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## How Satan Gains Access to Work in our Lives

### Part 9: Bloodguiltiness

In this issue we will examine the subject of bloodguiltiness and how it can provide an avenue of access for Satan in a person's life. In the Old Testament, bloodguiltiness came upon any person who was in any way responsible for the unnatural death of another person. The rules regarding bloodguiltiness were quite extensive, indicating, I believe, that some important principles underlie this concept. Understanding them will help us examine our own lives and generational lines for any outstanding "blood balances" that may perhaps leave us vulnerable to the enemy.

In my initial overview of Scripture on this subject, two verses grabbed my attention. The first establishes the seriousness of destroying man's life and is found in Genesis 9:6, which says that "whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, *for in the image of God He made man*" (NASB). Man's creation transcends everything else that God made. As I pointed out earlier in this study, I believe that God made man in His very own image so that he could be His intimate love mate throughout eternity. Think about it: *Man is the only part of His creation that can return love to God*. Anyone who destroys God's ultimate creation, chosen love mate, and glorious inheritance (Eph. 1:17) bears significant guilt, whether he does it intentionally or not.

The second reason that may heighten the magnitude of guilt incurred by the shedding of blood is found in Leviticus 17:11, which says, "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and *I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls*" (NASB; cf. Heb. 9:22). Blood is perhaps the most unique substance that God has created in that it carries life itself. (The Hebrew word for "life" in this verse is the same word used for "soul.") For this reason God has designated it as the agent through which our sins can be atoned. This means that both human life and the blood that provides that life carry a special sanctity in God's sight. Violating that sanctity in any way is a serious sin.

The concept of atonement in Scripture reflects an important principle of balance that seems to operate in the spiritual realm, not only in regard to sin in general but also in regard to the life force of man. The malicious, careless, or irreverent expenditure of life somehow disrupts a balance that can only be rectified by the sacrifice of a second life that is sanctified by God's command. When this does not occur, the person, family line, or community bearing responsibility for the death carries a bloodguiltiness, or indebtedness, that will lead to ongoing adversity in life (Deut. 20:1-9; Deut. 19:11-13—see NET Bible note 27; 1 Kings 2:31-33; Prov. 28:17), seemingly as a result of the spiritual foothold left by this unpaid blood "debt."

In the case of murder, God clearly states that the life of the murderer himself is required to pay for the bloodguiltiness of his crime (Num 35:16-21). Murder is distinguished from all other forms of manslaughter by its pre-meditated nature and underlying hatred (Deut. 19:11-12; Num. 35:16-24). Although God, in mercy, occasionally allowed a murderer to live in Old Testament times, that person came under a curse for the rest of his life, as seen in the lives of Cain and David (Gen. 4:11-12; 2 Sam. 12:9-14). Psalm 55:23 indicates

that even the undetected murderer will be tormented in his own mind and live out only half his days. Again, these curses indicate a major, ongoing foothold of evil existing in these people's lives when bloodguiltiness is not properly requited.

Bloodguiltiness extends far beyond murderers, however. Anyone who participates in an act that leads to the death of an innocent man becomes bloodguilty whether he was an accomplice to murder, served as a false witness or a judge against the person in a court of law, assisted in a suicide, failed to confine a dangerous animal, or did not build a railing around a balcony of his house (Deut. 19:10; 22:8; Judges 9:24; Ex. 21:29; 23:7; 2 Sam. 2:2-16). The sailors who threw Jonah overboard in order to save their own lives knew the potential consequences of their actions and quickly offered a sacrifice and pleaded with God not to hold them guilty for the blood of an innocent man (Jonah 1:14-16). Those who killed in battle, even according to the Lord's command, were declared unclean for seven days and then had to purify themselves using water containing the ashes of a sacrificed heifer (Num. 11; 31:19-24). Their impurity indicates that they, too, were contaminated through their acts by that which was not holy and which would continue to leave a foothold of darkness in their lives if not purified.

If no blood sacrifice is made to atone for bloodguiltiness, the debt can be passed on to future generations (Ex. 20:5; 1 Kings 2:33). Jesus' words in Matthew 23:34-35 seem to imply that our entering into the same sin is what brings generational guilt, and its accompanying curses (Dan. 9:11), on us. Even when this occurs, however, man is not without redemption, as Jesus has paid the debt of all bloodguiltiness upon the Cross. If the guilty person repents and requests Jesus' shed blood to be applied to both his own sins and those of his past generations, his account will be cleared (Gal. 3:13; Col. 2:13-14; 1 John 1:9). If he does not, he may well carry those curses and a significant foothold of darkness through the remainder of his life.

Even when not acted upon, a generational inheritance may spiritually "mark" a person for enticement by evil beings into a particular sin. This, too, may be eliminated if the person comes before God and, in their place, humbly acknowledges and confesses the sins committed by his ancestors (Neh. 9:2; Dan. 9:4-19).