

## Does God Forbid Blood Transfusions?

The American Red Cross estimates 10% of the population needs blood every year. Every week the lives of 1,000 Jehovah's Witnesses are placed in danger because the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society forbids their members from receiving blood. If the Jehovah's Witnesses are wrong on this point, it makes them a killer cult.

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jehovah forbids blood transfusions in Gen. 9:4, Ps. 16:4, Lev. 13:17, 7:26-27, Dt. 12:16,23, 15:23, 1 Sam. 14:34, and Acts 15:20,29. Anyone who drinks blood will be "cut off." However, those verses have nothing to do with blood transfusions—where human blood is placed in the bloodstream in order to save human lives. Let's take a closer look at these verses in context.

1. All these verses are talking about animal blood, not human blood.
2. All these verses are talking about drinking blood not transfusing blood.
3. Drinking blood goes to the stomach. Transfusing blood goes into the veins.
4. Lev. 13:17, 7:26-27, Dt. 12:16, 23, 15:23, 1 Sam. 14:34 are laws concerning Old Testament animal sacrifices, not blood transfusions. None of these verses have anything to do with people needing human blood in a hospital to save a life.
5. In Psalm 16:4, the "drink offering of blood" refers to pouring the blood of the animal sacrifice on the altar during pagan sacrifices. This has nothing to do with human blood transfusions.
6. In Gen. 9:4, God gave Noah permission to eat animals but to make sure they were properly drained of blood. This has nothing to do with human blood transfusions.
7. In Acts 15, the drinking of blood goes along with "things sacrificed to idols" so as to not be a stumbling block to others. This has nothing to do with blood transfusions.
8. Jesus said in Mark 7:15 that "Nothing that goes into a man from the outside can make him unclean." This declaration means that blood transfusions are not wrong.
9. Lev. 3:17 and 7:23 teach that it is just as wrong to eat fat. Any Jehovah's Witness that has eaten bacon is just as guilty as if they drank blood. Again, this is an Old Testament law, which we are no longer under.
10. The penalty for drinking blood was "cutting off" meaning put out of fellowship. A person could cleanse himself by taking a bath and washing his clothes (Lev. 17:10-16). The drinking of blood was not the death penalty, which is what Jehovah's Witnesses sentence the patient to by forbidding transfusions.
11. Jesus said in Mark 3:4 and Luke 6:9 that it is permissible to break the Law in order to save a life, even the life of an animal. Blood transfusions save human lives. Jesus said, "How much more valuable is a man than a sheep!" (Matt. 12:12).

Jesus said you could break the Law to save a life, but the Pharisees refused to believe this. If Jesus permitted one of the 10 commandments to be broken to save an animal's life, Jehovah's Witnesses should break a man-made law by the Watchtower Society to save a human life.

**A former Jehovah's Witness told us:**

"A very disturbing observation for me was to find out how the Society allowed certain blood derivatives to be used while at the same time denying others the ability to choose for themselves, without reprisal, the consequences of blood acceptance.

"Albumin, immunoglobulins, and hemophiliac preparations (Factor VIII and IX) are all preparations that are made from blood that the Society has given permission for Jehovah's Witnesses to use. Their reasoning behind this is that only "small amounts" of blood are used. By what authority does the Watchtower use to tell us that we cannot use blood, yet at the same time allow the use of blood in certain circumstances?

"A typical treatment for third degree burns requires 600 grams albumin. Producing this amount requires about 45 liters of whole blood. How can anyone call this "a small fraction?" It is also obvious that the blood used to derive albumin is not "poured out," but stored, which is prohibited for a blood transfusion but permitted in this context. How is that?

"Travelers are often injected with cholera vaccine and Jehovah's Witnesses accept this. A single injection requires 0.3 liters of whole blood. This blood, again, is stored. Yet the Society prohibits its members from storing their own blood in advance of an operation. Is there a difference?"