

Chinese New Year and the Colour Red



It's that time of the year again. Chinese people are decorating their homes with red ornaments, stuffing *hongbao* with money, and buying new red clothes.

The colour red is significant — it's the colour of prosperity, happiness, and good luck. It's the colour of Chinese New Year. Why?

The Colour Red and Salvation from Nian's Hunger



According to ancient Chinese legend, the mythical beast called "Nian" (年兽) would devour people and their children on New Year's Eve. To protect themselves, they put food by their doors as a substitute. But this food was a bad substitute. It could not satisfy "Nian".

One year, it was discovered that "Nian" was afraid of the colour red, when a little child dressed in red scared it away. The colour red saved them.

Since then, the Chinese wear red and hang red banners to ward off evil and bring prosperity. We all long for a better future.

The Bible and the Colour Red

The colour red in the Bible also signifies substitution and salvation for a better future. God's people were once enslaved by the Egyptians. But God rescued them. He told them to sacrifice a perfect lamb, and to paint its blood on the posts and beams of the main doors.



Exodus 12:23 says, "For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you."

Why? When God unleashed judgment over Egypt, only homes which had this red blood would escape God's fiery judgment.

God was also going to destroy Jericho for its sins. But one citizen, Rahab, believed God. She was told to hang a red rope by her window so that she'd be saved when Jericho was destroyed. It marked her out for her to be saved.



God's people knew they were sinners. But God was forgiving. God gave a system of sacrifices. Animals were killed as substitutes judged in the sinner's place. Their red blood was sprinkled on the offerer. Forgiveness is not automatic. Only those marked by that blood were forgiven.

The Colour Red and Salvation from God's Anger

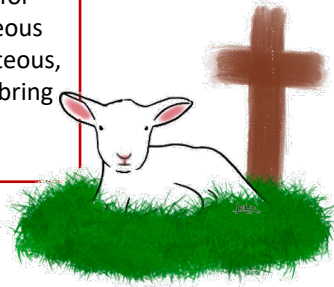
But these animals were inadequate substitutes. They could not satisfy God "for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4).

The Bible tells us that God is angry with the wicked every day (Psalm 7:11) and all human beings are sinners (Romans 3:23). God will judge us forever (Romans 6:23).



To save mankind from his anger and judgment, God sent a substitute to be judged for them, to shed his blood to satisfy God's anger. Jesus Christ was the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29).

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God..." (1 Peter 3:18).



Why did God do this? He loves sinners! John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

But this salvation and substitution are not automatically given. Only those who believe and repent are saved. Just like the red blood on the door, red string by the window, and red blood on the sinner, the sacrifice of Christ must be applied.

One day God will come to judge everyone. Only those who believe in Jesus and marked by his blood can be saved from God's anger.

Your Salvation and Prosperous Future



Everyone wants a healthy and prosperous new year, but don't we hope for a prosperous *eternity* as well?

The good news is this – God is merciful and sent Jesus to shed his red blood for sinners. When we repent of our sins and believe in him, we will become friends with God and be blessed forever (Romans 10:9).

Chinese Christians celebrate Chinese New Year too! But the colour red has a much deeper meaning for them. It means a prosperous eternity because of Christ – their longing for a better future is fulfilled. There is true blessing in the power of Christ's **RED** blood!

We wish you a happy, prosperous, and meaningful New Year!



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THE COLOUR RED