

An Issue of Blood

"And a certain woman, which had *an issue of blood* twelve years, And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. And when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway *the fountain of her blood was dried up*; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague" Mark 5:25-29. It is an issue of blood.

"And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?" Jesus was touched? Yes. But there is more: This lady found that Christ is indeed, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" Heb.5:15. And in return she felt his touch as virtue, power, Righteousness, went out from Him! "And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague" vs. 34. "*Christ puts honour upon faith, because faith gives honour to Christ.*" (Matthew Henry) (For further study, read the article, "Touching Jesus.")

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The word *issue* as previously used had the thought of something flowing forth; but the same word can mean an issue or matter or concern; it may or may not be a subject of controversy or debate.

Laid within the unusual writings of Ezekiel is a picture of extreme grief - and a picture of extreme gladness! Chapter sixteen is both graphic and beautiful; and well worth our exploring. We shall attempt to examine it, verse by verse. The entire chapter should be read, but we shall focus on verses one through ten. (Kindly pardon the outline.)

The Commission. Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations" Ezek. 16:1. "Son of man," used by our Lord of Himself seventy-nine times, is used by Jehovah ninety-one times when addressing Ezekiel. As used of Ezekiel, the expression indicates, not what the prophet is in himself, but what he is to God: a son of man (a) chosen, (b) endued with the Spirit, and (c) sent of God. All this is true also of Christ who was, furthermore, the representative man - the head of regenerate humanity." (Scofield) One should not read very far without the realization that it is not Ezekiel but the Lord who is speaking! May we have an ear to listen. . .

The Citizenship. "Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Caanan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite" vs. 3. "Jerusalem. . .is in these verses made to know the meanness and baseness of her origin, from what poor beginning God had raised her, and how unworthy she was of his favour and of the honor he had put upon her." (Matthew Henry)

The Condition. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all" vs. 4. "It was a sign that she was loathed by those who bore her, and she appeared loathsome to all that looked upon her. *The Israelites were an abomination to the Egyptians*, Gen. xliii.32; xli. 34." (Matthew Henry)

The Callousness. None eye pitied thee, to do to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee;" vs. 5. They were "without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful" Rom. 1:31. "I designed thee for life when thou wast doomed to destruction, and resolved to save thee from death. Those shall live to whom God commands life." (Matthew Henry)

The Casting out. "but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born" vs. 5b. "Egypt was the *open field* into which they were cast; there they had no protection or countenance from the government they were under, but on the contrary, were ruled with rigour, and their lives embittered." "God looked upon the world of mankind as thus cast off, thus cast out, thus polluted, thus weltering in blood, and His thoughts towards it were thoughts of good, designing it *Life, and that more abundantly*" (Matthew Henry)

The Compassion. "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live" Ezek. 16:6. "By converting grace, he said to the soul, *Live*. He looked upon them with a kindness and a tender affection, not only pitied them, but *set His love upon them*, which was unaccountable, for there was nothing lovely in them." (M. Henry)

The Creation. "Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to excellent ornaments: thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou wast naked and bare" vs. 6b,7. What! Shall a great artist who has fashioned a wondrous masterpiece, not stand back and admire his workmanship? Has not Isaiah declared, "He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied?" Isa. 53:11. Do we err in saying that the *glory* Jesus beheld, overcame the *grief* He was bearing!?

"Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love" vs.8. Sounds like something a "Good Samaritan" might do, doesn't it? Behold! the Mercy and Grace of your God! "It was the kindness and love of God our Saviour that sent Christ to redeem us, that sends the Spirit to sanctify us, that brought us out of a state of nature into a state of grace. That was a *time of love* indeed, distinguishing love, when God manifested His love to us, and courted our love to Him." (M. Henry)

The Covering. "and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness" vs. 8b. The word skirt, *kanaph*, as used throughout the Old Testament scriptures is almost exclusively defined as "Wing!" Consider the Exodus "Passover." "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you." Ex. 12: 13. "The Lord will "pass through" to smite the Egyptians. . .the Lord will "pass over" the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come into your houses to smite you" Ex. 12:23. I am reminded of the story of the mother hen, who upon the approaching of a great fire, gathered her chicks under her wings: the mother hen was consumed by the inferno but her chicks were saved alive after the fire "passed over."

The Covenant. "yea, I entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine" vs. 8c. With the covenant came "the issue of blood": "and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price" I Cor. 6:19b,20a. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen" Heb.13:20,21.

The Cleansing. "Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee" vs.9a. It is "an issue of blood:" Question and answer: "What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. O precious is the flow, that makes me white as snow! No other fount I know; nothing but the blood of Jesus!" (Lowry)

The Consecration. "and I anointed thee with oil" vs. 9b. "Then washed I thee with water, to make thee clean, and *anointed thee with oil*, to make thee sweet and supple thee." (M. Henry)

Is not the oil of the Spirit to be compared with the fruit of the Spirit? What can make one sweet and supple more than love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance? Supple, *mishiy*. It is the preparation of one for the inspection of the Husbandman. It is further to (trans)form one to be "bending, flexible, limber; characterized by ease, responsiveness, compliance, yielding." (Webster)

The Clothing. "I clothed thee also with brodered cloth, and shod thee with badger's skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk" vs. 10. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them" Gen. 3:21. "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" Rom. 13:14. It is "an issue of blood."

"Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgment was as a robe and diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet I was to the lame. . ." Job 29:12,14,15.

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How well it is expressed in the old hymn! "There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel's veins; And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains. Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood shall never lose its power 'til all the ransomed Church of God be saved to sin no more" (William Cowper.)

"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" Zec.13:1.

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