

FUNDAMENTALISTS AND THE “INCORRUPTIBLE” BLOOD OF CHRIST (4)

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Some Fundamental Theological Errors Underlying this View

5. An Obsession With “Hymns”

Fundamentalist churches most often sing “hymns,” uninspired human compositions, instead of the God-breathed Psalms (I Peter 1:21). One of the signs of modernism in the churches, they claim, is that the “hymns” about the blood have been removed from modern hymnals.¹ Modern, apostate evangelicals no longer like to sing about the blood of Christ, they say. Proud of their perceived separatism from apostasy, Fundamentalists unashamedly and enthusiastically sing “hymns” about the blood. So ingrained is hymn-singing in these churches that it is not uncommon for “hymns” to be quoted in sermons and other literature which promote their peculiar blood doctrine. Alan Cairns quotes five times from “hymns” in his pamphlet,² and Ian Paisley’s *Christian Foundations* is peppered with quotes from uninspired “hymns.”

Elsewhere Paisley complains about modern preachers in these words:

They call their congregations to sing in their evangelistic services such hymns as “There is a fountain filled with blood,” “There’s power in the blood” and “Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb” ... they say with great fervour that, while we ... sing about the blood in our hymns and preach about the blood in our sermons, there is no blood

¹Rev. Thomas Martin complains of this in a sermon: “We’re living in times when many are taking the hymnbook and any mention of the blood in the hymnbook, they’re taking them out completely ... that’s why it is amazing when a man professes to be a Christian and comes into the pulpit and never preaches upon the blood ... take the blood out of preaching and you will have, my friend, a lifeless pulpit and a lifeless congregation; take the blood out of our praise, and all you are left with is ritualism ... there will be no one saved in any church, this church included, if the blood is not preached” (www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?sid=21906152345).

²“The Precious Blood of Christ,” pp. 4, 13, 20, 22, 23.

today ... they give out the invitation hymn, “I am coming Lord, Coming now to Thee, Wash me, Cleanse me in the Blood, That flowed from Calvary.” Thus they invite sinners to an empty fountain and to a washing in the blood which no longer exists.³

It is not wrong to quote from uninspired writings, but it is a mistake to take “hymns” literally, if the “hymn” is erroneous or the words are not intended to be taken literally. The “fountain filled with blood” (possibly a reference to Zechariah 13:1) of William Cowper’s song is not literal, nor did Cowper intend it to be so interpreted. The blood was not “drawn from Immanuel’s veins;” it was shed. Sinners are “not plunged” into the blood of Christ; they are sprinkled (Isa. 52:15; Eze. 36:25; I Peter 1:2), *although not literally*. Many of the “hymns” of this type are characterised by symbolism and stirring devotional language which is not meant to be taken literally. That many such “hymns” were penned by Arminians ought to make them doubly suspect, for what qualifications do Arminians have to write about the atonement? The *Canons of Dordt* speak of the Arminian doctrine of universal, ineffectual atonement in these words:

... this doctrine tends to the despising of the wisdom of the Father and of the merits of Jesus Christ, and is contrary to Scripture ... these adjudge too contemptuously of the death of Christ, do in no wise acknowledge the most important fruit or benefit thereby gained, and bring again out of hell the Pelagian error ... these ... seek to instill into the people the destructive poison of the Pelagian errors (II:R: 1, 3, 6).

Popular “hymns” mould the thinking of the worshipper (often teaching him lies about God). Carried away by his emotions, the hymn-singer often fails to sing with understanding (Ps. 47:7; I Cor. 14:15) and forgets that “hymns” are not the Word of God and are therefore not authoritative. They cannot be quoted to prove a theological point! Many are so accustomed to hymns nowadays that they automatically quote from a hymn in a theological controversy. Sadly, many who have memorised the words of countless uninspired odes are woefully ignorant about the contents of God’s inspired hymnbook, the Psalter.

Even John Greer, in the sermon quoted earlier, reminds his congregation, “You know, all these hymns are not correct. I need to say that.” Indeed he does, but the

³“Ten Impossibilities if the Blood of Christ Perished,” p. 3.

question should be asked, why do Fundamentalists sing “hymns” which are not correct? Is singing erroneous, human “hymns” what Jesus had in mind when He said that the Father seeks worshippers who worship “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23)?⁴

James A. Fowler rightly points out that “fanciful language concerning the blood of Jesus can be seen in many hymns,” and adds that whereas “most people take these phrases as but the symbolism of ‘poetic license,’ there are some who take them quite literally.”⁵

Erroneous Exegesis

In order to have even a semblance of credibility, Fundamentalists need to prove their bizarre doctrine of the blood from Scripture.

Paisley claims to stand on the Word of God when he teaches that the blood of Christ has been eternally preserved:

I am not concerned what the scholars say on this subject; my only concern is what the Scriptures say. My appeal is not to the word of the scholars either in consensus or in controversy but to the Word of the Spirit of God. My rule is not any textbook of biology but the truth of the Bible. I care not how unpleasing God’s revelation is to the natural man, no matter how educated he may be; I care not how unlikely the doctrine of the Bible may appear to the majority of men—that matters not: all that matters is the plain teaching of God’s infallible Book.⁶

Those are laudable sentiments. Would to God that all who call themselves Christians were as bold to defend what they believe the Scriptures teach! The question is, however, do the Scriptures appealed to by Paisley and others in this controversy actually teach what is claimed?

We have examined Hebrews 9:12 already and seen that it does not teach that Christ entered Heaven *with* His blood, but *by* His blood, which He had shed on

⁴Cf. Angus Stewart, “*Our Own Hymn Book Versus God’s Own Hymn Book: a Critique of the Free Presbyterian Church of Ulster Hymnal*” (www.cprf.co.uk/articles/freepresbyterianhymnal.htm).

⁵“The Blood of Christ” (www.christinyou.net/pages/bloodchrst.html).

⁶“Ten Impossibilities if the Blood Perished,” p. 1.

Calvary, having *obtained* eternal redemption for us. What are the main texts Fundamentalists appeal to for proof of their doctrine about the blood of Christ?

I. Leviticus 17:11

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul” is the testimony of Leviticus 17:11. From this verse, De Haan maintains that the very essence of life is blood. What makes a person, or an animal, alive, above everything else, is blood. He even goes so far as to claim that when God breathed into Adam the breath of life, causing Adam to become a “living soul” (Gen. 2:7), that this refers to the addition of blood to the lifeless body of Adam, a sort of blood transfusion.

The breath of God put something in man that made him alive. That something was blood. It must have been. It could be nothing else: for we have already shown that the life of the flesh is in the blood and so when life was added by the breath of God, *He imparted blood to that lump of clay in the shape of a man, and man became a living soul*. Adam’s body was of the ground. *His blood was the separate gift of God*, for God is Life and the Author of all life ... Adam’s body was of the earth, but *his blood was directly from God*. God demands that we respect this fact, since *it was God’s own breath which filled all flesh with blood*. To eat blood, therefore, is to insult the life of God for the life ... is in the blood.⁷

Paisley agrees with De Haan’s ludicrous interpretation of Genesis 2:7. In a sermon entitled, “The Blood! The Shed Blood! The Precious Blood of Jesus!” (March, 2002), he asserted, “The moment God breathed into Adam, his bloodstream was created and his substance physically was tied into the mystery of his spiritual being.”⁸ Furthermore, he agrees with De Haan on Leviticus 17:11:

The blood equals the life, therefore the Blood of Christ equals the life of Incarnate Deity. According to Colossians 2:9, in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily and that fulness was emptied out in the crimson of the cross. The Blood then is the life-tide of the Godhead.⁹

⁷“The Chemistry of the Blood” (www.knology.net/~byrdland/blood.html; italics mine).

⁸www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?currSection=sermonsspeaker&sermonID=2902162557

⁹*Christian Foundations*, p. 96.

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How could Christ, in shedding his human blood, empty out the “fulness of the Godhead”? The blood is the life “of the flesh” (Lev. 17:11), not of the Godhead. The Son of God has life in Himself, “for as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself” (John 5:26). When Christ died, He died in His human nature; He did not die in His divine nature. Christ can never die in His divine nature, and it is difficult to imagine how He could have suffered and died in the incorruptible, indestructible, human nature which is imagined by Fundamentalists!¹⁰

Christ’s human blood was not deified at the incarnation; His human nature was able to sustain the wrath of God because it was united to (not mixed with) His divinity. Lord’s Day 6 of the *Heidelberg Catechism* explains the necessity of the incarnation of the Son of God. Firstly, the Saviour must be human because “the justice of God requires that the same human nature which hath sinned should ... make satisfaction for sin” (A. 16). Secondly, the Saviour must be divine “that he might, by the power of His Godhead, sustain in His human nature, the burden of God’s wrath” (A. 17). Quite simply, if Christ’s human nature differed from ours, He could not save us.

In Leviticus, blood stands for life, because when blood is shed (of a man or of a beast) life is violently taken away. However, the fact that the “life of the flesh is in the blood” does not prove that Christ’s blood is divine, supernatural, sinless or eternally preserved in heaven.

2. Acts 20:28

Another text appealed to by Fundamentalists is Acts 20:28: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” From this text, some infer that Christ had God’s blood and the blood of Christ was divine. It speaks of “the blood of God” does it not? Ian Paisley writes, “His Blood is *divine* Blood as opposed to *human* blood,” and cites this text.¹¹

¹⁰Cf. Paisley: “The blood that coursed in the blood vessels of the holy incorruptible body of God Incarnate while He was on earth was as holy and incorruptible as the flesh of the body itself” (“Ten Impossibilities if the Blood of Christ Perished,” p. 8). See also Greer’s sermon: “You see the whole humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ is a sinless humanity ... Since the blood belongs to His sinless humanity, that means that His blood is incorruptible and His blood is indestructible ... No part of the real humanity of Christ could ever see corruption” (www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?sid=10602123256).

¹¹*Christian Foundations*, p. 57; italics Paisley’s.

Calvin comments on this text:

Surely God does not have blood (Acts 20:28), does not suffer (I Cor. 2:8), cannot be touched with hands (I John 1:1). But since Christ, who was true God and also true man, was crucified and shed his blood for us, the things that he carried out in his human nature are transferred, improperly, although not without reason, to his divinity.¹²

In theology this is known as the *communicatio idiomatum* or the “communication of properties.” Calvin explains,

Thus, also, the Scriptures speak of Christ: they sometimes attribute to him what must be referred solely to his humanity, sometimes what belongs uniquely to his divinity; and sometimes what embraces both natures but fits neither alone. And they so earnestly express the union of the two natures that is in Christ as sometimes to interchange them.¹³

Acts 20:28, then, does not teach that Christ had divine blood, but that Christ’s human nature is inseparably united with His divine nature in one divine Person forever, as orthodox Christianity has always maintained.

3. Hebrews 12:24

Ian Paisley insists that this text (“and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel”) teaches that the blood of Christ (he means the red liquid in Christ’s veins which was shed on the cross) is literally sprinkled and literally speaks:

You cannot sprinkle blood that has congealed. You cannot sprinkle blood that has perished. You cannot sprinkle blood that is lost. You cannot sprinkle blood that has corrupted. You cannot sprinkle blood that is extinct. The continuing characteristic of the blood of Christ in the New Testament is the fact of the sprinkled blood! The apex of the glory in Emmanuel’s land is the blood of sprinkling. If Christ’s blood had not been preserved and sprinkled on the mercy seat of the Triune Jehovah, in no way could sinners be reconciled to God.¹⁴

¹²*Institutes*, vol. 1, p. 484 (2.14.2).

¹³*Institutes*, vol. 1, pp. 482–483 (2.14.1).

¹⁴“Ten Impossibilities if the Blood of Christ Perished,” p. 6.

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But the question must be reiterated: Is the blood *literally* sprinkled on souls? Again, we return to the true humanity of Christ. When blood comes into contact with air, it clots. If Jesus' blood had not clotted like normal human blood, He would have bled to death as an 8 day-old child when He was circumcised. Jesus had real human blood. The efficacy of Christ's sacrificial death continues, although His physical blood perished in the dust (Luke 22:44). Incidentally, you cannot literally sprinkle blood which has returned to Christ's resurrection body either, as Paisley's colleagues, Greer, Cairns and Martin teach.

A second claim from Hebrews 12:24 is that for Christ's blood to speak (literally) it has to have been preserved. Again, we will let Paisley explain himself: "Did the literal blood of Abel cry to God? Yes. The Holy Ghost recorded it to be so. Does the literal blood of Jesus speak today? Yes. The Holy Ghost has recorded it to be so."¹⁵

The author to the Hebrews is obviously using figurative language. Blood does not speak. That is figurative. Christ's blood does not literally speak, and neither did Abel's. It is a figure of speech. That should be obvious from the context. If the blood of sprinkling "speaketh better things than that of Abel" does that mean that Abel's blood is also preserved? If, it is maintained, Christ's blood cannot speak if it was lost in the dust of Palestine, how can Abel's (Gen. 4:10)?

Some Fundamentalists have even appealed to Calvin's commentary on Hebrews, showing that they can no more differentiate between the literal and the figurative in his writings than they can in Scripture.¹⁶ Calvin comments on Hebrews 10:19 ("having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus"):

He afterwards marks the difference between this blood and that of beasts; for the blood of beasts, as it soon turns to corruption, could not long retain its efficacy; but the blood of Christ, which is subject to no corruption, but *flows ever as a pure stream*, is sufficient for us even to the end of the world. It is no wonder that beasts slain in sacrifice had no power to quicken, as they were dead; but Christ who arose from the dead to bestow life on us, communicates his own life to us. It is a

¹⁵"Ten Impossibilities if the Blood of Christ Perished," p. 7.

¹⁶Cf. Hymers: "During the Reformation this great truth was re-emphasized by John Calvin," and he quotes from Calvin's commentary on Hebrews 10:19 (www.rlhymersjr.com/Articles/02-16-03EternalBlood.html).

perpetual consecration of the way, because the blood of Christ is always *in a manner distilling* before the presence of the Father, in order to *irrigate heaven and earth*.¹⁷

You see, say the Fundamentalists, Calvin taught that Christ's blood was "subject to no corruption, but flows ever as a pure stream." The highly figurative language ought to be an indicator that Calvin should not be taken literally here, but such men are undeterred. Does Christ's physical blood literally "flow ever as a pure stream," "distill" before the Father and "irrigate heaven and earth"? Calvin is speaking metaphorically here, as he himself indicates: "*in a manner* distilling before the presence of the Father, in order to irrigate heaven and earth."

Commenting on Hebrews 13:20 ("through the blood of the everlasting covenant"), Calvin writes,

Christ so arose from the dead, that his death was not yet abolished, but it retains its efficacy for ever, as though he had said, God raised up his own Son, but in such a way that the blood shed once for all in his death is efficacious after his resurrection for the ratification of the everlasting covenant, and brings forth fruit the same as though it were flowing always.¹⁸

Ian Paisley teaches that the blood of Christ is one of seven things in heaven and he lambastes those who disagree:

[This new brand of preachers say that] all that are mentioned above [in Hebrews 12:22-24] are real except the blood. God places it at the apex. They displace it altogether. There is no blood in Heaven, they affirm. There is no blood-sprinkling there. There is no speaking blood there.¹⁹

How can Christ's shed blood (a created substance) be at the "apex of heaven"? The saints of God celebrate the fact of the accomplished redemption of Christ. Their song is "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain" (Rev. 5:12); not "Worthy is the blood that was shed." Is there much difference between Romanists worshipping what

¹⁷*Commentary on Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Baker, repr. 1993), p. 235; italics mine. Notice, by the way, that Hebrews 10:19 (as well as Hebrews 9:12) cannot be rendered "with the blood of Jesus" because neither we, nor the Lord Jesus, enter heaven "with" the blood, but by virtue of it.

¹⁸*Commentary on Hebrews*, p. 357; italics mine.

¹⁹"Ten Impossibilities if the Blood of Christ Perished," p. 10.

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they think is Christ's blood in the Mass, and Fundamentalists exalting the literal blood of Christ as they imagine it to be in heaven?²⁰

Charles Spurgeon denies that this text is referring to the literal material blood:

What is this "blood of sprinkling?" In a few words, "the blood of sprinkling" represents the pains, the sufferings, the humiliation, and the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, which he endured on the behalf of guilty man. When we speak of the blood, we wish not to be understood as referring solely or mainly to the literal material blood which flowed from the wounds of Jesus. We believe in the literal fact of his shedding his blood; but when we speak of his cross and blood we mean those sufferings and that death of our Lord Jesus Christ by which he magnified the law of God.²¹

Paisley does not even attempt an exegesis of Hebrews 12:24. He just makes the bold assertion, "The Blood is in heaven" and attacks all who disagree. What is the correct interpretation of this passage? First, the context describes a contrast between the church under the law and the church of the new dispensation with the coming of Christ. That is one of the themes of the epistle to the Hebrews. In Hebrews 12:18-21 the apostle gives a graphic account of the church (Acts 7:38) at Sinai. New Testament believers have not "come unto" that mount. Hebrews 12:22-24 is not a description of heaven. John Owen's commentary is very good on this subject:

The apostle intends a description of that state whereunto believers are called by the gospel. For it is that alone which he opposeth to the state of the church under the old testament. And to suppose that it is the heavenly, future state which he intends, is utterly to destroy the force of his argument and exhortation.²²

²⁰Cf. Richard Alexander: "Another problem is that the Blood Indoctrinators are very close to producing another member of the Godhead. It is no longer Christ who saves us; it is His blood. The difference may seem slight, but it is not. Would we think a woman normal who ignored her wounded child in favor of the blood that he left on a sidewalk? The blood is an extension of the individual; by itself, it does not have any significance. It is only in connection with the person from whom the blood came that it has any significance" (<http://members.aol.com/pooua/Bloodbook.html>).

²¹"The Blood of Sprinkling" (1886) (www.apibs.org/chs/1888.htm).

²²*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, vol. 7, p. 330.

The realities described in Hebrews 12:22-24 are spiritual. Mount Zion, the city of the living God (Rev. 21:10), the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2), the general assembly and church of the firstborn are all names for the church. There is no mountain called “Zion” in heaven. Zion is a type of the church. Through the gospel, we have an interest in all the spiritual blessings of Christ. Owen writes,

This is the first privilege of believers under the gospel. They “come unto mount Sion;” that is, they are interested in all the promises of God made unto Sion, recorded in the Scripture, in all the love and care of God expressed towards it, in all the spiritual glories assigned unto it.²³

Through Christ, elect believers have communion with the saints and angels, because Christ has gathered and reconciled “all things” unto Himself (Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20). The saints and angels are in one mystical body; angels and the saints are fellow worshippers (Heb. 1:6; Rev. 5:11); angels are interested in the affairs of the church (I Peter 1:12), rejoice over penitents (Luke 15:10) and serve the church (Heb. 1:14). We have been reconciled, not only to God, but also to the angels (Col. 1:20) who, being holy (Matt. 25:31), could have no fellowship with us in our sins. Through Christ, our relationship to the angels has been radically transformed. Writes Owen,

Wherefore by Jesus Christ we have a blessed access unto this “innumerable company of angels.” Those who, by reason of our fall from God, and the first entrance of sin, had no regard unto us, but to execute the vengeance of God against us, represented by the cherubim with the flaming sword (for “he maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire”) to keep man, when he had sinned, out of Eden, and from the tree of life, Genesis 3:24; those whose ministry God made use of in giving of the law, to fill the people with dread and terror; they are now, in Christ, become one mystical body with the church, and our associates in design and service. And this may well be esteemed as an eminent privilege which we receive by the gospel.²⁴

In a very real sense, the church militant on earth is one with the church triumphant in heaven. God has “made us to sit together in heavenly places with Christ

²³*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, vol. 7, p. 332.

²⁴*An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, vol. 7, p. 336.

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Jesus” (Eph. 2:6); we have “access by one Spirit unto the Father” and are “fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Eph. 2:18-19); and “our conversation is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20), although we are still bodily on the earth. This is part of what the creeds call “the communion of saints”—not that believers on earth pray to or seek the intercession of the glorified saints in heaven—but that all the elect (past, present and future) are “in Christ” who is the head of the body (Col. 1:18).

The elect, of whom are “the spirits of just men made perfect” (Heb. 12:23), who comprise “the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven” (Heb. 12:23; cf. Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:3) have access through “Jesus the mediator of the new covenant” (Heb. 12:4; cf. I Tim. 2:5; Heb. 8:6) to “God the Judge of all” (Heb. 12:23). The means, whereby they have access to angels, departed saints, the holy God and judge of all, is the “blood of sprinkling” (Heb. 12:24). This “blood of sprinkling” speaks better things than that of Abel. It is said in Genesis 4:10 that Abel’s blood “crieth” unto God, that is, the blood of Abel is witness against his brother, and cries out for justice and the divine punishment of Cain. As indicated earlier, this is a figure of speech: blood does not speak. The blood of Christ “speaketh” too, but it does not cry out for vengeance; it cries out, “Atonement has been made.” God forgives guilty sinners on the basis of what Christ did by shedding His blood. The justice and vengeance of God against the sins of God’s elect has been satisfied. God hears the cry of the blood of the Lamb and the elect sinner is pardoned. The elect are “sprinkled” with (not plunged beneath) that blood spiritually. As Owen says, “It is the expiating, purging efficacy of his blood, as applied unto us, that is included therein.”²⁵

Paisley complains that you cannot sprinkle blood that has been lost. That is not the issue. The idea of sprinkling the blood of Christ in Scripture is not a literal sprinkling of the material blood, so it is not necessary that it be preserved. As Stibbs writes,

“The sprinkling of the blood” in the case of Christ’s sacrifice means the extension to the persons sprinkled of the value and the benefits of the death of which it is token. So the phrase and the idea continue to be a metaphorical way of referring to the application of, and the participation in, the saving benefits of the death of Jesus. This efficacy of the one sacrifice already made is continuous and all-sufficient. So

²⁵ *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, vol. 7, p. 348.

Christians can still prove, as they walk in the light, that the blood of Jesus cleanses them from all sin; that is, that Christ's death avails to purge away any and every fresh defilement.²⁶

4. I Peter 1:18-19

Perhaps the text most appealed to by the proponents of this doctrine is I Peter 1:18-19 where we read,

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

It is argued that silver and gold are corruptible, but the blood of Christ is incorruptible, meaning that it can never congeal, perish, be lost or corrupt. Paisley writes, "The blood that coursed in the blood vessels of the holy incorruptible body of God Incarnate while He was on earth was as holy and incorruptible as the flesh of the body itself."²⁷

That statement is heresy. It may sound pious to claim that Christ had incorruptible flesh, but it is the heresy of the Docetists. Because the Docetists held, like the Gnostics before them, that matter is sinful, they believed it was more honouring to Christ to confess that He did not have a real human nature; that He only *seemed* to be human. The early church condemned the Gnostics and Docetists and the church has always rejected any denial of Christ's true humanity. Incorruptible flesh and incorruptible blood do not constitute a real and complete human nature. Rather, such an assertion is a denial of Christ's incarnation.

Returning to I Peter 1:18-19, we should mention, first of all, that the text does not say that Christ's blood is incorruptible; it says that gold is corruptible, and Christ's blood is precious. The value of Christ's blood is contrasted with the value of gold, and Peter affirms that Christ's blood is infinitely more valuable than gold. However, what Paisley and others have to prove is, not even that Peter means that the "blood of Christ is precious and incorruptible" but that by the blood of Christ is meant that red liquid consisting of blood cells, platelets and plasma.

²⁶*The Meaning of the Word "Blood" in Scripture*, p. 25.

²⁷"Ten Impossibilities of the Blood of Christ Perished," p. 8.

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By the blood of Christ, the apostle means that the saving virtue of the bloody, sacrificial, atoning death of Christ is incorruptible, still as effective as it was when He died approximately 2,000 years ago. The power of the bloody, sacrificial, atoning death of Christ never ceases, never decays, is always effectual unto the salvation of every elect sinner. There is not one sinner for whom Christ died who will ever say, “Christ died for me, but I was damned. Here I am in hell, and although Christ’s blood was shed for me, and although Christ put away my sins by His death, yet I did not make it to heaven.”²⁸ Christ will see the travail of His soul and be satisfied (Isa. 53:11), or, as Calvin expresses it, “Christ so arose from the dead, that *his death* was not yet abolished, but *it retains its efficacy for ever*.”²⁹

The bloody, sacrificial, atoning death of Christ is eternally present in the mind and decree of God Almighty, for Christ is “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8). It is not the case that two millennia have passed since the death of Christ and it has “gone stale.” It will never go stale! The effects of the atonement are everlasting! When Christ appears before His Father on behalf of His elect (cf. John 17:9), He (as it were) reminds God of His work of redemption. He is always interceding, and the ground of His intercession is His blood (the bloody, sacrificial, atoning death of Christ). God does not need to see material blood all the time. The blood was shed once, and since it was human blood (not divine blood or blood with divine and human attributes) it was finite and not eternal. That does not take away from its value: it is valuable (Peter says “precious”) because it is *Christ’s* blood. It is valuable by virtue of the Person whose blood it is, and the eternal redemption for which it was shed.

to be concluded (DV)

²⁸The tragedy is that many are teaching that God loves everybody and Christ died for everybody. The natural man logically infers from this that God would not damn a person for whom Christ died, and is given a false sense of security, so that he sees no need to repent from his sins and be converted. Such lying prophets “strengthen the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life” (Eze. 13:22).

²⁹*Commentary on Hebrews*, p. 357; italics mine.