

Blood of Christ:

‘The blood of Christ’ a phrase which unites the animal sacrifices with the work of Jesus Christ on the cross by using animal blood as a representative analogy for the substitutionary spiritual death of Jesus. When the carotid of an animal was severed, blood gushed-out and since the life of an animal is in his blood, the gushing-out of animal blood meant that the animal would die. The physical death of the animal through bleeding to death was used as a representative analogy for the substitutionary spiritual death of Jesus on the cross. In other words, the death of Christ on the cross was not a physical death through bleeding to death, but God the Father punishing the humanity of Christ for the penalty of every sin of humanity. The physical death of the animal depicted the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross. Ephesians 1:7, "By whom we have redemption through His blood (propitiation, reconciliation and redemption), resulting in the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace." Colossians 1:14, "By whom we have redemption resulting in the forgiveness of sins." 1 Peter 1:18-19, "We have not been redeemed with corruptible things [including blood], such as silver and gold, from our empty manner of life, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ [the phrase ‘blood of Christ’ related to an animal sacrifice; in other words, for those who insist that it was literal blood, should also insist that he was truly a lamb], a lamb without spot and without blemish." Thus, the phrase, the blood of Christ depicts, by analogy, the saving work of Christ on the cross.

The doctrine of Redemption was taught by means of animal blood in the Old Testament. Hebrews 9:22, "And according to the standard of the Law, nearly all things were cleansed with animal blood, and without the pouring out of *animal* blood there is no forgiveness [for without the shadow there is no reality]." You see, sacrificial animal blood was the shadow, a teaching aid of the reality. The reality would take place on the cross. Without the shadow, there is no reality. Without the reality there is no payment of sins on the cross. Without the payment of sins on the cross, there is no basis for forgiveness of sins. The payment for the penalty of

sins means that judgment took place on the cross. Forgiveness takes place at salvation and thereafter.

The following was taken from the booklet, “The Blood of Christ” by R.B. Thieme Jr. pages 1, 2.

THE BLOOD METAPHOR

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST symbolizes the most important event ever to occur throughout the ages of angelic and human history. The phrase, “the blood of Christ,” is a metaphor for the saving work of Christ on the cross. The cross was the terrible price Jesus Christ paid for our so-great salvation. Unless believers understand the true connotation of this figurative phrase, they cannot fully appreciate what Christ has done for them.

This is a sensitive subject for many believers. For some the blood of Christ has been associated with a lifetime of emotional experiences. Since childhood they have heard the blood mentioned in hushed, reverent tones; they have vigorously sung the hymns about the “wonderworking power in the blood”; or they have grown up with the idea that there was a special power in the red liquid that circulated through Jesus’ mortal body. Without even knowing its source, some believers cling to the old dogma that Christ carried His blood with Him to heaven in a bowl. This specious idea from the Dark Ages continues to perpetuate a form of mysticism around the physical blood of our Lord.

While some believers are ignorant of the doctrine of the blood of Christ from a simple lack of expository teaching, others are ignorant as part of a devastating system of hidden arrogance in their souls. The first category of individual has enough objectivity to listen and learn; he simply needs biblical information. The other type, however, is affected by a much more serious and complicated malady. Instead of being interested in what the Bible has to say, he considers his own view of the blood to be more important than God’s view. He would rather resist divine viewpoint than

permit his pride to be deflated. To such a believer, the true doctrine of the blood is not simply a matter of learning something new and important; it is a challenge to his colossal arrogance. As the old saying goes, “Do not confuse me with the facts!” The only antidote is humility—recognition of the authority of the pastor-teacher who consistently teaches the Word of God. Bible doctrine will deflate pride and establish true spiritual growth on the solid foundation of Jesus Christ.

There is no biblical basis for attributing mystical or unusual properties to the physical blood of Christ. The term, blood of Christ, is far more significant than any magical power falsely ascribed to His bodily fluids. We will see in great detail that His physical blood has absolutely nothing whatever to do with substitutionary atonement.

In the Bible, αἷμα (haima), “blood,” can have several literal meanings which include human blood and animal blood. However, when the New Testament speaks of the blood in relation to the sacrifice of Christ, it does not refer to literal blood. “The blood of Christ” is always a figure of speech. The Greek lexicographer, Walter Bauer, devotes an entire paragraph to the figurative use of the word in relation to Christ. He describes “the blood and life as an expiatory sacrifice . . . especially the blood of Jesus as a means of expiation.” Likewise, Vine states, “the blood of Christ . . . betokens His death by the shedding of His ‘blood’ in expiatory sacrifice.” Bullinger categorizes phrases such as “justified by His blood” (Rom. 5:9), “redemption through His blood” (Eph. 1:7), “brought near by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13), and “released us from our sins by His blood” (Rev. 1:5) as double metonymy referring to the “merits of His atoning death.” Further, Kittel’s Theological Dictionary confirms that “the blood of Christ in the New Testament is simply a pregnant verbal symbol for the saving work of Christ.” “Pregnant verbal symbol” means figurative language. In other words, Christ did not bleed to death to pay the penalty of sin. The term, blood of Christ, is a metaphor for His expiatory death in which He received the judgment that removed the penalty of sin.

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Based on the scholarly work of R.B. Thieme Jr.

I recommend downloading 'THIEME'S BIBLE DOCTRINE DICTIONARY' from this website: rbthieme.org