

Appendix 2: Blood

As I explained in the chapter ‘All Elaborated: The Blood’, having seen that I had overloaded that chapter with extracts, scattering shot far too-widely, and that this muffled the impact of what I am trying to say, I decided to slim down the extracts. However, I was loathe to omit the space – the weight – the post-Pentecost Scriptures give to the blood of Christ in terms, not only of his blood, but of his sufferings, death, cross, and so on, and what this means in the redemption of the elect. Consequently, I have compromised by putting the original material into this Appendix, while trimming the chapter, hoping that this re-arrangement will go some way to meeting both ends.

* * *

Here is the original material:

Now for the post-Pentecost Scriptures to see how those writers were moved by the Spirit to teach us about Christ’s redeeming sacrifice, and what that sacrifice actually accomplished.

What do they tell us about the amazing love involved in it: the love of God for sinners; the love of Christ in obedience to his Father:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him (John 3:16-17).

While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die – but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:6-8).

Appendix 2: Blood

You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith (Eph. 2:1-8).

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word (2 Thess. 2:16-17).

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 John 4:9-10).

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen (Rev. 1:5-6).

What do the inspired writers tell us about what Christ accomplished by his spotless life offered up in blood sacrifice? Let the writer to the Hebrews lay the table for us. Judging even by the superficial measure of the amount of space in his treatise which he devoted to the subject, the importance of Christ's sacrifice and his priesthood is immediately obvious. It goes without saying that the following is full of the sufferings of Christ, the shedding of his blood in death. But the major point that the writer makes is that these sufferings were designed by the Father to accomplish the redemption which the Godhead had eternally

Appendix 2: Blood

planned. It is only too-possible to concentrate on the physical aspects of Christ's sufferings (the Moravians did, with their 'blood and wounds' theology), but Scripture, while it records those sufferings, it is far more interested in what God accomplished through the sufferings of Christ. Christ made God's plan effectual by becoming a man, living a life of obedience under the law (Gal. 4:4-5), and offering his body and blood as a redeeming sacrifice:

We see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

For it was fitting that he [that is, God the Father], for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect [that is, a complete Saviour] through suffering...

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he [that is, Christ] himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people (Heb. 2:9-17).

Although he was a son [of course, he was and is, the Son of God – DG], he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect [that is, a complete Saviour], he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him (Heb. 5:8-9).

It was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests [of the old covenant], to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever (Heb. 7:26-28).

Appendix 2: Blood

Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying: ‘See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain’. But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second.

For he finds fault with them when he says: ‘Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not teach, each one his neighbour and each one his brother, saying: “Know the Lord”, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more’.

In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away (Heb. 8:1-13).

The writer, having reminded his readers of the detailed procedure of the old-covenant system of priesthood and sacrifice,¹ then moved away from the endlessly-repeated

¹ As Jews they were fully cognisant of what he was referring to.

Appendix 2: Blood

ineffective old system to the real; that is, the new, one and only effective sacrifice of Christ:

By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first tent is still standing (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered [under the old covenant] that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshipper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation [that is, until Christ brought in the new covenant – DG].

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come [and/or are to come], then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. For where a will is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. For a will takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. Therefore not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying: 'This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you'. And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

Appendix 2: Blood

Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him (Heb. 9:8-28).

The writer returned to the ineffective nature of the old covenant. Indeed, it was more than ineffective. The fact is, the old covenant made things worse! By the repeated sacrifices, the Jews were constantly reminded that they were sinners, and constantly reminded that they had no effectual sacrifice for their sins – no matter how many bulls, goats or lambs they offered! As the writer of Hebrews put it:

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshippers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins (Heb. 10:1-4).

Here is the inadequacy of the old covenant: after all the duly-appointed thousands and thousands of animals offered in the duly-appointed way by duly-appointed men in the duly-appointed place and at the duly-appointed times, the people remained as they ever were; that is, sinners. Even the priests who offered the sacrifices were still in that dire condition. As

Appendix 2: Blood

the writer had already put it, even the high priest was a sinner who needed forgiveness:

Every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. And no one takes this honour for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was (Heb. 5:1-4).²

So much for the old covenant. Now for the contrast:

So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him: ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten you’; as he says also in another place: ‘You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek’ (Heb. 5:5-6).

Having declared that the old-covenant sacrifices never did take away sin, the writer pressed home his argument for the superiority of the new covenant:

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said: ‘Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said: “Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book”’.

When he said above: ‘You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings’ (these are offered according to the law), then he added: ‘Behold, I have come to do your will’. He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single

² This encapsulates the utter uselessness (as well as blasphemy) of the Romish system based on the old-covenant priesthood imposed on the *ekklēsia* by the Fathers.

Appendix 2: Blood

sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying: 'This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds', then he adds: 'I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more'.

Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin (Heb. 10:5-18).

Clearly, this must have the most important and far-reaching consequences for every believer, as the writer of Hebrews plainly stated:

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain,³ that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near (Heb. 10:19-25).

And:

We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go to him outside

³ The old curtain was pulled down in the death of Christ: 'Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom' (Matt. 27:50-51).

Appendix 2: Blood

the camp and bear the reproach he endured (Heb. 13:10-13).⁴

I offer no apology for these extended extracts: if the Holy Spirit moved the writer of Hebrews to such an extent, and ensured that his work was preserved for us, what else should we do but allow the full weight of his teaching to play its complete part in our lives?

Now, as we know, the writer to the Hebrews had a specific purpose: he was doing what he could to prevent Jewish believers reverting to the old covenant, thus departing from Christ. Consequently, the above extracts are replete with the contrast between the two covenants, and explicit in showing the superiority of the new covenant over the old, especially with regard to the ineffectiveness of the old covenant. This is true of the entire book of Hebrews. Other post-Pentecost writers, however, having a different agenda, concentrated more on setting out what Christ accomplished by the shedding of his blood, and doing so without, as it were, having to prove its effectiveness in relation to the inadequacy of the old-covenant sacrifices. This is not to say that there is no such contrast drawn by the other writers.⁵ This will become obvious in the following extracts setting out the truth behind Christ's accomplishment of redemption by his death.

I begin with Paul:

By works of the law no human beings will be justified in [God's] sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it – the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is

⁴ See my 'Quit The Camp' on my sermonaudio.com page.

⁵ Paul, as I noted earlier, drew the contrast between the covenants, marking the watershed of the ages, and drew it in Romans right at the start of his exposition of the redemption Christ accomplished, doing so by his repeated use of the memorable phrase 'but now'.

Appendix 2: Blood

in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus (Rom. 3:20-26).

While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die – but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned – for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.⁶

But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

⁶ This, leading to the next paragraph, is of a complicated construction. Paul was clearly taking the redemption accomplished by Christ's life offered up in the shedding of his blood, and contrasting it with the fall of the human race by Adam's sin.

Appendix 2: Blood

Therefore, as one trespass⁷ led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness⁸ leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 5:6-21).

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:1-4).

He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died – more than that, who was raised – who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us (Rom. 8:32-34).

And not only in Romans:

Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed (1 Cor. 5:7).

Far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world (Gal. 6:14).

In [Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace (Eph. 1:7).

Remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to

⁷ Or, the trespass of one – that is, Adam.

⁸ Or, the act of righteousness of one – that is, Christ.

Appendix 2: Blood

the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (Eph. 2:12-16).

Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God (Eph. 5:2).

Christ loved the *ekklēsia* and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the *ekklēsia* to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:25-27).

Though [Christ] was in the form of God, [he] did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (Phil. 2:6-8).

...through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him... (Col. 1:20-22).

You, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him (Col. 2:13-15).

And Peter:

Appendix 2: Blood

You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed (1 Pet. 2:23-24).

And John:

The blood of Jesus [God's] Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 1:7 – 2:2).

The Lamb plays a very large role in Revelation.⁹ We read:

I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice: 'Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?' And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. And one of the elders said to me: 'Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals'.

And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. And he

⁹ 'The Lamb' appears in Rev. 6,7,12,13,14,15,17,19,21,22.

Appendix 2: Blood

went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: 'Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth'.

Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing!'

And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying: 'To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might forever and ever!'

And the four living creatures said: 'Amen!' and the elders fell down and worshipped (Rev. 5:1-14).

The post-Pentecost writers of Scripture have left us in no doubt about the effectual nature of Christ's blood which was shed in sacrifice for sin. What a wealth of teaching the Spirit has brought out of that little phrase 'my blood'!