood

of the Lamb, 12:11, those that conquered by the blood of the Lamb, and 13:8, those names not written in the book of the Lamb who was slain.

The book of Revelation 1:5 expresses praise to God who washed us from our sins by his own blood. Boring opines that the result of this praise is the affirmation that the church is a beloved community. The Lamb has given us freedom from sin by the shedding of his own sacrificial blood. The mention of blood in Revelation 1 is connected to the slain Lamb of Revelation 5. John has resisted the temptation of the oppressed to believe that they are innocent and their oppressors are guilty. He knows that Christian existence is not innocent existence but a forgiven existence (Boring 77). He knows that forgiveness in the Old Testament sacrificial system is only at the cost of life. Like in the Old Testament, John does not think that blood has any saving efficacy as a substance; it only represents a “life” given to God. Jesus here is praised because he set us free from sin by giving up his life for us.

In Revelation 5:9, speaking of the blood of the Lamb who ransomed us from sin, from every tribe and language, and of the nations, he did it for all. The slain Lamb combines with the mention of his blood that frees us in Revelation 1. The word Lamb does occur in Revelation 5:8 and blood in 5:9; and the word Lamb is not in 1. The two references in one and five are connected by the same person, Jesus. Jesus now represents the fulfilment of the Passover Lamb in both passages by offering himself by his own blood, giving redemption. Carson and Moo assert that John describes what he sees as each seal is opened by the Lamb's conquest, he purchased the entire humanity by his blood. The destruction, the crying of the martyrs for justice, and the natural disasters signifying the “wrath” of the Lamb before the seven seals are described. The innumerable people who had come out of tribulation from the earth, the Lamb has made them become priests and serve. Because the Lamb was slain, he alone has the power to purchase men for God (Carson and Moo 699).

In Revelation 7:14, those who washed their robes and made them white by the blood of the Lamb. Fleming observes that God wants to assure his people that he does not forget them during the difficult days when ungodly people and the world is preparing themselves for judgment (Fleming 596). Let us keep in mind that when we faced unjust leadership, especially in a difficult country such as Nigeria, where ungodly leaders rule, persecution at its peak on Christians because of their faith, God watches. In Revelation 7, we can see three important things that were not in chapters 1 and 5. Jesus' blood is the blood of the Lamb, and this blood washes them from sin and gives salvation as the fulfilment of the Passover Lamb. This is the same idea that John has in 1:29 and other Passover references in John that the Lamb's blood takes away sin. The words in John 1:29, Lamb that takes away sin, Revelation 1, freedom by his blood, the Lamb in 5, and the words in Revelation 7 on the washing from sin, are important. All connected by John's references in the Gospel and Revelation by speaking of Jesus as the Lamb of

God in the same way, that his blood is for redemptive purposes. These words point out that Revelation and John's Gospel support the death of Jesus as the fulfilment of the Old Testament Passover celebration. These people pressing us are preparing themselves for judgment. God does not allow the wind of judgment to blow across the earth without thinking about his people's security, which might not be what most of us may think, but it would surely come. God knows who are his and has marked them out for special protection. Note protection here does not mean earthly protection from accidents, enemies of the faith, or poverty; one can still be a good Christian and still be physically poor. Heavenly protection and riches are far better for believers than those of the world. The number of people protected in each of the twelve tribes symbolizes God's people on earth.

Believers who have been victorious in suffering persecution for the sake of Christ are fit to stand in God's presence only because Christ died to give them cleansing and new life. As priest of God, they will permanently be in his presence, where they will worship and serve him in true fellowship. No longer will they suffer, but the good shepherd Jesus Christ will protect them and care for them. Believers are encouraged to stand firm in the faith because, in the end, everlasting happiness awaits them. Therefore, it is inappropriate to conform to the patterns of the world but to trust in God, not practice syncretism or physical pleading of the blood of the Lamb, but to take heed that the Lamb has paid for all.

In Revelation 12:11, the conquering by the blood of the Lamb is a defeat of Christians, which can only be possible through the blood of the Lamb. It is important to note here that conquering is not the physical defeat from sickness, or other earthly material-related issues, but defeat from temptations of lustful desires, the get-rich-quick syndrome, seeking prosperity without hard work, defeat from heresies, all the enticements of the devil in human activities, which attracts sin, which is the greatest enemy between man and humanity. Mays explains that the defeat in Revelation 12:11, portraying the fall of Satan as an eschatological fall to the earth, is closely parallel to the only vision of Jesus preserved in the gospel tradition in Luke 10:18, when the seventy returned (Mays, Ed. p. 1313). The blood and the Lamb in Revelation 1, 5, and 7 are connected, and in addition to 12, those who overcame by the blood of the Lamb (the Passover Lamb). All these reference in Revelation gives credit to Jesus as the Lamb slain it did not talk about the Passover, but the blood of the Lamb in Revelation is the fulfilment of the Passover Lamb in Exodus 12 and John 1:29. They overcame in 12:11, the temptation to reject and renounce Jesus, because it is only the fulfilment of the Passover blood in Jesus that saves sinners. Sinners are saved from judgment, death, and temptation. This is, however, so different than many Nigerian prayers for protection by the blood.

In Revelation 13:8, everyone whose name has not been written in the book before the foundation of the world is in the book of the Lamb that was slain. This posed a question: Are there people whose names are not written? The relationship between the record of people's deeds and the book of life is not clear. It has been suggested that those whose names are missing from the citizen list would suffer Judgment. Before creation and by grace alone, God chose individuals to be redeemed by Christ's death, whose names appear in God's book of life (Mounce, p. 377).

In Revelation 19:7, "Let us rejoice and exult and give him glory for the marriage of the Lamb has come and his bride has made herself ready". In this context, who is the Lamb and who is the bride? This passage commemorates Matthew 5:12, where the cause of rejoicing is given as gestures of heavenly reward awaiting those who were reviled and persecuted for the cause of Christ. This reward is now pictured as a great wedding feast in which the Lamb (Jesus) and his bride (the church, who suffered for his sake on earth) celebrate their union. This is a metaphorical marriage expressing the relationship between God and his people. The prostitute has been destroyed. Now the Lamb's pure bride is announced, granting her a gown of righteous deeds which is her groom's gift (Mounce, p.347).

In Revelation 19:13, "He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood and the name by which he is called is the word of God." Jesus is named "the word of God" because he is the greatest revelation of the Father and God of all creation, who created the earth and also heaven. The robe the rider wears has been dipped in blood. The figure draws heavily upon the oracle of vengeance in Isaiah 63:1-3, in response to the Prophet's inquiry. The blood stains on the robe of the conquering Messiah are not his blood but the enemy's shed in conflict and victory. Magina added that Christ has no other name higher or greater than the word of God (the word became flesh and dwell amongst us); and the blood of in which the robe of the Lamb is dipped is not the blood of his enemies as it is in Isaiah 63:1-6, it is his blood in which the martyrs have washed their robes and made them not red but white (Rev 19:14). He also says that John 1:29 portrays Jesus as the Passover Lamb in Exodus 12 (Magina, pp. 221-222). Revelation 1:5, 5:9, 7:14, 12:11, 13:8, and 19:7, 13, 14, relates to the blood of Jesus as the fulfilment of the Passover symbolism and its climax in Jesus' return the Lamb conquers by the blood because it has fulfils the salvation symbolism of the Old Testament and this empowers the victory of the second coming of Jesus Christ (the Passover Lamb).

CONCLUSION

The books of John and the Revelation both express the spiritual efficacy of the blood of the Lamb (Blood of Jesus), when John said "this is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world", he is referring to the Jesus taking imagery as a replacement of the Lamb killed at the Passover in Egypt when God save the Israelites from death by

the blood of the Lamb on their sprinkled at their doorpost. The blood (death) of those animals was a sign of forgiveness for their sins. Jesus became our Passover Lamb in the New Testament; he possesses all the qualities required. Jesus was without blemish, and his legs were not broken, making him the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world.

The Revelation affirms the spiritual efficacy of the redemptive works of the blood of the Lamb of God that was slain. The Revelation affirms and expands the fulfilment of the Passover symbolism in the blood of Jesus to show not only salvation by the blood and death of the Lamb of God, but the power to resist the worst temptation of all time, the persecution of the beast and Satan in the end times. This is inclusive of the fulfilment of the Passover blood, which empowers the return of Jesus to judge the world in Revelation 19, and bring his final victory to earth with his saints. This portrays how it is foolish to use the mention of Jesus' blood to bless roads, cars, houses, inanimate objects, and for selfish ambitions (pleading the blood for wealth and riches) of some Christians in the world. The blood of Jesus is rather the power of salvation from the judgment of the world. In 1 Corinthians 5:7, we are to do away with the old yeast, which is malice and wickedness, and to be influenced by the redemptive work of the Passover Lamb, which is sincerity and truth.

The Nigerian Church needs to learn from this study that pleading the blood of Jesus (how some plead sounds like invoking the blood), for protection from death and some physical material cleansing (things like cars, roads, pulpits, and houses) is inappropriate. I think the idea of sprinkling might be taken from Leviticus 16, God himself gave those instructions to the high Priest; we are not given such instructions because Christ became our Passover Lamb who paid for our death. The blood of the Lamb of God is for a purely spiritual purpose of redemption. It is that which guarantees us salvation in Christ Jesus by being the Passover Lamb who takes away our sins and reconciles us with God the Father. Instead of pleading the blood, we rather embrace and learn from Revelation 12:11, "And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not love their lives so much even unto death". By the blood of the Lamb, by enduring suffering, they were looking forward to the glory that awaits them in heaven. The blood guaranteed their salvation even when they died in the process of suffering. The blood was an assurance of redemption for them. Christians around the world who were killed, and the Christians especially from the northern part of Nigeria who are being killed daily because of their faith, the blood of the Lamb of God has already justified them from sin and has secured for them a place in heaven by faith through the blood of Christ. The Nigerian Church should learn from the saints and Apostles who were killed; the blood of Jesus did not save them from persecution and death, but rather they rejoice in their suffering because of the glory that awaits them. They did not plead the blood of Jesus for protection because the blood of Jesus was not meant for that purpose. The blood of the Lamb of God (the Passover

Lamb) has already secured a place for them with the Father by faith in the blood of the Lamb.

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