

Adult Bible Studies

Current Events Supplement June 16, 2019

The New Covenant's Sacrifice Hebrews 19:11-22

James Harrison of New South Wales, Australia, donated blood every two weeks for 60 years to the Australian Red Cross Blood Service. Harrison's 1,173 blood donations are estimated to have saved the lives of 2.4 million babies, including two of his grandchildren. Nicknamed the "Man with the Golden Arm," Harrison has a rare antibody that is used to treat hemolytic disease of the newborn (HDN), a condition that causes a pregnant woman's body to "reject the fetus's red blood cells" due to a mismatch in Rh-negative blood types. HDN causes miscarriages and brain damage to babies. Harrison has never seen his actions as anything remarkable. "I hope it's a record that somebody breaks, because it will mean they are dedicated to the cause."¹

In today's lesson, the student book author writes about the importance and theme of blood to the covenant and salvation stories in Scripture. "Why blood? Perhaps because blood is necessary for life, and without it we cannot live."² Blood symbolizes our very dependence upon God and recognizes each life as a gift from God. To attach mercy, forgiveness, and grace to blood in the covenant is to remember and covet God's gift of life.

Thankfully, we live in a time when many blood diseases and loss of blood can be successfully treated with transfusions. Thankfully, we live in a time when people are willing to donate blood to save the lives of strangers. Blood types are not determined by ethnicity, gender, lifestyle, socioeconomic status, or age. A gift of blood does not come with strings attached for a certain group of people. God's gift of life and love, given for all humankind, is also a gift we can give.

1. Have you ever donated blood? Why did you feel compelled to do so?
2. Have you ever received a blood transfusion? What difference did it make in your health and in your life?
3. How does blood symbolize our very dependence upon God?

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¹From "For Six Decades, 'The Man With the Golden Arm' Donated Blood—and Saved 2.4 Million Babies," by Amy B. Wang, *The Washington Post* ([washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2018/05/12/for-six-decades-the-man-with-the-golden-arm-donated-blood-and-saved-2-4-million-babies/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.c9e95b1e704a](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2018/05/12/for-six-decades-the-man-with-the-golden-arm-donated-blood-and-saved-2-4-million-babies/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.c9e95b1e704a)).

²From *Adult Bible Studies*, Summer 2019, by Kevin Baker (Cokesbury, 2018); page 23.