

## Addendum to Sermon on Blood-Guilt

On August 27, 2023 I preached on “Clean Hands and Blood-Guilt.” That topic generated some post-assembly observations. Here is an important one:

It is true that the decisions and actions of Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel in that place were responsible for the sufferings, blood-shed and death of Jesus Christ:

Act 4:25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?

Act 4:26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

Act 4:27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

Act 4:28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

It is also true (as noted in the sermon) that this was the very means by which the *eternal redemption* of the elect by the blood of Christ was accomplished (EPH 1:3-7) and that the *temporal remission* of the sin of blood-guilt became available to repenting believers thereafter by the very same blood's power to forgive sinful thoughts and acts (ACT 2:36-41; 3:18; 1JO 1:7-9). As Joseph had once said of wicked actions of his own brothers which God used to put Joseph into a position of power to be a savior unto them years later, “...ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive” (GEN 50:20).

One could foolishly conclude that what Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and the Jews did was wise and commendable since sinners could not be saved without the bloodshed, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and therefore all the elect owe that conspiracy a great debt of gratitude. But as I also mentioned on Sunday, it was pointedly the entire family of the elect that were the very reason Christ suffered, bled and died: we could also foolishly conclude that we are the cause of our own salvation by the blood of Christ! Such asinine reasonings are what Paul tended to cut off with “God forbid...” (ROM 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11; 1CO 6:15; GAL 2:17; 3:21).

Paul summarized such fallacy as the errant proposition, “...Let us do evil, that good may come...” (ROM 3:8). The first proponent of that insidious doctrine was Satan in the garden of Eden:

Gen 3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

Gen 3:5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Satan's doctrine was that the maximum potential for humanity is achieved by sinful disobedience: restricting oneself to righteousness and belief of God's word is actually a hindrance to good. His spirit still works that same game in the *children of disobedience* (EPH 2:2). Every temptation to which we yield is a replay of this devilish principle: there is something personally beneficial to be gained by sin in spite of knowledge to the contrary so “...let us do evil that good may come.” This folly is always the product of deception in which we are either duped or deliberate.

Let us also be wary of confusing this horrible doctrine with what Scripture does teach about lesser law being overruled by greater law when those two come into conflict (MAT 12:1-8).