

# Exodus 4:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me.

## Analysis

**Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me** (וַתִּקַּח וַתִּצְפֹּרָה צֹר וַתִּכְרֹת אֶת־עֲרֻלַּת בְּנָהּ וַתַּגֵּעַ לְרַגְלָיו וַתֹּאמֶר כִּי חֲתָן־דָּמִים אַתָּה לִי)—Zipporah acts decisively, using a **sharp stone** (צֹר, tsor, flint knife) to circumcise their son. **Cast it at his feet** (וַתַּגֵּעַ לְרַגְלָיו, lit. "touched his feet")—whose feet? Moses' or the child's? Ambiguous. **Bloody husband** (חֲתָן־דָּמִים, chatan-damim)—obscure phrase, possibly "bridegroom of blood" connecting circumcision to covenant marriage. Zipporah's tone seems reproachful—she finds this bloody ritual distasteful. Her action saves Moses' life but reveals marital tension over religious practice. She later returns to Midian (18:2), possibly due to this conflict.

## Historical Context

Flint knives were traditionally used for circumcision (Joshua 5:2-3) even after bronze/iron tools existed, maintaining ancient practice. Zipporah's Midianite background may have made Hebrew circumcision customs foreign or objectionable. The phrase chatan-damim occurs only here, making translation difficult. Some see it as establishing circumcision as "marriage" (covenant cutting) between God and His people, sealed in blood.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does Zipporah's reluctant obedience teach about the tensions that arise when covenant obligations conflict with cultural or personal preferences?
2. What does this crisis teach about ensuring that family religious practices align with covenant requirements, not just personal convenience?

## Interlinear Text

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וַתֵּקֶחַ ח	צִפּוֹרָה ה	צ ר	וַתְּכַרֵּת	אֶת	עֲרֹלָת	בֶּן־הָ
took	Then Zipporah	a sharp stone	and cut off	H853	the foreskin	of her son
H3947	H6855	H6864	H3772		H6190	H1121
וַתַּגֵּעַ ע	לְרַגְלָיו	וַתֹּאמֶר	כִּי	חֻמִּי	דָּמִי יָם	אֶת־הָ
and cast	it at his feet	and said	H3588	husband	Surely a bloody	H859
H5060	H7272	H559		H2860	H1818	H0

## Additional Cross-References

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**Genesis 17:14** (Parallel theme): And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

**2 Samuel 16:7** (Blood): And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial:

