

The Doctrine of *The Blood of Christ*

1. The phrase “blood of Christ” is a representative analogy to animal sacrifices in the Old Testament.

The phrase “Blood of Christ” demonstrates the fact that the work of Jesus Christ was presented by means of the blood sacrifices of the animals (Hebrews 9:18-10:10). Animal sacrifices did not bring about salvation, but pointed to the work of Christ on the Cross:

“...and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place [the throneroom of heaven] once and for all, having obtained eternal redemption.” (Heb. 9:12)

“But in those [animal] sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” (Heb. 10:3-4)

“The next day he [John, the one performing the water-baptism ritual] saw Jesus coming to him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)

2. The animals used for the sacrifices were innocent.

The animal hadn’t done anything wrong, and did not deserve to die, just as our Lord was without sin and did not deserve to be punished for our sins. This is the very nature of a sacrifice.

3. The animal sacrifices were to be without blemish (Ex 12:5; 29:1) just as our Lord was without blemish:

“...but (you were redeemed with) the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” (1 Peter 1:19)

Because of the virgin conception and virgin birth Jesus Christ had no sin-nature, no imputation of Adam’s original sin, and from the time of His birth even until His physical death on the Cross He committed no personal sins. (For more information on this topic please refer to Max Klein’s *Fellowship With God, Volume Two*, Chap 6 “*The Perfection of Jesus Christ: Romans 5:6*”).

4. The animal sacrifices were to have no bones broken, just as our Lord would have no bones broken:

God knew that the guards on duty at the time of Christ’s crucifixion would decide not to break the legs of Jesus Christ, as they saw that the body of Christ was already absent of life and did not require *crurifragium* – the practice of breaking the leg bones in order to quicken the death of the person crucified (John 19:31-33). Having foreknowledge of this circumstance God therefore commanded the Jews that the bones of the animal sacrifices could not be broken, providing yet another foreshadow of the Lord’s sacrifice at the Cross (Ex. 12:46; Ps. 34:20; Jn. 19:36).

5. The physical death of the animal is analogous to the spiritual death of Christ.

The life of the animal is in the blood (Lev. 17:11, 14), therefore, when it suffers sufficient loss of blood it is dead (the animal has no soul, and certainly no spirit). The life of a human is related to their relationship with God. Separation from God means that a person is *spiritually dead*, even though they are physically alive (Gen. 2:17; Matt. 22:32; Rom. 5:12-21; Rev. 21:8).

6. God had to provide a human body to be the target of the punishment for our sins:

As deity God can have nothing to do with sin except condemn and punish it (1 John 3:5; Jam. 1:13). The humanity (body) of Jesus Christ was the target for our sins, *not* the deity of Jesus Christ. This was first prophesied in scripture in Genesis 3:15, “her seed” (the KJV even uses capitals: “her SEED”) referring to the humanity of Jesus Christ.

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He will bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” (Gen 3:15)

“Therefore, when He [God the Son] comes into the world, He says “Sacrifice and offering You [God the Father] have not desired, but a body You have prepared for Me.” (Heb. 10:5, cf. Ps. 40:6)

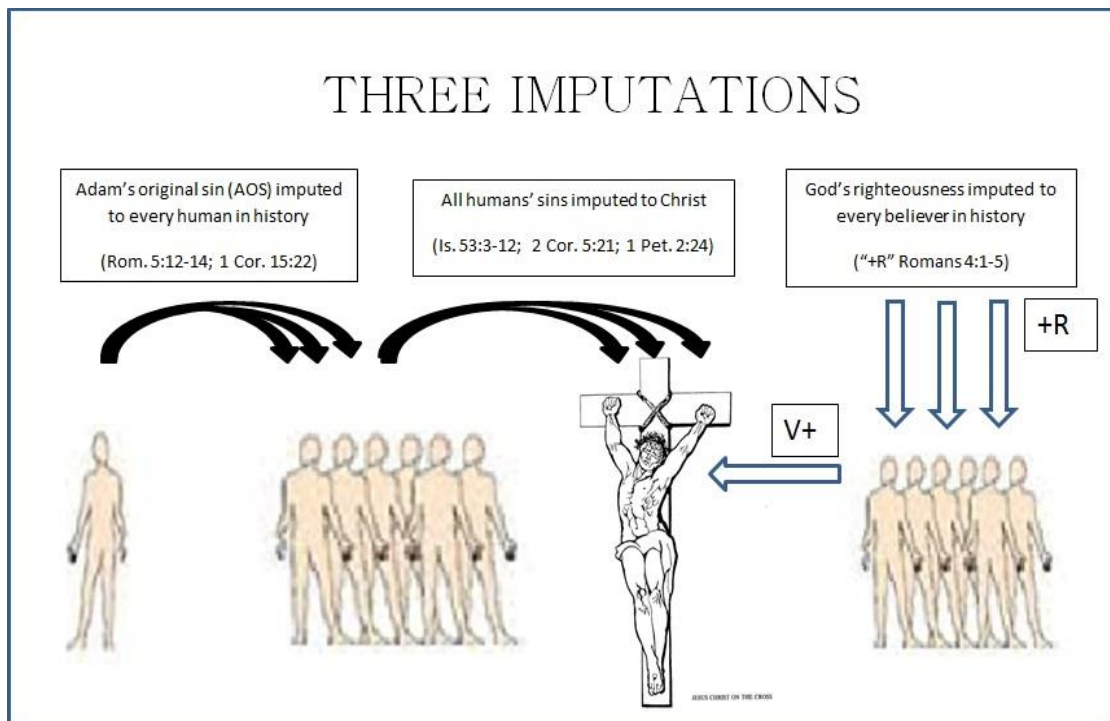
7. Jesus Christ received the imputation and punishment for the sins of mankind:

On the day of the crucifixion, from 12 midday to 3 p.m. God the Father enshrouded Jesus Christ with a supernatural darkness (Luk. 22:34), then one by one He imputed every sin of every person to the body of Jesus Christ and punished Jesus for every one of those sins (Is. 53:3-12; Rom. 5:8-9; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:24, 3:18; Heb. 9:28).

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6)

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Cor. 5:21)

“...and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the Cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.” (1 Pet. 2:24).



8. Jesus Christ had no fellowship with God the Father while the sins of the world were upon Him:

The imputation of our sins to the humanity of Jesus Christ meant that there was a temporary separation (tantamount to “substitutionary spiritual death”) between God the Father and the humanity of Jesus Christ. To reiterate, God can have nothing to do with sin other than to punish it.

“Now from the sixth hour [midday] darkness fell upon all the land until the ninth hour [three p.m.]. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, Lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:45-46; cf. Ps. 22:1)

9. The Spiritual Death of man

To understand the meaning and purpose of Christ’s substitutionary death, first we need to understand the implications of man’s spiritual death, beginning at the fall of Adam in the Garden. The following notes are taken from Max Klein’s *Fellowship With God, Volume Two: Chapter Six ‘The Perfection of Christ’*:

“When Adam committed the original sin of disobedience he died spiritually – that is, he acquired a sin nature and lost his human spirit. Adam was warned that in the day that he ate from the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, he would die spiritually.

“But from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil you [Adam] shall not eat from it for in the day that you eat from it, dying [the Hebrew infinitive: מות / *mut*] you will die [the Hebrew imperfect: תמות / *tamut*].” (Gen. 2:17)

In Genesis 2:17 the Hebrew verb מות (“*mut*” = translated as “die”) is doubled, appearing in the text as תמות מות (“*mut tamut*” - the infinitive form followed immediately by the imperfect). Many Bible translations render this construction as having an intensive force: “you shall surely die”. However, this translation does not convey the true meaning of this verse. Certain scholars have argued that the double construction of the infinitive followed by the imperfect verb should be translated “dying you will die.” Theologically this rendering makes much more sense: the infinitive “dying” refers to spiritual death, and “you will die” refers to physical death. Adam and his wife died spiritually immediately, but did not die physically for many years after.

On the very day that Adam and his wife ate of the fruit, they acquired sin natures and lost their human spirits. They demonstrated their possession of sin natures when they put on fig leaves (Gen. 3:7). Here Adam demonstrated how man with a sin nature seeks to solve his relationship with God through some method of human good or religion. Then, when the Lord came into the garden and called for them that He might judge them, they demonstrated the loss of their human spirits by hiding from the Lord (Gen. 3:8). No human spirit means no relationship with God; no relationship with God means judgment. If Jesus Christ were to announce that He was going to visit your city tomorrow to judge, most believers would welcome him even if they were out of fellowship. However, most unbelievers would stay out of sight since they do not have a human spirit, and therefore no relationship with God. Also, since Adam and Eve no longer had a relationship with God, they easily succumbed to the temptation of fear from their sin natures (Gen. 3:10). In their fallen states, Adam and his wife both possessed a sin nature, but no longer possessed a human spirit. As a result, Adam’s descendants also possess a sin nature at birth (Rom. 5:12), and are born without a human spirit (1 Cor.2:14; Jude 19). The progeny of Adam are born like fallen Adam.

“For this reason just as through one man [Adam, not the woman], the sin nature entered the world and through the sin nature, death [God legally imputes Adam’s original sin to the sin nature of the individual at birth. This results in spiritual death], and in this way death [spiritual death] spread [through the male sperm] to all mankind because in him [the human race was seminally in Adam] all have sinned [imputation of Adam’s Original Sin at birth].” (Rom. 5:12)

10. The “Substitutionary Spiritual Death” of Christ:

A theological synonym for Christ’s salvation work on the Cross is “substitutionary spiritual death.” He was our substitute – He “died” (i.e. took the punishment for our sins) instead of us. This is clearly seen in a correct translation of Romans 5:8:

“But God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died [ἀποθνήσκω / apothnesko] instead of us [the Greek preposition *υπερ* (*hyper*, meaning “instead”) with the genitive form of the plural pronoun *ημων* (*hemon*)].

However, in using the term ‘spiritual death’ we must be careful to understand that this refers to separation from God the Father, and not the loss of Jesus Christ’s spiritual life. He was still filled with the Holy Spirit and applying doctrine the whole time He was on the Cross (Phil. 2:8; Heb. 4:15).

11. Physical Death follows Spiritual Death:

This ‘death’ mentioned in Romans 5:8 (the Greek verb ἀποθνήσκω / apothnesko, the common word used in referring to the death of a person) refers to the separation of (the humanity of) Jesus Christ from God the Father. His substitutionary spiritual death occurred first, followed by physical death. Christ yelled in a loud voice “It is finished!” (perfect present indicative of the verb τελέω / *teleo*), telling us that His saving work on the cross was completed *before* He died physically.

“Therefore, when Jesus had received the sour wine [He needed to lubricate His throat in order to shout loudly], He said “It is finished!” And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.” (John 19:30)

12. How did Jesus die His physical death?

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, and a prophecy from Psalms also record Jesus’ final words.

“And Jesus cried out [shouted] again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.” (Matt. 27:50)

“And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed [ekpneou / exhaled] His last.” (Mark 15:37)

“And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, “Father [indicating punishment was over and now having ‘fellowship’ restored between the humanity of Christ and the Father], into your hands I commit my spirit!” And having said this, He breathed His last [breath].” (Luke 23:46)

Luke, like the other Gospel writers, does not record the entire statement, but provides us with a reference to the passage of Scripture that Jesus quotes from the Old Testament as written by King David:

“Into Thy hand I commit my spirit; Thou has ransomed me, O Lord of truth.” (Ps. 31:5)

Putting these passages together we see that in Jesus final breath he was shouting out the words “Oh Lord of truth” emphasizing the importance of doctrine.

13. Nobody killed Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ was the author of His very own trichotomous (three-way) separation of body, soul and spirit – John 10:18).

“I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again.” (John 10:17b-18a)

When the centurion [a Gentile] said, “Truly, this man was the Son of God”, Mark makes it clear in the Greek that it was *because* he witnessed Jesus breathing out His own life, a supernatural act.

“And the centurion, standing across from Him, seeing that He had breathed out his spirit [*ekpneuo*] in such a manner [*houtos*] , said “Truly this man was the Son of God.” (Mar. 15:39 cf. Luk. 23:47) (see Matt. 11:26 for use of ‘*hoti + houtos* = because’)

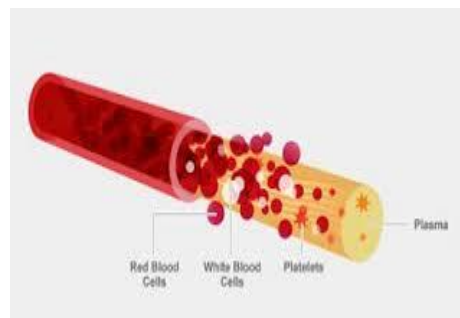
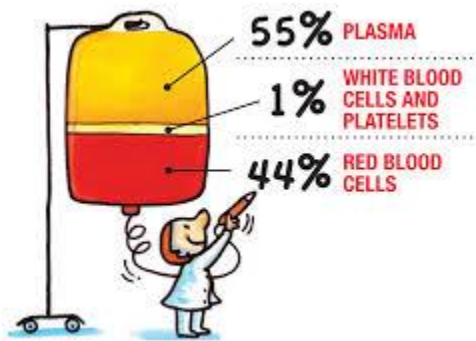
14. Jesus did not physically die because of a loss of blood.

After the soldiers broke the legs of those crucified with Jesus, and then seeing that Jesus was dead, the following event is recorded:

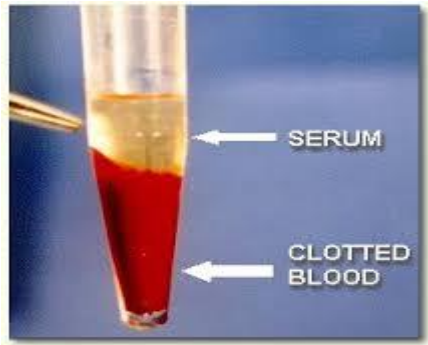
“But one of the soldiers pierced His side [pleuran = chest cavity] with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water [hudor].” (John 19:34)

Understanding Blood and Water:

Blood consists of four main components: Red blood cells (44 percent of the blood liquid), platelets (less than one percent), white blood cells (less than one percent), and plasma (55 percent).



Red blood cells provide blood its red color. When blood coagulates (settles in one place, then separates according to density), the heavier red blood cells move to the bottom, and the remaining colorless platelets, white blood cells and plasma are on top. This is a grey/yellow color (see picture) consisting mostly of water (plasma itself is 92 percent water).



The word 'hudor' (water) is used in a medical sense to describe the grayish-yellow fluid that separates from the red-blood cell clots when blood settles in the ventricles of the heart and coagulates immediately after physical death.

Although he had suffered a certain amount of blood loss through the physical lashings; the crown of thorns being pushed onto His head; and the nails in His hands and feet, these things did not cause significant amounts of blood to exit the body. At the moment of Christ's physical death his heart and lungs ceased to operate. The forward position of his body on the cross allowed a large amount of blood to settle in his left and right ventricles (the lower portion of the heart). Here, the blood coagulated and components of the blood separated according to their weight.

To quote from "The Blood of Christ" (by R.B.Thieme, Jr., page 32)

"...all these lacerations and puncture wounds (from his back, head, feet and hands) *did not* kill our Lord. How do we know? If extensive hemorrhaging had been the cause of death, the result would have been very little blood remaining in the heart. The very sight of blood clots and serum pouring out is forensic medical proof not only that Jesus was physically dead, but that *He did not bleed to death.*"

15. The humanity of Jesus Christ suffered two deaths upon the cross

Christ died twice on the Cross – His first death being spiritual death ("the blood of Christ") the second being His physical death - when He voluntarily gave up His spirit to God the Father, and His soul went to Hades. The plurality of the deaths of Christ upon the Cross are bought out clearly in the Greek language of Romans 6:9 :

"...knowing that Christ, having been raised from the deaths [plural of νεκρός / nekros], is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him." (Rom. 6:9)

While it was His work on the Cross which saves us, an act completed before He died physically (John 19:30), His physical death was also necessary in order that He be resurrected into the newness of Life, with an eternal resurrection body. The resurrection from the dead also demonstrates to us that God the Father was propitiated (pleased) with the work of Christ on the Cross (John 11:25; Rom. 6:4-10; 10:9; 1 Cor. 15:12-22).

16. Conclusion

It is not the physical death of Jesus Christ on the Cross which saves us, but his substitutionary spiritual death, i.e. His separation from God the Father and consequent punishment for our sins. This is what is meant by 'the blood of Christ' – His three hours upon the Cross when He was being punished by God the Father in our place.

"For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation [a pleasing sacrifice] through faith in His blood [the substitutionary spiritual death of Christ]." (Rom. 3:23-25a)

Appendix:

Timeline of the crucifixion of Christ, as related to the above study notes:

- 9am. (the third hour) Jesus Christ nailed to the cross, alongside the two criminals.
- 12 midday. (the sixth hour) A dark cloud came upon the cross. The sins of the world were imputed to the body of Christ by God the Father and punished over a three hour period.
- 3pm. (the ninth hour) Jesus last words:
 - ““Eli, Eli, Lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:45-46; cf. Ps. 22:1)
 - Jesus received the sour wine [He needed to lubricate His throat in order to shout loudly],
 - He said “tetalestai / It is finished!” (John 19:30a, Matt. 27:50a, Mark 15:37)
 - “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit - Thou has ransomed me, O Lord of truth.” (Ps. 31:5; Luk. 23:46a)
 - “And having said this, He breathed out His last (breath).” (Matt. 27:50b; Mark 15:37b; Luke 23:46)
- The statement by the centurion who realized the supernatural act of Christ’s death: “Truly this man was the Son of God.”
- The breaking of legs of the other crucified men.
- The subsequent stabbing through the heart of Jesus, which allowed witnesses to see “blood and water” – proving that Christ did not die from a loss of blood.

Related Doctrines:

The Doctrine of Levitical Sacrifices
The Doctrine of Harmatology (the study of sin)
The Doctrine of Imputations
The Doctrine of Dispensations
The Doctrine of the Resurrection of Christ
The Doctrines of Judgment/Propitiation/Atonement etc.
The Character of God
The 40 Absolutes

Bibliography / Credit:

The Blood of Christ, by R. B. Thieme, Jr.
Fellowship with God, Volume Two, by Max Klein
Various Doctrines compiled by Gary Kukis

For further studies: www.rbthieme.org www.maxklein.org www.ibdoctrine.com