

Clean Hands and Blood-guilt

- A. The importance of having clean hands is underscored by **PSA 24:3-5**.
1. God rewards according to righteousness, the cleanness of the hands. **PSA 18:20, 24**.
 2. One's strength increases accordingly. **JOB 17:9**.
 3. It may be observed that one's hands may be clean because of avoiding defilement or clean by having defilement washed away.
 4. The Jews turned this spiritual/moral principle into a vain tradition of artificial purity tests. **MAR 7:1-8**.
- B. When someone is distancing himself from involvement or culpability in a wrongful deed, he might say that he has *washed his hands of it*, as Pilate. **MAT 27:24**.
1. Pilate's ceremony and declaration was a cheap abrogation of his duty as a magistrate which he did for political and personal purposes. c/w **MAT 27:19**.
 2. Christ was basically made a sacrifice for the "greater public good." c/w **JOH 11:48-50**.
 3. Pilate is held by God to be as guilty in the death of the innocent Christ as Herod, the Jews and their leaders. **ACT 4:26-28**.
 4. The guilt of innocent blood is a high order of unclean hands. **ISA 1:15; 59:3; PRO 6:17**.
 5. The Jews, like Pilate, did not consider themselves culpable. **MAT 27:25** c/w **ACT 7:52**.
 6. Both Pilate and the Jews abused law in condemning Christ.
 - a. Pilate deemed Roman law could not condemn an innocent man but provincial law could so he fudged to prevent a riot.
 - b. The Jews had a law for capital punishment (**JOH 19:7**) which they falsely brought to bear against Christ.
 - c. Consider **PSA 94:20-21; JER 2:34-35**.
- C. The guilt of blood attaches to:
1. shedding of innocent blood. **DEU 19:10**.
 2. delinquency in punishing one who sheds innocent blood. **DEU 19:13**.
 3. delinquency in warning men about wickedness. **EZE 3:18** c/w **ACT 20:26**.
 4. the warned but impenitent sinner. **EZE 33:4** c/w **ACT 18:6**.
 5. by association, the profaning of the Lord's Supper. **1CO 11:27**.
- D. **DEU 21:1-9** ordered a handwashing ceremony in declaration of innocence of blood-guilt.
1. Under the supervision of the priests/judges, city elders were to kill a heifer which had not been used in man's service, wash their hands over it and swear their innocence. c/w **PSA 26:6**.
 2. Assuming that there were no liars among the elders, the guilt of innocent blood was pardoned and put away from the people only by following this law. Multitudes may well have been saved from the wrath of God by this procedure.
 3. Christ seems to answer to this law in being both the *murdered victim* and the *slain innocent heifer used only in God's service*.
 - a. His body was prepared for God's work in sacrifice for sinners. **HEB 10:5-10**.
 - b. He did not bear Adam's corrupted image, being conceived by God. **LUK 1:35**.
 - c. His sufferings, bloodshed and death atone for secret and unknown sins, even for all sins of His elect. **COL 2:13**.
 - d. However, none can claim total innocence in the crucifixion of Christ. All have sinned and come short of God's glory (**ROM 3:23**); all are by nature children of wrath (**EPH 2:3**). It was for the elects' sins that Christ died!
- E. The innocent blood which the Jews called upon themselves and their children (**MAT 27:25**) was the very blood of *eternal* redemption for many of them. **HEB 9:12**.
1. Among that wicked generation were elect children of the promise. **ROM 9:6-8; 11:5**.

2. Those who later repented and turned to Christ found *temporal* remission of sins (even blood-guilt) and relief from wrath according to God’s tender mercies and promise.
 - a. The Holy Ghost pricked their hearts to the ugly reality of what they had done. **ACT 2:36-37.**
 - b. The awful words, “...His blood be on us, and on our children” (**MAT 27:25**) should be contrasted with **ACT 2:38-41**, even “...the promise is unto you, and to your children...”
 - c. The *guilt* of blood was offset by the *gift* of the blood: *eternal forgiveness* that secured their heavenly inheritance, and *temporal remission* of sins that gave them an inheritance in God’s kingdom in this world: the house of God which is the N.T. church. **1TI 3:15.**
3. Their repentance, faith and baptism was the means by which they would “...Save yourselves from this untoward generation” (**ACT 2:40**).
 - a. untoward: Difficult to manage, restrain, or control; intractable, unruly, perverse.
 - b. It was “...an evil and adulterous generation...wicked generation” (**MAT 12:39, 45**).
 - c. It was a “...faithless and perverse generation...” (**MAT 17:17**).
 - d. The humble, repenting, obedient believers saved themselves from that generation’s corruption and from its massive blood-guilt that would be required of them. **LUK 11:50-51 c/w 1TH 2:14-16.**
 - e. This provision did not apply to the hardened unbelievers. **ACT 18:6.**
4. Thousands in Israel turned to Christ and were saved from wrath and blood-guilt. **ACT 2:41; 4:4; 21:20.**
 - a. These were not saved by declaring, “...Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it” (**DEU 21:7**), but rather by admitting that they were guilty and repenting. **ACT 2:36-41.**
 - b. Repentance and submission to Christ is by far the best way to clean one’s hands. **JAM 4:8.**
5. Are you concerned about your own sin, guilt and ignorance of God, about the corruption and perversion of the culture around you and what it could come to? Peter’s words still apply. **ACT 2:38-40.**