



AT- ONE- MENT

THE PATHWAY TO COMPLETE
RESTORATION WITH GOD

ADRIAN EBENS

AT-
ONE-
MENT

THE PATHWAY TO COMPLETE
RESTORATION WITH GOD

ADRIAN EBENS



Adrian Ebens, 2021

Copyright © 2021, Adrian Ebens

The moral right of the author has been asserted.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced for commercial profit, including transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher and copyright holders. Please note the author has highlighted sections of the verses with bold to emphasise a specific point gathered from those texts.

Unless otherwise identified, Scripture quotations are taken from the *New King James Version*. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations attributed to NIV are from the Holy Bible, *New International Version*, copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission.

Scripture quotations attributed to YLT are from the Holy Bible, *Young's Literal Translation*, copyright© 1898, by Robert Young, now in the public domain.

Scripture quotations attributed to *Apostolic Polyglot* are from the *Apostolic Bible Polyglot*, copyright © 1995, by Charles Lynn VanderPool, Sr. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations attributed to *Good News* are from the *Good News Translation*, copyright © 1976, 1992, by American Bible Society. All rights reserved.

All website links and quoted content are current as of December 2021.

This book and all other Father of Love publications are available from our website fatheroflove.info to order additional copies please email adrian@life-matters.org

ISBN: 978-0-6488114-8-0

This book was

Written by Adrian Ebens

Edited by Danutasn Brown

Proofread by Lorelle Ebens

Cover designed by Shane Winfield/Advent Design

Cover Photo by Josh Imerbin/Shutterstock.com

Typeset 10.5/14 Palatino Linotype

Printed in Australia

CONTENTS

1. In Search of Atonement.....	1
2. Reformer’s Context	9
3. Divine Justice and Punishment	14
4. Adam’s Hidden Treachery	19
5. I Have Glorified You On Earth	26
6. The Throne of Iniquity	31
7. Uplifted Serpent	40
8. Striking the Rock	49
9. Man’s Atonement.....	54
10. Where Sin Abounded Grace Did Much More Abound	64
11. The Slaughter of Innocence	72
12. The Veil of His Flesh.....	81
13. Context for Abraham and Isaac Story	94
14. The Faith of Abraham.....	104
15. Daniel and the Abominable Treachery of the Little Horn.....	116

ATONEMENT

16. William Miller, the Daily and the Transgression of Desolation	123
17. The Cleansing of the Sanctuary.....	132
18. Comparison Between Protestant and Adventist Atonement.....	140
19. The Heavenly Sanctuary	149
20. The Judgment and Blotting Out of Sin.....	159
21. Breaking the Yoke Of Covenant Dualism.....	170
22. Coming To Manhood — The Cross a Present Thing	183
23. The Meaning of Blood in the Sanctuary.....	192
24. The Punishment of Us All.....	200
25. Back into the Wilderness.....	213
26. Bring Rebellion to the Full	226
27. Chronos No Longer	234
28. My Beloved Son.....	241
29. The Ministry of Reconciliation	246
30. First Angel’s Message.....	253
31. Babylon is Fallen	261
32. A Thankful Heart	267

CHAPTER 1

IN SEARCH OF ATONEMENT

How shall I be reconciled to God? This question expresses the inner yearning of billions of human souls that have sojourned through the darkness of this fallen world.

The accumulated sense of guilt, rising into the consciousness of the hearts of men who have transgressed against their Maker, causes the soul to long for forgiveness and reconciliation.

Our Father in heaven has written the principles of His kingdom into the tablets of the human heart. The sense of right and wrong that pricks us in our conscience when we lie, steal, and kill remind us that we are responsible to someone greater than ourselves.

The Christian teaching of atonement has sought to explain to us the process of how we might find release for our guilty souls and peace with our Creator and our fellow man.

Here is what the famous Christian preacher Billy Graham said about what atonement means in a Christian context:

...assurance rests on the finished work of Jesus Christ. When Jesus died on the cross, He bore our iniquities, enduring God's wrath,

ATONEMENT

and cried out, "It is finished!" (John 19:30). By this, He meant that the full atonement for all our sins – past, present and future – has been made. His work of redemption now completed, our entire sin debt is paid in full.¹

This view sees the death of Jesus as satisfying the wrath of God; Jesus takes our place and receives the penalty we deserve in order that we might go free. But many in the world have questions about this story. What is God wrathful about, and how does sending His Son to die satisfy that wrath? How does Christ's death pay the debt for sins that men continue to commit today?

At the heart of the atonement is the story of Jesus Christ who was condemned to death through the malice of the religious leaders of His nation and hung upon a Roman cross. Men killed Christ; men wanted Him dead. Did His Father also want Him dead? Did Jesus set Himself up to die?

The meaning of His death upon the Cross and how this translates into forgiveness and peace for the guilty soul is not as clear as one might imagine.

While speaking to one of the Jewish leaders who was intrigued by the growing ministry of Christ, Jesus expressed a critical piece of the puzzle to the atonement.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:14-15

Jesus referred his listener to a story concerning Moses and the children of Israel just after they had left Egypt. The people had been grumbling and complaining against God and Moses about their imagined difficulties in the desert, regardless of the fact that God had provided all their needs. God had been protecting them from the elements as well as from the dangers of the creatures in the desert.

¹ <https://billygraham.org/story/how-to-be-sure-of-your-salvation/>

The protection of God was driven off through their selfish ingratitude and serpents came in amongst the people and began to bite them. What happened next seems very strange.

And the people spoke against God and against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For *there is* no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.” So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. Then the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery *serpent*, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived. Numbers 21:5-9

Moses was instructed to make an image out of brass of the very thing that God sent to bite and kill the people for their rebellion – a venomous serpent. The people were then commanded to look upon this representation of what was killing them and by looking at the brass serpent, trusting God’s word, they would live.

Amazingly, Jesus told Nicodemus that in this same manner as Moses lifted up the brass serpent in the wilderness, the lifting up of Jesus would cause all who looked upon Him in faith, believing in Him, to live.

It is such a strange story upon which to base a key element of how man can find peace with God and have eternal life. Was Jesus comparing Himself to a serpent, which essentially represents Satan? Why did God ask Moses to make an image of the destroying serpents and then ask people to look in faith upon the image of what was destroying them in order to be healed? Why not make an image of a healer or one who destroys snakes? Why not the image of a lamb or a dove; wouldn’t that make more sense? How can you be healed looking at an image of the

ATONEMENT

very thing that is killing you? Why did Jesus compare Himself to the thing that was destroying them – a snake?

These questions serve to emphasise the point that there is an enigma at the heart of the process of how a man can find forgiveness and reconciliation.

This search is further complicated by other things Jesus says about the way to salvation. When Jesus was asked by a man how he could have eternal life, Jesus gives an answer that we might not expect.

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."
Luke 10:25-28

Why did Jesus point the man to the law and ask him what it means? Jesus says nothing to the man about dying for his sins and that if he believed in the sacrifice of Jesus as payment for his sins then he would be saved. Jesus simply agrees with the man's statement that we should love God with all our hearts and our neighbours as ourselves. Is it because Jesus is speaking to a man who has no idea about the process of salvation and is just trying to point him in the right direction? Why didn't Jesus speak about His sacrifice and the need to believe on this sacrifice for salvation?

On the night before Jesus was taken and crucified, He was praying to His Father. One thing He prayed really strikes an odd note to the tune of the atonement as expressed in Christianity.

"I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do." John 17:4

How can Jesus say that He has finished the work His Father gave Him on the night before He died on the Cross? If believing on the sacrifice of

Jesus on the Cross as a substitute for our sins is at the heart of the Christian faith, then what does Jesus mean by this? Did He say this in anticipation of the next day? Shouldn't He have prayed, "We are almost there; we have almost finished, Father."?

These are some of the questions that make the subject of atonement less simple than we might imagine. Unsurprisingly, one theologian, Leon Morris, who wrote much on the subject of the atonement, makes a startling admission regarding the New Testament writers and their expressions regarding the idea of atonement:

The NT writers do not repeat a stereotyped story. Each writes from his own perspective. But each shows that it is the death of Christ and not any human achievement that brings salvation. But none of them sets out a theory of atonement.²

He goes on to state:

Theories of the atonement are legion as men in different countries and in different ages have tried to bring together the varied strands of scriptural teaching and to work them into a theory that will help others to understand how God has worked to bring us salvation.³

And finally concludes:

But we are small minded sinners and the atonement is great and vast. We should not expect that our theories will ever explain it fully. Even when we put them all together, we will no more than begin to comprehend a little of the vastness of God's saving deed.⁴

Doesn't the Bible set out a complete process of the atonement? Is it such a mystery that it could not be written out in Scripture sufficiently? The evidence that supports what Leon Morris suggests is that Christianity is divided on the process of the atonement and how to explain it.

² <https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/atonementmorris2.html>

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

ATONEMENT

There are several theories of the atonement that have been developed over the time since Christ dwelt on the earth. The idea that dominated Christian thought after the Apostles died, and developed by the early church fathers was the ransom theory.

Essentially, this theory claimed that Adam and Eve sold humanity over to the Devil at the time of the Fall; hence, it required that God pay the Devil a ransom to free us from the Devil's clutches. God, however, tricked the Devil into accepting Christ's death as a ransom, for the Devil did not realise that Christ could not be held in the bonds of death. Once the Devil accepted Christ's death as a ransom, this theory concluded, justice was satisfied and God was able to free us from Satan's grip.⁵

The focus of this theory is, of course, the ransom paid to redeem the human race. It presents a view of God as one who bargains with the devil and even tricks him in order to rescue humanity. God is understood to be a shrewd, cunning individual who outsmarts His opponent. Augustine, writing along these lines, stated:

The Redeemer came and the deceiver was overcome. What did our Redeemer do to our captor? In payment for us He set the trap, His Cross, with His blood for bait. He [Satan] could indeed shed that blood; but he deserved not to drink it. By shedding the blood of One who was not his debtor, he was forced to release his debtors.⁶

Is this how God acts? Is this even fair? Does it address all the issues involved in how humanity fell and why Jesus had to come? Most Christians today agree this view is problematic and very limited. The idea of a ransom is emphasised but the framework for the ransom is questionable. Regardless of these problems, the idea was prominent in many churches until the eleventh century when the Archbishop of Canterbury, Anselm, developed what is called the satisfaction theory of the atonement.

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ransom_theory_of_atonement

⁶ <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02055a.htm>

Anselm was born in upper Burgundy on the border of France and Italy. At the age of fifteen, he desired to enter the monastery but his father refused to allow it. After his mother died, Anselm's father became much more religious which Anselm found to be unbearably severe. Soon after, he left home to find his way in the world. When his father died, he pondered whether to return to take up his father's estates or to join a monastery and become a monk. He chose the latter.⁷

Anselm excelled in scholastic pursuits and rose through the ranks until he became Archbishop of Canterbury. Anselm clashed with the kings of England being twice exiled during the controversy he contested. Anselm was Neoplatonic in his worldview which means he approached Scripture through the framework of Greek philosophy like many Christian scholars before and after him. It is not surprising that we find the following theme at the centre of Anselm's concepts of atonement.

In the eleventh century Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, produced a little book called *Cur Deus Homo?* ("Why did God become Man?"). In it he subjected the patristic view of a ransom paid to Satan to severe criticism. He saw sin as dishonoring the majesty of God. **Now a sovereign may well be ready in his private capacity to forgive an insult or an injury, but because he is a sovereign he cannot.** The state has been dishonored in its head. Appropriate satisfaction must be offered. **God is the sovereign Ruler of all, and it is not proper for God to remit any irregularity in his kingdom.** Anselm argued that the insult sin has given to God is so great that only one who is God can provide satisfaction.⁸

It is fascinating to ponder how Anselm comes to these conclusions. They seem to be drawn from the logic of political theory, rather than Scripture. Can God really not forgive because of His position as Head of State? God, in speaking to Moses, clearly revealed His character in regard to mercy and forgiveness:

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anselm_of_Canterbury

⁸ Leon Morris – *Theories of atonement*

ATONEMENT

And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." Exodus 34:6-7

There is no hint of God not being able to forgive without some satisfaction for His insulted majesty. Upon the Cross, Christ demonstrates in the most sublime manner the ability of God to forgive those who trespass against Him. When we consider Anselm's experience with his own father and his conflicts with the kings of England, it is easy to see the projection of his own experience onto God.

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. James 1:23-24

Anselm's story serves to remind us that men are overwhelmingly tempted to project their own characteristics onto God in order to sanctify and excuse their own beliefs, decisions and behaviour. This is the central reason for the mystery of the atonement. Men perceive God acts as they would. Projection is natural and easy when we do not allow the Scriptures to interpret themselves. Through the framework of Neoplatonism, Anselm was free to project his own desires onto our heavenly Father and help to cement within Christianity a view of God as a severe and unforgiving sovereign whose offended majesty must be satisfied. He is by no means the first, and there are plenty of Scriptures that could appear to give credence to his ideas.

Anselm is a pivotal figure in considering the subject of the atonement, for the Protestant reformers developed and refined his ideas into the dominant theory of atonement existing today called Penal Substitution.

CHAPTER 2

REFORMER'S CONTEXT

Shortly after the time of Anselm, around 1200-1300 A.D., was the zenith of the Catholic Church's power. The Pope ruled over all of Europe, commanding kings and declaring who went to heaven and who went to hell. This right to rule is best understood in their own words.

Pope Innocent III (1198-1216, maybe the most powerful of all Popes) appointed all bishops; he summoned to his tribunal all causes, from the gravest affairs of mighty kingdoms to the private concerns of the humble citizen. He claimed all kingdoms as his fiefs, all monarchs as his vassals; and launched with unsparing hand the bolts of excommunication against all who withstood his pontifical will...

Innocent III affirmed "that the pontifical authority so much exceeded the royal power as the sun doth the moon." Nor could he find words fitly to describe his own formidable functions, save those of Jehovah to his prophet Jeremiah: "See, I have set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down."

"We declare," says Boniface VIII (1294-1303), in his bull *Unam Sanctam*, "define, and pronounce it to be necessary to salvation for

ATONEMENT

every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff." This subjection is declared in the bull to extend to all affairs. "One sword," says the Pope, "must be under another, and the temporal authority must be subject to the spiritual power; whence, if the earthly power go astray, it must be judged by the spiritual." Such are a few of the "great words" which were heard to issue from the Vatican Mount, that new Sinai, which, like the old, encompassed by fiery terrors, had upreared itself in the midst of the astonished and affrighted nations of Christendom. (J.A. Wylie, *History of Protestantism*)

This was a radically different Christianity to what existed in the time of the Apostles, due to the church's relationship with power and authority. During the period of the early church there was no focus on how to rule over nations because Christianity was in the minority and was being persecuted in the world. Early Christian theologians were more concerned about how to live right in a pagan world.

But by the 1300s the whole of Europe had become "Christianised" and fully under the sway of the church rulers in Rome, and therefore the Popes were focused on how to rule and uphold orthodoxy. This necessity to keep the minds of men in the same understanding as their rulers, to "keep the peace," is seen in the leading theologian of the day, Thomas Aquinas, who was prominent about 100 years after Anselm, advocating the burning of heretics – alive.⁹

In the early church, exterminating heresy was not an issue for the simple reason that there was no orthodoxy. There originally was a huge variety of opinion on how to understand the Scriptures, and great freedom for each to decide for himself. This is in stark contrast to the condition of liberty of conscience during the height of centralised Roman Christianity, where the Scriptures weren't available in the common language and the priests were considered the only ones able to read and interpret them. With this transformation of Christianity, heresy came to be seen as more and more of a threat.

⁹ https://www.heretication.info/_heretics.html

In the sixth century when Justinian handed the power of Caesar to the Roman pontiff, he drafted laws against heretics that required their expulsion from office but their lives were to be preserved. For them, said Justinian, "to exist is sufficient."¹⁰

When the drawing power of the love of Christ is removed from man, the only power left is that of force and the threat of death. As the church became more about dogma and politics rather than the Scriptures, service, and thinking others better than yourself, death for dissidents became more and more common.

Figures vary widely as to how many people were killed as heretics during the dark ages, but the point I wish to draw from this is that the Papacy conveyed clearly the notion that heresy must be punished with death.

In the slaughter of the Waldenses and Albigenses; in the fires of Smithfield; in the Spanish inquisition amongst many others, we see the face of man projected onto the face of God and worshipped as God.

It is important to understand that the doctrine of the atonement developed by the reformers in the 16th century was in the context of the slaughter of many thousands of "heretics" that had raged for the previous three hundred years.

The reformers decried the abuses of the Popes and protested their brutality but as many children discover who rail against their parents, they become acutely aware that it's not an easy thing to remove from your character that which you learned as a child under their tuition.

Martin Luther urged the princes of Germany to put down the peasants' revolt with force after initially showing sympathy to the peasants' cause.

Martin Luther initially shows some sympathy for the peasants' plight. He, himself, in his Admonition for Peace in 1525, criticised the "arrogant" attitude of the sovereigns. Only when troops of

¹⁰ Ibid

ATONEMENT

peasants slaughter a count and his escort, and this creates a furore as the “Bloody deed of Weinsberg”, does the reformer change sides. Now he radically distances himself from the insurgents. With his text “Against the Robbing Murderous Hordes of Peasants”, he urges the princes to take ruthless retaliation. “They must be sliced, choked, stabbed, secretly and publicly, by those who can, like one must kill a rabid dog.” Luther chooses to apply the “freedom of a Christian” to the spiritual and not to the secular area.¹¹

It is impossible for a man who believes that peasants who have committed murder should be sliced, choked and stabbed like a rabid dog not to bring this mindset into an understanding of how God deals with sinful behaviour.

John Calvin desired the prickly Michael Servetus be killed for espousing heretical doctrine. Calvin wrote to William Farel on the issue:

I hope that sentence of death will at least be passed on him; but I desired that the severity of the punishment be mitigated.¹²

Calvin appealed for Servetus to be beheaded, rather than burned alive, in an attempt to mitigate the severity of punishment. Once again, Calvin reveals his thoughts in regard to how God deals with those considered evil. How do we correlate this with the words of Jesus?

“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.” Matthew 5:44-45

Both Luther and Calvin were instrumental in forming the doctrine of atonement that is most influential today – Penal Substitution.¹³ They were products of their time. It is an undeniable fact that men read the Bible through the lens of their culture and upbringing. Within the

¹¹ <https://www.dokumentarfilm.com/en/luther-and-the-peasants-war>

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Servetus

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penal_substitution

REFORMER'S CONTEXT

context of what was happening in the Middle Ages, Luther and Calvin shone a light into the darkness, and for this we should all be thankful, yet, in our pursuit of truth we cannot allow our gratitude to them to blind us to their shortcomings. They would hopefully wish us to advance in the light that they have initiated.

Let us now examine the doctrine of Penal Substitution as our next stop in our search to understand the atonement.

CHAPTER 3

DIVINE JUSTICE AND PUNISHMENT

While Anselm spoke of compensation in satisfying God's justice, the reformers spoke of punishment. Martin Luther animates the theory in the following way:

Being the unspotted Lamb of God, Christ was personally innocent. But because He took the sins of the world His sinlessness was defiled with the sinfulness of the world. Whatever sins I, you, all of us have committed or shall commit, they are to be Christ's sins or we shall perish forever... Our merciful Father in heaven... therefore sent His only Son into the world and said to Him: "You are now Peter, the liar; Paul, the persecutor; David, the adulterer; Adam, the disobedient; the thief on the cross, You, My Son, must pay the world's iniquity." The law growls: "All right. If Your Son is taking the sins of the world, I see no sins anywhere else but in Him. He shall die on the Cross." **And the law kills Christ. But we go free.**¹⁴

Luther asserts the law of God demands mankind be punished for all men have sinned, and Christ steps into man's place to receive that punishment so man can "go free". The personification of the law reveals

¹⁴ Martin Luther, *Commentary on St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*

the awkwardness of this proposition. Rather than saying the Father growls and the Father kills Christ, Luther states that the law does it.

The idea of the Father punishing Christ has raised many concerns from scholars. For example, John Scott rebuts this idea in saying “We must never make Christ the object of God’s punishment.”¹⁵ To avoid this charge, Penal Substitution relies heavily on the doctrine of the Trinity to allow for the nuance that God took the punishment on Himself in the person of God the Son.

Important theological concepts about penal substitution depend on the doctrine of the Trinity. Those who believe that Jesus was himself God, in line with the doctrine of the Trinity, believe that God took the punishment upon himself rather than putting it on someone else. In other words, the doctrine of union with Christ affirms that by taking the punishment upon himself Jesus fulfills the demands of justice not for an unrelated third party but for those identified with him.¹⁶

Penal Substitution seeks to wash its hands of the ugly implications of a justice that demands retribution through the doctrine of the Trinity. But not all are convinced of the need for this nuance. For others the raw reality of God’s rulership means that God is wrathful towards those who break His law and He demands punishment – that is how He is, He will punish sinners just as the Pope punishes heretics.

Any biblically adequate atonement theory must include the notion of propitiation, that is to say, the appeasement of God’s just wrath against sin. **The source of God’s wrath is His retributive justice, and so appeasement of wrath is fundamentally a matter of the satisfaction of divine justice.** How are the demands of divine justice satisfied? Biblically speaking, the satisfaction of God’s justice

¹⁵ John Scott, *The Cross of Christ*, (Leicester, UK:InterVarsity, 1986), page 151

¹⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penal_substitution

ATONEMENT

primarily takes place, not as Anselm thought, through compensation but through punishment.¹⁷

Charles Spurgeon spells it out without any gloss. Note carefully the juxtaposition of love and justice in his thought process.

...we must measure the great redemption by the sternness of divine justice "God is love," always loving; but my next proposition does not at all interfere with this assertion. **God is sternly just, inflexibly severe in His dealings with mankind.** The God of the Bible is not the God of some men's imagination, Who thinks so little of sin that He passes it by without demanding any punishment for it....

Learn ye, my friends, to look upon God as being as severe in His justice as if He were not loving, and yet as loving as if He were not severe. His love does not diminish His justice, nor does His justice, in the least degree, make warfare upon His love. The two things are sweetly linked together in the atonement of Christ. But, mark, we can never understand the fullness of the atonement till we have first grasped the Scriptural truth of God's immense justice.

There was never an ill word spoken, nor an ill thought conceived, nor an evil deed done, for which God will not have punishment from some one or another. He will either have satisfaction from you, or else from Christ. If you have no atonement to bring through Christ, you must for ever lie paying the debt which you never can pay, in eternal misery; for as surely as God is God, He will sooner lose His Godhead than suffer one sin to go unpunished, or one particle of rebellion unrevenged. You may say that this character of God is cold, stern, and severe. I cannot help what you say of it; it is nevertheless true. Such is the God of the Bible.¹⁸

The words *stern*, *severe* and *inflexible* do not naturally correlate to the word *love*. Spurgeon invites us into the process of mystery with these

¹⁷ William Lane Craig, *atonement and the Death of Christ*, (Baylor University Press, 2020), page 195

¹⁸ Charles Spurgeon, *Particular Redemption*

logical opposites by suggesting that His justice appears as if He is not loving and at the same time loving as if He were not severe. To accept these conflicting principles, you must submit to the idea of a mystery. You are forced to abandon your logic process and just accept the conflict as the limitation of your mind. We are reminded that Paul instructs us to test all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21) and therefore we are not required to abandon reason for mystery when the Bible does not explicitly demand it.

While it is beyond the scope of this book, such mystical applications of logic sit comfortably for someone who has already accepted the naturally logical contradiction of the Trinity. To accept that three persons are simultaneously all-powerful and yet they are not three all-powerful

persons but one all-powerful being requires logical contradiction reframed as mystery that must be accepted. As we stated earlier, the doctrine of Penal Substitution rests easiest in the bosom of the Trinity and it would seem that the same mystical element in both is employed to pressure the logical mind into submission. Such coercion should invite suspicion as to whether the path of truth requires us to walk in this direction.

Does the image of a being who would rather lose His divine crown than let one sin go unpunished cause you to feel welcome in His presence? That any mistake, no matter how small, requires blood? Does our heavenly Father act in this way? Is this truly His character? Does the Bible support this notion of an inflexible justice that must be punished and that God is so intent on having this justice that He would punish His own Son to be satisfied?

There are plenty of voices that cry “No” to this idea of punishment, but there seems to be few who question the principles behind the system of

Does the Bible support this notion of an inflexible justice that must be punished and that God is so intent on having this justice that He would punish His own Son to be satisfied?

ATONEMENT

justice that requires this punishment. Instead of digging deeper into what Scripture says and asking God if this is what He is really like, most people who are repulsed by this concept of atonement give up on Christianity and leave the faith.

But do these severe theories of atonement come from God, or do they come from man?

Is it possible that due to the fact that no clear principle of the atonement has stood alone within Christian thought that humanity has framed the atonement through its own perceptions of justice inherited from Adam and inspired by the evil one? Did not the gospel prophet prophesy of this eventuality?

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.
Isaiah 53:4 (NIV)

Are we potentially imagining that God punished His Son to satisfy His divine justice when in reality we are the ones who punished Him?

All of us like sheep have wandered, each to his own way we have turned, and Jehovah hath caused to meet on him, the punishment of us all. Isaiah 53:6 (YLT)

While the King James translates Isaiah 53:6 as God laying on His Son the iniquity of us all, the Young's Literal Translation offers an insight into another perspective. Is it God that demanded retribution or was it man? Did God allow our desire for punishment to meet on His Son so that we might see our true evil nature at work? Is it God that condemned man or is it man that condemned God?

CHAPTER 4

ADAM'S HIDDEN TREACHERY

In speaking of His Father, Jesus expresses a universal statement without qualification or limitation.

“For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son.” John 5:22

The word for *judge* carries the following meaning as expressed in the Strong's Concordance:

Properly to distinguish, that is, decide (mentally or judicially); by implication to try, condemn, punish:—avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, go to (sue at the) law, ordain, call in question, sentence to, think.

Jesus tells us that God does not decide either mentally or judicially to try, condemn or punish any person. There is no person in the universe who knows the Father better than Jesus; in fact, Jesus tells us that He knows the Father to the same level as the Father knows Him.

“As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father...” John 10:15

How could it be possible for the Father not to condemn anyone? There are many Bible verses that seem to contradict what Jesus said. In seeking

to resolve this in my mind previously, I concluded that Jesus Himself would be the one judging and condemning those who resist the gospel. But then we discover another judgment statement from Jesus a few chapters later.

“You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one.” John 8:15

This is exactly that same word for judge as we found in John 5:22. Jesus plainly tells us that He does not judge or condemn any person. When I first processed the reality of what these two texts were saying, I experienced serious cognitive dissonance. If God does not condemn any person and neither does His Son then how does the judgment work and how is evil dealt with? It seems completely impossible to interpret these verses to mean God and His Son do not judge or condemn anyone at all.

The following verses open for us a window on a completely new reality when thinking about judgment and condemnation.¹⁹

“Judge not, that you be not judged. **For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged;** and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.” Matthew 7:1–2

It [Love] does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 1 Corinthians 13:5 (NIV)

“And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, **I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.** He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—**the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.**” John 12:47–48

The apostle Paul reveals to us where condemnation comes from and where it originated on this earth.

¹⁹ For an extended treatment of this topic see the book *As You Judge* available at fatheroflove.info

ADAM'S HIDDEN TREACHERY

And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by [out of] one [Adam] to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. Romans 5:16 (KJV)

If we look at Romans chapter five closely, it reveals that condemnation comes from Adam and not from God.

Romans 5	Man's Action and Effect	God's Action and Effect
Verse 15	But not as the offence so also <i>is</i> the free gift
Verse 15	For if through the offence of one many be dead much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, <i>which is</i> by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.
Verse 16	And not as <i>it was</i> by one that sinned, <i>so is</i> the gift:
Verse 16	... for the judgment <i>was</i> by one to condemnation,	... but the free gift <i>is</i> of many offences unto justification.
Verse 17	For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.
Verse 18	Therefore as by the offence of one <i>judgment came</i> upon all men to condemnation even so by the righteousness of one the <i>free gift came</i> upon all men unto justification of life.
Verse 19	For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.
Verse 20	Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:
Verse 21	That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

ATONEMENT

Plenty of translations seek to present the idea that Adam brought God's condemnation upon himself through his actions but a correct reading of the text reveals that Adam was the one who did the condemning. And who did he condemn?

Then the man said, "The woman **whom You gave to be with me**, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." Genesis 3:12

As no man comes to the Father except through the Son, so it was the Son of God who came to Adam in the garden and asked him what he had done. Adam had fled from the presence of God fearing that he would be punished for eating the fruit. Adam reasoned that because God had said when you eat the fruit you will die, this meant that God was coming to kill him. Believing that God had condemned and sentenced him, Adam retaliates and blames God in the person of His Son for the events that had occurred. As Adam thought he would die, he attempted to shift what he thought was the execution of death onto the Son of God and onto his wife.

The verse we just read presents to us the pattern of human atonement. Adam condemned Eve, who was guilty, for her part of offering to Adam the fruit. But Adam then condemned the innocent, the Son of God. Here is the birth of Penal Substitution within the human race. The full manifestation of this atonement is seen on the Cross. The two men beside Christ were indeed guilty as was Eve, but in the centre was the crucifixion of the innocent. This is the satanically inspired idea that Satan had all along to slay the Son of God. As we shall discover in later chapters, human atonement usually requires the death of the innocent along with a representative of the guilty. This is the sin hidden deep in Adam's heart.

If I have covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom. Job 31:33

The Genesis account does not reveal Adam's desire to place the sentence of death upon the Son of God and his wife, although it is evident that Adam is seeking to blame them both. We see evidence of the seed within

Adam to blame his wife in the 137 women that are presently killed every day by their male partners.²⁰

The prophet Hosea tells us what the iniquity of Adam was.

And they, as Adam, transgressed a covenant, there they dealt treacherously against me. Hosea 6:7 (YLT)

The word for treachery has the following range of meanings in Hebrew:

H898 Baġad: A primitive root; to cover (with a garment); figuratively to act covertly; by implication to pillage: - deal deceitfully (treacherously, unfaithfully), offend, transgress (-or), (depart), treacherous (dealer, -ly, man), unfaithful (-ly, man), X very.

Adam transgressed the everlasting covenant with God. He acted treacherously towards God but he hid this murderous treachery deep in his heart. The covering of fig leaves was a symbol of his attempt to cover something far more sinister than simply feeling bad for eating the fruit of the tree.

Adam was not fully aware of his feelings towards God, and secondly, his wife. As they were hidden, they would not truly be known until they were manifested. God sought to show Adam the extent of his treachery by allowing one of His precious animals to be sacrificed. God did not desire to do this (Psalm 40:6) but it was an extreme emergency measure to alert Adam to the terrible evil that was hidden inside. The sacrifice was a mirror into the bosom of Adam; it was designed to show him his true intentions toward the Son of God.

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.
Romans 5:12

This verse is understood by Christians to mean that death passed upon Adam, and therefore all men, because God judged and condemned Adam for eating of the fruit of the tree. The truth is that Adam assumed

²⁰ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-46292919>

ATONEMENT

that God was going to condemn and kill him. Jesus tells us that neither He nor His Father condemn any person. Therefore, Adam sinned against the truth of God's character. God told Adam he would perish in choosing a path that doubted God's love, as this would disconnect Adam from the source. Adam's sin of seeking to shift what he understood was the punishment onto the Son of God, rather than holding on to the hope of God's goodness, caused death to come into the world. This way of thinking has passed to every person born into this world:

For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son,... Romans 5:10

And you, who **once were alienated and enemies in your mind** by wicked works,... Colossians 1:21

Adam condemned the Son of God (the innocent) and his wife (the guilty) to death sitting upon Satan's throne of judgment. How was Adam's sin manifested? When Cain killed Abel.

The fruit of Adam's body could not be hidden. Cain was conceived in Adam's early sinful state. The iniquity in his bosom was manifested in the life of Cain. That which was invisible in Adam became visible in Cain. Abel was filled with the Spirit of Christ and reflected the fruit of Adam's growing repentance, while Cain continued to develop the carnal nature of his father through his refusal to repent.

We note that Paul does not say *by one woman sin entered into the world*; it came through Adam not Eve. While Eve did eat the fruit, she was deceived by the serpent. (1 Timothy 2:14). Adam willfully took the fruit and seeded the enmity (hatred) of the carnal man. (Romans 8:7).

Adam's hidden iniquity was enmity/hatred towards God. In order to hide this enmity, Adam projected his hidden condemning judgment onto God. To Adam, it appeared that God wanted to kill him, rather than he wanting to kill God. This is a psychologically recognised process that fallen human beings use for deflecting and repressing unwanted thoughts and feelings.

Psychological projection is a defense mechanism in which the human ego defends itself against unconscious impulses or qualities (both positive and negative) by denying their existence in themselves while attributing them to others.²¹

If we understand this process correctly, the doctrine of Penal Substitution is the fully developed fruit of man projecting his condemning wrath onto God. Adam was the one who was the aggressor while the Son of God meekly bore the stripes laid upon Him, not stripes of God's punishment but of mankind.

Condemning judgment demanding death as coming from man rather than God will probably be a new idea to the reader. If sin is so deceitful and hidden, this shouldn't be a surprise. If sin were so easily dealt with, humanity would have had atonement with God long ago. Finally, after nearly six blood-soaked millennia, the Spirit of God reaching into the heart of men can finally show us what is truly taking place within us. We could never have discovered this ourselves. We are too self-deceived to realise it. But now this message is calling us to repent of our inherited and cultivated treachery against God and His Son.

Let us make it clear. Adam's fear of God, which all men have inherited due to sin, caused in us terrible mental trauma. In self-defence, man projects his hidden sin onto the character of God and makes God the one with the character flaw. This causes us to believe reconciliation is held back by God's need for blood, when actually it is our need for blood.

If this indeed be the truth, then it follows that atonement for man is realised in two things.

1. A restored understanding of the character of God.
2. A true understanding of man's own evil condemning nature that leads to repentance in the light of the truth of God's character.

²¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological_projection

CHAPTER 5

I HAVE GLORIFIED YOU ON EARTH

How wonderfully profound and simple are the words of Jesus to Philip in answer to his question to show him the Father.

Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father?'" John 14:8-9

Jesus assures Philip that within the time frame that he had known Christ, the character of the Father was fully revealed to him. Jesus kept nothing back but rather all of the magnificence of God's glorious character was revealed to him. Hence Jesus could pray this on the night before His crucifixion:

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word." John 17:6

The word *name* in Greek here speaks of character. Jesus did not simply teach the disciples how to pronounce the Father's name, no, He revealed to them the character of His Father because this is what was needed to establish the first part of the atonement.

The life of Jesus chronicled in the four Gospels of the New Testament reveals a person that is incredibly beautiful. Always thinking of others, showing compassion, mercy and kindness. Firm in convictions; always speaking the truth. Fearless in the face of the storms of men and nature while sublimely forgiving men's weaknesses. His loving look toward Peter, even while Peter was cursing in denial of knowing Him, leaves us in awe of the golden elements of His character.

On two occasions Jesus cleansed the temple revealing the intensity of loyalty to His worship of His Father, yet He never struck any person in a violent act nor ever did He take a person's life. This reality needs to find entrance into our hearts and minds. This is a very narrow gate to enter, because if we accept the obvious truth that Christ never killed anyone while here on earth, and we accept His words that what He displayed is in fact the very character of His Father, then we are left without excuse for our condemning and violent natures which are tempted to see punishment and even death visited upon those who have wronged us or those we love.

If you can see that the life of Christ on earth is the full manifestation of the character of God, then this automatically affects your understanding of the atonement. If Christ never manifested a justice causing Him to kill any person here on earth, then it is impossible to conceive that His Father would do this. These thoughts raise many questions beyond the scope of this book. For an introduction to the subject of God's non-violent character please read the book *Acts of our Gentle God* available at fatheroflove.info. For an in-depth analysis of this subject please read the book *Agape* also available at fatheroflove.info.

If Christ never manifested a justice causing Him to kill any person here on earth, then it is impossible to conceive that His Father would do this.

If at the heart of the atonement God is seeking to reveal to man the truth of His loving character through His Son, then we can find pure majestic light in the prayer of Jesus the night before His death.

ATONEMENT

“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.” John 17:4

The central pillar of Penal Substitution is that the punishment we deserved was put onto Christ in His sufferings and death. This is declared, by that doctrine, to be the central work that Christ came to do. Christ destroys this pillar with the simple prayer that He had completed the work His Father had given Him on the night *before* His death.

Christ glorified His Father in the revelation He gave of His character. This work was completed before Christ died on the Cross. It is true that in the prayer of Jesus to forgive those who were killing Him there was provided a glorious exclamation mark to the beauty of God’s character, but Jesus asserts that this work had already been completed the night before.

When Christ surrendered Himself fully to the will of His Father and committed Himself to save man at any cost to Himself, He fully manifested the love of His Father. The crucifixion of Christ was necessary on the grounds that mankind needed to see revealed the iniquity that was hidden in the bosom of Adam and inherited by all his descendants. We needed to see the Cross in order to see the horrible creatures we are, and confess ourselves guilty of the murder of the Son of God.

“And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only *son*, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.” Zechariah 12:10

Every time we feel anger in ourselves desiring harm to another person, we are guilty of the blood of Christ. John tells us that he who hates his brother is a murderer. (1 John 3:15). Christ tells us that in as much as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto Me. (Matthew 25:40).

When you search the words of Jesus in the Gospels to discover His definition of the Cross, you find only these words:

Then He said to *them* all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."
Luke 9:23

Jesus defines the Cross as daily self-denial. The nailing of Jesus to a wooden cross was the supreme manifestation of His self-denial, but this alone is not the true Cross. The true Cross of Christ encompasses all of His self-denial throughout human history.²²

In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old. Isaiah 63:9

Daily Christ suffers the agonies of crucifixion; daily men are piercing Him with their condemning words and violent deeds. As any parent would be deeply wounded in being forced to watch the suffering and death of their children, so Christ, to a much larger extent, suffers and is pierced in watching His children harm and destroy each other.

If they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, **since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God**, and put *Him* to an open shame. Hebrews 6:6

Paul understood this truth when he said "I am crucified with Christ." (Galatians 2:20, KJV). He did not say he was crucified *like* Christ, referring to a single event in the past, but rather *with* Christ as he declared "I die daily." (1 Corinthians 15:31).

Many scream into the blackness of night "Where are you God in my hour of need!" The reality is that He is right there in the darkness suffering everything you feel, hoping you will turn to Him and trust Him to help you through your valley of despair. Without faith it is impossible for Him to step into our prison of shadows ruled by the

²² For a more detailed examination of this topic see the book *Cross Examined and Cross Encountered* available from fatheroflove.info

ATONEMENT

powers of darkness. We must be the ones to invite Him in faith to bring His light to help us.

The Christian world is blinded to the true Cross of Christ by the splinters and spikes of Calvary. It is astounding that humanity in its satanic wisdom can take an emblem of pure light and yet use this to mask the true majesty of the Cross. The true Cross is simply too bright for humanity to truly appreciate. The self-denial of God over 6000 years is simply too vast to understand. This love utterly condemns our selfishness but it is not coming from the scowling face of divinity but rather the tender look of patient love. Our Father heaps loving coals of fire upon the heads of the guilty, in order for the guilty to see the truth of His character (Romans 12:20); it is not to harm or destroy them.

Do we believe the words of Jesus that He completed the work of His Father the night before He died? If you do then you must radically alter your perceptions of the atonement, for our beautiful Father never desired sacrifice or offering for sin. (Psalm 40:6). We did, through the condemning inheritance of our forefathers all the way back to Adam.

CHAPTER 6

THE THRONE OF INIQUITY

In speaking to the leaders of the Jewish nation, Jesus speaks to the deeper truth of the carnal man:

“You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.” John 8:44

By nature, fallen man has a nature fathered by Satan. Our natural impulses fulfil the desires of Satan. Paul punctuates this reality when he says:

...in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, **the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience**, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were **by nature children of wrath**, just as the others. Ephesians 2:2-3

Satan was a murderer from the beginning. He desired to be worshipped like the Father, while at the same time replacing the Son of God. (Isaiah

14:12-14). Satan worked in secrecy, the true father of all the Machiavellian arts, seeking to dethrone the rulership of the Son of God.

Owing to the fact that carnal men reflect the desires of Satan we can discover through the stories of the Bible, Satan's modes of operation in his war with the government of heaven proving true the words of Paul that "all these things ... are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." (1 Corinthians 10:11, KJV).

The story of Absalom's pursuit of his father's throne, even to the extent of murdering him, reflects perfectly the desire of his father the devil. What was the subject that Absalom introduced in the courts of his father's realm?

Now Absalom would rise early and stand beside the way to the gate. *So* it was, whenever anyone who had a lawsuit came to the king for a decision, that Absalom would call to him and say, "What city *are* you from?" And he would say, "Your servant *is* from such and such a tribe of Israel." Then Absalom would say to him, "Look, your case *is* good and right; but *there is* no deputy of the king to hear you." Moreover Absalom would say, "**Oh, that I were made judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice.**" And *so* it was, whenever anyone came near to bow down to him, that he would put out his hand and take him and kiss him. In this manner Absalom acted toward all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel. 2 Samuel 15:2-6

Absalom's vehicle that would carry him both into the hearts of the nation and within reach of the throne was named *justice*. The name Absalom means *father of peace*, but hidden under this name was a character of hatred and war. Absalom wanted his father to punish his half-brother Amnon who sexually assaulted Absalom's sister, Tamar. Because king David did not execute his desired sentence against Amnon, Absalom despised his father and was determined to deal with Amnon himself.

THE THRONE OF INIQUITY

But Absalom urged him; so he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, "Watch now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, **and when I say to you, 'Strike Amnon!' then kill him. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be courageous and valiant.**" So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and each one got on his mule and fled. 2 Samuel 13:27-29

Absalom executed Amnon with the justice he felt was appropriate. It is very unlikely that Absalom's desire for retribution was based solely on vengeance for his sister. Amnon was the first-born son of David and therefore was first in line to the throne. David's second son Daniel or Chileab seems to disappear from history leading some to think that he died as a child.

Absalom's aspiration for the throne was the deeper motive. Although now being next in line to the throne, his fears that he might be excluded because of his revenge, combined with his lust for power drove him to take the throne by force. To achieve this goal he set about to win the hearts of the kingdom of Israel just as Satan moved amongst the angels of heaven, seeking to win them to his side in order to take the throne of God by force.

David was sorrowful about what his son Amnon did to his daughter but he did not have any thought of killing him. David's own moral failure with Bathsheba clouded David's need to act. Previously David had administered true justice within his realm (2 Samuel 8:15), but David's inaction fueled Absalom to take his own vigilante action.

After Absalom murdered Amnon, David expelled him from the capital until finally, through the appeals of Joab, his general, Absalom returned.

Once returned, the subject that Absalom introduced to the thinking men of the nation was the subject of justice and the administration of law. His agitation of this subject placed doubt over King David's administration of the government of Israel. Absalom's throne was crafted through doing mischief with the law.

ATONEMENT

Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law? Psalm 94:20 (KJV)

Absalom's murder of Amnon reveals the merciless nature of his thoughts on justice. He divorced the principle of mercy from justice, making them incompatible with each other.

In the designs of Absalom, we see the desires of his murderous father, Satan. He wanted to remove Christ, the first-born Son of the Father and take His place. Of course, God was not negligent like David to administer justice in His realm, but God's dealing with Satan's intrigues required time so that the truth would be revealed. Like Absalom, Satan introduced to the kingdom a different idea of justice; justice that demands forced punishment and death without forgiveness. Satan framed the law of God with mischief in a manner to separate God's character from His governance and administration; creating a void in the minds of the heavenly beings that he filled himself with his own authority and idea of justice, thus forming the throne of iniquity.

...to open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins*,.... Acts 26:18 (KJV)

Paul reveals that coming out from the power of Satan is to come into the possibility of the forgiveness of sins. Satan's darkened kingdom was founded upon unforgiveness and punishment. God reveals Himself as merciful, gracious, and long-suffering in character. (Exodus 34:5-6). God's desire is to show mercy and truth; Satan's desire is to punish and destroy.

The law of God is a law of life and liberty. (James 2:12; Proverbs 13:14). As the Father was the only one who was inherently immortal and His Son possessed this immortality through His love and honour of His Father, all the rest of the angels were given this life through the Son of God, moment by moment.²³

²³ For more on this see the book *Divine Risk* chapters 1 to 6 available at fatheroflove.info

Lucifer reframed the law as a code that the angels must obey and that those who do not obey should be punished. This is what he called justice. This was different to God's justice. Note carefully the following text.

Justice and judgment *are* the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face. Psalm 89:14 (KJV)

This Bible text is a classic Hebrew sentence structure. The second sentence is an expansion of the first. It is restating the principles of the first part in a magnified way. Apart from this, the English punctuation also provides this principle. The colon after the word *throne* means that what comes next is explaining what is before the colon.

1. Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne

Equals

2. Mercy and truth shall go before thy face

What this is saying is that justice is expressed as mercy and judgment is expressed as truth. God's justice means to do what is right. For God the right thing to do is to show mercy.²⁴ Those who refuse to obey after repeated appeals will reap what they have sown.

When God revealed His name/character to Moses, we read nothing about inflicting death.

Now the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." Exodus 34:5-7

²⁴ For more on this see the book *Divine Risk* chapters 9 to 14 as well as the book *As You Judge* chapters 3 to 13. Both are available at fatheroflove.info

Did God fulfil the request of Moses and reveal to him all of His character? Our beloved Father names mercy as His first attribute followed by graciousness. He then names patience, having abundant goodness and truth and being merciful to thousands of generations and forgiving iniquity and sin.

Our Father mentions nothing of sacrificial payment for sin. There is no mention of Penal Substitution in what He said. It simply says that He

Our Father mentions nothing of sacrificial payment for sin. There is no mention of Penal Substitution in what He said. It simply says that He forgives.

forgives. God does not clear anyone who transgresses because the words *the guilty* are supplied words by the translators. God allows every person to receive the consequences of their own actions and will give mercy to those who ask for it while facing their consequences. It says that God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation. What does it mean to visit

the iniquity of the fathers upon the children? This word in Hebrew means:

(Qal) to pay attention to, observe, to attend to, to seek, look about for, to seek in vain, need, miss, lack, to visit, to visit upon, punish to pass in review, muster, number, to appoint, assign, lay upon as a charge, deposit - *Brown Driver Briggs*

Our Father in heaven pays attention to and observes how the sins of one generation affect the next generation. While He continues to warn as best as He can of the dangers of taking a sinful path, He does not force people in any direction. God not only visits or oversees the iniquities of the wicked but also does this for the followers of God. When David committed adultery and arranged for the murder of Uriah, God did not clear David of the death of four of his sons but rather gave him grace to endure the consequences of his wrong choices.

THE THRONE OF INIQUITY

The Bible repeatedly states this principle of people being punished by the natural consequences of their wrong choices:

The LORD is known *by* the judgment He executes; **the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.** Psalm 9:16

Behold, *the wicked* brings forth iniquity; yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood. He made a pit and dug it out, and has fallen into the ditch *which* he made. His trouble shall return upon his own head, **and his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown.** Psalm 7:14-16

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; **for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption,** but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. Galatians 6:7-8

God revealed all of His character to Moses. He says nothing about putting to death those who sin against Him. This same principle is placed into the Ten Commandments which were written with the finger of God and spoken by Him for all to hear on Mt. Sinai.

“You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness *of anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth *generations* of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.” Exodus 20:3-6

The generation or type of people that determine to hate God and His ways will face the natural results of their own errors. A refusal to come into the truth of God’s word leaves those who refuse this to the mercy of Satan. When Satan begins to harm and destroy those who resist God, those affected imagine that it is God who is punishing them in jealousy. God is not a petty jealous person but rather He appears to be jealous in the eyes of those who walk a rebellious path. Thus, God warns us that

if we worship false gods or ideas, He will appear to be jealous. The word *am* in “I...*am* a jealous God” is supplied by the translators and is not part of the verse.

It is such a sorrowful thing for our Father to allow His rebellious children to walk away into the hands of Satan and be destroyed. But as He respects the free choice of all, He will not stop those who are determined to rebel.

Satan is the author of condemnation and death. His throne is built upon reframing the law of God into an instrument that leads to punishment and death.

Just as Absalom stole the hearts of Israel through his obsession with punitive justice, so Satan has deceived the whole world by the same lie. Catholics, Protestants and any other groups who refer to divine justice as demanding death are in fact unwittingly projecting Satan’s wicked justice onto the merciful, gentle, and gracious Father of all living.

Through his false justice, Satan has almost universally achieved what he set out to do – establish his throne above the stars of God and all of humanity. (Isaiah 14:12-14).

While God did not desire sacrifice for sin, Satan convinced many angels and the entire human race of his principles of justice. For this reason, God’s rescue plan for humanity had to take into account the fact that our false understanding of justice, projected onto God, meant that there could be no perceived forgiveness of sins without the shedding of blood.

It was pointless to tell mankind they were simply forgiven of their sins. Firstly, Adam hid the seed of sin so deep in his soul that he did not fully understand what he needed to confess. Secondly, until humanity saw that their sins were punished, either of themselves or a substitute, they would not believe in the forgiveness of God just as Cain refused to accept it.

And Cain said to the Lord God, my crime *is* too great for me to be forgiven. Genesis 4:13 (Brenton LXX English translation)

THE THRONE OF INIQUITY

In order to save man, God had to deliver us from the kingdom of Satan in which there was no forgiveness without punishment and death. Therefore, Christ had to be made sin for us, that we might believe in the forgiveness of God. Christ must be lifted up to satisfy serpent justice, that we might look upon Christ on the Cross and believe that we might be healed.

CHAPTER 7

UPLIFTED SERPENT

In chapter one we raised a number of questions related to the words of Jesus comparing Himself to the raising of the serpent on the pole. Without addressing the question of Satan's false justice system, it would have been too difficult to adequately respond in that chapter. Now we have addressed Satan's justice system, we are ready to explore this story.

The story of the uplifted serpent in the wilderness holds a vital key to understanding the subject of the atonement.

Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For *there is* no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." Numbers 21:4-5

The children of Israel complained about their situation and accused not only Moses but God Himself of neglecting their needs and letting them die in the wilderness. The people allowed Satan to blind their eyes to God's loving watchcare and the continual prayers and kind leadership of Moses. This spirit of murmuring allowed Satan to break through God's hedge of protection.

UPLIFTED SERPENT

He who digs a pit will fall into it, and whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent. Ecclesiastes 10:8

Israel had dug themselves into a pit of needless worry and groundless blame. Accusing God of neglect was a false charge against His character and therefore it was idolatry. It is important to understand that any false idea about God constitutes idolatry. Any wrong conception of God's character is an idol of our own imagination.

God had been protecting Israel from the dangers of the wilderness. He had provided a pillar of cloud during the day to shield them from the heat of the sun and a pillar of fire by night to keep them warm from the cold. He fed them manna every day and obviously protected them from the wild animals and venomous creatures in the desert. At the close of their wilderness wandering Moses told them:

For the LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand. He knows your trudging through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God *has been* with you; **you have lacked nothing**. Deuteronomy 2:7

We are also told:

The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them. Psalm 34:7

When Israel ceased to fear God and accused Him of neglect, He could not protect them from Satan as He had done previously.

So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. Numbers 21:6

All of the translations I checked state that God sent the serpents among the people. When you hold the idea that God's justice demands punishment leading to death, then it makes complete sense to believe that God punished the Israelites for their ingratitude and false accusations against Him. The punishment for many was death.

ATONEMENT

The Israelites perceived that God had sent the serpents to punish them, and they confessed to Moses that they had sinned and pleaded with Moses to ask God to take the serpents away.

Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. Numbers 21:7

God does not tell Moses to tell the people that it was not Him who sent the serpents because the people would not comprehend this. They knew they had sinned against God, and in their own minds it made complete sense that God would punish them and even kill some of them in anger because of their sins. This is the justice they understood; this is what atonement meant to them.

When you observe the meaning of the Hebrew word for *send* in the tense given, we see the following:

Piel Tense

1c1) to send off or away or out or forth, dismiss, give over, cast out

1c2) to let go, set free

1c3) to shoot forth (of branches)

1c4) to let down

1c5) to shoot

Did God send them directly to harm the Israelites? Or did God let the serpents go free by no longer preventing them from coming into the camp of Israel? We don't have to guess which meaning to apply here because Paul tells us what happened:

...nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by **serpents**; [G3789] nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the **destroyer**. [G3644]
1 Corinthians 10:9-10

The Greek word that Paul uses for serpent is used in a number of other places to refer to Satan.

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent [G3789] of old, called the Devil and Satan,... Revelation 12:9

He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent [G3789] of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.
Revelation 20:2

On top of this, the Strong's definition for the word *destroyer* in the next verse means "a ruiner, venomous serpent." We consider also the words of Jesus about His character.

For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save *them*.... Luke 9:56

All of this points strongly towards the thought that God let the snakes go free from restraint and Satan then used them to harm and kill the Israelites. Israel thought it was God that was killing them through the serpents when in fact it was Satan taking control of the serpents because Israel had made a hole in the wall of God's protection through their ingratitude, false accusations, and idolatry regarding God's character.

In order to meet the people's thinking, God gave Moses a very strange instruction.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery [H8314] *serpent*, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live." So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived. Numbers 21:8-9

God told Moses to make a brass image of the serpents that were biting them, put it on a pole, and then invite the people to look upon the brass serpent and they would live.

This practice was common among heathen nations as seen in the story of the Philistines when they took the ark of Israel and consequently experienced plagues of mice and were struck with hemorrhoid tumors.

Now the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months. And the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners, saying, "What shall we do with the ark of the LORD? Tell us how we should send it to its place." So they said, "If you send away the ark of the God of Israel, do not send it empty; but by all means

Why does God use a pagan practice to heal the Israelites? Simply because they were still ruled by pagan ideas of justice and restitution.

return *it* to Him *with* a trespass offering. Then you will be healed, and it will be known to you why His hand is not removed from you." Then they said, "What *is* the trespass offering which we shall return to Him?" They answered, "Five golden tumors and five golden rats, *according to* the number of

the lords of the Philistines. For the same plague *was* on all of you and on your lords. Therefore you shall make images of your tumors and images of your rats that ravage the land, and you shall give glory to the God of Israel; perhaps He will lighten His hand from you, from your gods, and from your land." 1 Samuel 6:1-5

Why does God use a pagan practice to heal the Israelites? Simply because they were still ruled by pagan ideas of justice and restitution.

What is fascinating about the word used for fiery serpent is that it is found in another place to refer to an angel.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. Above it stood **seraphim**; [H8314] each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. Isaiah 6:1-2

Is it a coincidence that the exact word for *fiery serpent* also is used to refer to the seraphim that stand before the throne of God? Who is the angel that became a serpent who once stood in the throne room of God? Obviously, this is a reference to Satan. Why is Moses being asked to

make a symbol of Satan and follow the pagan customs of other nations to provide a path to redemption for the bitten Israelites? Because their ideas of reconciliation and atonement demanded this type of ritual for the people to believe that God would forgive and accept them.

The connections to Satan and Paganism relating to the lifting up of the serpent contain another layer of confirmation. This relates to the metal that the serpent was made from – brass.

Brass was not a metal created by God. It was not something you could dig out of the ground. Brass was developed by one of the descendants of Cain.

And **Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch.** And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son—Enoch. **To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad begot Mehujael, and Mehujael begot Methushael, and Methushael begot Lamech.** Then **Lamech took for himself two wives:** the name of one *was* Adah, and **the name of the second *was* Zillah.** And Adah bore Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. His brother's name *was* Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and flute. **And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron.** And the sister of Tubal-Cain *was* Naamah. Genesis 4:17-22

Tubal-Cain was not of the line of the sons of God (meaning those who worshipped the true God) through Seth but rather a descendent of Cain. His father was the first man brazen enough to take two wives and thus it makes sense that Tubal-Cain would be inspired to make something so hard — a reflection of the hardheartedness of the line of men from which he descended.

Brass is symbolically considered a negative element in the Scriptures – a reflection of hardness of heart.

Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh of brass?
Job 6:12 (KJV)

ATONEMENT

Because I knew that thou *art* obstinate, and thy neck *is* an iron sinew, and thy brow brass. Isaiah 48:4 (KJV)

They *are* all grievous revolvers, walking with slanders: *they are* brass and iron; they *are* all corrupters. Jeremiah 6:28 (KJV)

Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross: all they *are* brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are *even* the dross of silver. Ezekiel 22:18 (KJV)

The metal used indicates that the process is man-made rather than God-made.²⁵ The fact that a serpent was made from brass reveals the satanic inspiration of the entire process.

As the people look in faith towards the uplifted brass serpent, God is enabled to reach them with His primary goal of offering them healing, forgiveness, and salvation. Our beloved Father reaches down into the darkness of human delusion and convinces us of His healing love and forgiveness.

The people believe that God sent the serpents to punish them and therefore the serpent on the pole reveals the truth of who they were actually worshipping – Satan. Why? Because it is Satan's merciless justice that they believe is at the heart of God's character when in reality it is the character of Satan and man.

The significance of the words of Christ to Nicodemus cannot be overstated:

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. John 3:14–15 (KJV)

Jesus uses the word *as* to indicate that what He is doing is just the same as what He did with Moses.

²⁵ Brass is an alloy of copper and zinc

UPLIFTED SERPENT

1. He engages a pagan practice of making an image of what is feared that will harm them.
2. He is lifted up in the image of a serpent representing serpent justice.
3. He is lifted up in the context of man-made brass reflecting the hardness of human nature in requiring such a thing.
4. He satisfies the demands of the seraph/serpent who once stood in the presence of God.

Jesus lays out clearly that He had to be lifted up and slain, not because God demanded it, but because Satan and man did. There was no other way for God to reach the human race with His forgiving love except to meet human expectations of what was required to save us.

Thankfully, the Scriptures give us a number of examples that show our Father wants us to progress from a brass pagan symbol of atonement to a position of simply speaking to our Father and trusting in His forgiveness and grace. In the next chapter we will examine the symbol of striking the rock and speaking to the rock as evidence of this journey to understanding atonement.

In later chapters we will examine the Sanctuary furniture and the meaning of the journey from the altar of brass in the Courtyard to the golden ark of the covenant. We will also examine the meaning and procession of the feasts from Passover through to the Day of Atonement as further evidence of God wanting us to realise that our ways are not His ways and that He really does want to teach us His ways.

Again, this will be reflected in the language of Daniel 7 (Aramaic) and 8 (Hebrew) and the significance of those differences.

In all these things and more God shows us that He does not want us to remain in the mindset of Penal Substitution with the human understanding that God's justice or righteousness demands death. Our Father knows He needed to meet us in this dark place in order to lead

ATONEMENT

us into the light of realising that we only need to know *His* character and then by His grace repent of *our* character and ask Him to change us.

It is also vital to understand that in order to have true atonement, we have to understand our own thought processes about justice and atonement before we can move towards our heavenly Father's reality of atonement. Therefore, Penal Substitution is a vital part of the atonement process. You can't truly progress into the Most Holy Place of God's atonement until you grasp our false human perception of atonement in the Courtyard.

How precious is our Father to meet us in our darkened concepts of justice! How wonderful that Jesus was willing to be raised upon a Cross that satisfied satanic human justice, just to give us the chance to believe God would forgive us.

Praise to the Father that He does not leave us in this darkened pagan view of atonement but rather calls us into the light of truth where we realise that God does not desire sacrifice or offering of any type, He just wants us to know His character that we might repent and be reunited to Him.

CHAPTER 8

STRIKING THE ROCK

For man to be convinced that God has returned him to favour, He had to satisfy Satan's justice thus proving true aspects of the ransom theory of the atonement. Satan kidnapped mankind and convinced us that God was furious with us and that His justice demanded death. In order to release man, God allowed His Son to be tortured and killed by the human race and allowed us to believe that His justice was satisfied in the death of His Son. How else can He bring salvation to an insane human mind? We had to be convinced that our justice was served.

For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh. Romans 8:3

God's law became weak through our fleshly thinking. The law that was ordained to life we found to be unto death. (Romans 7:10). Why? Satan's justice system deceived us and took a mischievous opportunity through the law and slew us. (Romans 7:11).

God made His Son to be sin for us – meaning that He allowed Him to be killed under our natural justice system, inspired by Satan, that we might believe that God has forgiven us. This is equivalent to the instruction of Moses to strike the rock.

ATONEMENT

So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!” And the LORD said to Moses, “Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and **you shall strike the rock**, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. Exodus 17:4-6

The people wanted to kill Moses as punishment for not having their needs immediately met. God provided a substitute – the rock. Who does the rock represent?

...and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and **that Rock was Christ**.
1 Corinthians 10:4

The striking of the rock represented the satisfaction of the people who were demanding punishment for Moses. The rock, representing Christ, was the substitute. When it was struck, representing the crucifixion of Christ (Matthew 26:31), water, representing the favour of God, flowed forth.

Forty years later, after suffering the consequences of wandering in the wilderness because of their unbelief, the people once again thirsted for water.

Now there was no water for the congregation; so they gathered together against Moses and Aaron. And the people contended with Moses and spoke, saying: “If only we had died when our brethren died before the LORD! Why have you brought up the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It *is* not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates; nor *is* there any water to drink.” Numbers 20:2–5

Once again, they accused Moses of failing to provide their needs. God had sent them manna for 40 years. He had supplied their water through

STRIKING THE ROCK

all the 40 years. Could it be possible that Israel might have learned to trust God and now they might simply ask for water in faith?

So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and they fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them. Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. **Speak to the rock** before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." Numbers 20:6-8

This time Moses was to "speak to the rock" for water to pour forth, a symbol of life and salvation. There was no need to strike anything. There was no need for Penal Substitution this time. He simply had to speak to the rock.

This symbol teaches us in a simple manner, the two-step process of the atonement. When we first leave the bondage of sin as symbolised in the exodus from Egypt, the rock must be struck. The use of force had to be applied to the rock to allow the water to come forth from it.

As God's people who are near the promised land, having entered the realm of believing that God has given us the water of life through the smitten rock, we are now invited to simply speak to the rock without the need for sacrifice. This is the second step. The sojourn in the wilderness represents the character development of the Christian life:

And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you *and* test you, to know what *was* in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every *word* that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. Deuteronomy 8:2-3

ATONEMENT

Sadly, Moses was not able to reveal the beauty of simply speaking to the rock at that time. The cruelty of the people in blaming him for everything tested him to act according to the justice system that we received from Adam inspired by Satan. Moses struck the rock in anger twice reflecting the need for punishment and the use of force. We dare not blame Moses for his failure. Do we think we would have done any better with those people grumbling all the time?

And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. Numbers 20:10-11

The important point to consider is that in striking the rock as a symbol of the death of Christ, Moses judged himself as one that now must die. According to his reasoning sin must be punished, and thus God dealt with Moses as he had acted.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them." Numbers 20:12

In striking the rock twice, Moses did not sanctify the character of God in the eyes of the people. His anger in striking the substitute rock resembling Christ, revealed that he would judge himself according to his own understanding of justice. This is also seen in Moses saying, "Must *we* bring water...," ascribing this act to himself rather than to God.

Many are puzzled as to why God did not allow Moses to walk into the promised land with Israel. But Moses had judged himself under the false justice system. After striking the rock, he knew that he had not obeyed the voice of God. He knew that he had made a mistake. Now having struck the rock, he judged himself according to how he had judged the people, manifested in striking the rock twice. He wanted to

STRIKING THE ROCK

go over into the land, but inwardly he condemned himself for not doing what the Lord had asked him to do.

The people must realise the severity of the error of Moses. The whole congregation operated on this false justice system. Like Cain, they were crying that this punishment was greater than Moses could bear, but all of them inwardly felt that this iniquity could not simply be forgiven. So the Lord was forced to allow the judgment Moses and Aaron had given to come back to them.

The story of Israel receiving water from the rock at the beginning and ending of their travels gives to us the two-step process of the atonement. The striking of the rock (Christ) had to occur for the people to accept that the water (life) would be given to them. At the end of the journey, they were tested again to see if they could enter into God's way of atonement and that is simply to speak to the rock (Christ). Sacrifice and offering are not required in the second or New Covenant step of atonement.

This adds weight to the words of Jesus that He finished His Father's work the night before He died. No death was required in God's work to complete the atonement. It only required an understanding of His character and simply to ask for forgiveness, believing that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6).

CHAPTER 9

MAN'S ATONEMENT

The previous two chapters have laid out for us the two-step process of the atonement. The false justice system of Satan inherited by men must be satisfied before men will believe in the forgiveness of God. The sacrifice of Christ on the Cross is a satisfaction of human justice which opens the door for us to believe the truth of God's character.

Once we understand this principle, we can begin to unlock several stories in the Old Testament that present God as One who demands death. The reality is very different.

Consider the story of Israel right on the borders of Canaan:

Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the LORD, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel." So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor." Numbers 25:1-5

Israel was seduced by Balaam. Though respected by Israel as a prophet, Balaam had lost his way, following after his own greed rather than God. He took payment from the Midianite king to curse Israel. But his attempts were frustrated due to Israel being under God's protection, and he blessed them instead. He then cunningly suggested they invite the Israelites to a feast where they would drink wine, drop their guard, and fall into the worship of pagan gods – this would remove God's blessing and bring about a curse. The apostle Paul refers to this event and the degrading practices they engaged in as part of that worship:

Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell. 1 Corinthians 10:8

The Israelites had forsaken the commandments of God. They bowed down and worshipped other gods, and participated in their sexual immorality. Israel was not ignorant of the actions they were taking. They remembered what happened at the golden calf event and the judgments that fell upon them at that time.

God had warned Israel to stay close to Him and to walk in His commandments and statutes so they would be safe.

But if you do not obey Me, and do not observe all these commandments, and if you despise My statutes, or if your soul abhors My judgments, so that you do not perform all My commandments, *but* break My covenant, I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you, wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. Leviticus 26:14–16

Israel suffered a deadly disease that ripped through the camp. We learn this a little further on from the story in Numbers 25.

And those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand. Numbers 25:9

ATONEMENT

Paul mentions that 23,000 died in one day, but a total of 24,000 died all together. When Israel forsook their God, God had to allow them to endure the consequences of their choices.

The LORD is known *by* the judgment He executes; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Psalm 9:16

In the same way that God no longer prevented the serpents from coming into the camp, He also did not prevent Satan from attacking their bodies with disease. They did this to themselves because they worshipped other gods.

If a woman leaves her loving husband and enters into a relationship with a man who begins to beat and ultimately kills her, do we blame her loving husband for her death because he did not stop the woman from entering into another relationship? How helpful would it be to

In deep grief, our heavenly Father had to allow Israel their own choice to worship other gods — gods invented by Satan.

force her to return? Would that reveal the husband as freedom loving?

In deep grief, our heavenly Father had to allow Israel their own choice to worship other gods — gods invented by Satan. In worshipping these gods, Israel placed themselves under his control which then

allowed him to begin to destroy them.

When the plague began to go through the camp and people started to die, the guilt and consequence of their actions caused them to realise their sin. In human terms, the only way that Israel could find favour with God again was for punishment to be administered, that led to the death of a few, in order that the rest might be reconciled to God.

In order to satisfy the justice of the people, God told Moses the following:

MAN'S ATONEMENT

“Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the LORD, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel.” Numbers 25:4

God was simply revealing the sinfulness of man in this statement. The natural human reaction to the negative consequences of bad decisions is to find someone else to blame. This was the only way in which the people would accept mercy; a sacrifice or Penal Substitution was required. The whole nation had been involved in the feast but those most notable in encouraging them to evil were now hung up in the sight of the people.

As the people looked upon the men hung up before the sun, like the process of looking up to the brass serpent, the people could begin to believe that God would forgive them so they could be healed of the plague.

While the plague was going on and the leaders in the apostasy were being slain, one of the princes of Israel brought a Midianite woman into the middle of the camp intending to openly sleep with her.

And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who *were* weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Numbers 25:6

While the rest of Israel were weeping and repenting for their sins, this leader from the tribe of Simeon dared to shamelessly bring this foreign woman into the camp to commit sexual immorality with her. Although many in the camp had sinned, the actions of this man provided a lightning rod for human justice to manifest itself. Zimri the Simeonite became a sin-bearer not only for himself but for the entire nation.

Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw *it*, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel.

ATONEMENT

And those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand.
Numbers 25:7-9

When Phinehas saw the brazen actions of Zimri, his sense of justice was aroused. While Israel was repenting of their sins, this man flouted his sin before them. Phinehas, following the principles of human justice and judgment, took a Javelin and killed Zimri and Cosbi in the act of sexual intercourse. This felt right to the nation, and they believed it would satisfy God's justice (though it was actually human justice that was projected onto God which was appeased).

It was after this act that the plague was stopped. God then placed a blessing on Phinehas in the following way:

Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal. Therefore say, "Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and **made atonement for the children of Israel.**" Numbers 25:11-13

In the action of killing Zimri and Cosbi, Phinehas brought atonement to Israel. This follows the same pattern as the striking of the rock. Israel could not have believed that God would forgive them until Zimri was dead, because human justice demands death before forgiveness can occur. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. (Hebrews 9:22).

God blessed Phinehas because he acted in good faith. God did not condemn him for killing Zimri because God knew that the first step for humanity to accept atonement was the death of the guiltiest within the nation.

If Phinehas had not done what he did, Israel would have remained under the perceived condemnation of God as they understood it. They would not have been able to believe God would forgive them.

Therefore, the plague would have continued until the majority of the camp would have perished.

If Israel had known the truth of God's character and that He did not desire sacrifice, they could have come and asked for forgiveness and they would have been accepted. They could have spoken to the rock and received the waters of life freely. But man's ways are not God's ways, therefore Zimri had to die so that the whole nation did not perish.

The reason that God told Moses to hang up the offenders before the people is because this is the process of human atonement. But in speaking these words to Moses, God was only revealing what many in Israel were thinking.

Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, "*It is* because of Saul and *his* bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites." So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites *were* not of the children of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; the children of Israel had sworn protection to them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the children of Israel and Judah. Therefore David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? And **with what shall I make atonement**, that you may bless the inheritance of the LORD?" And the Gibeonites said to him, "We will have no silver or gold from Saul or from his house, nor shall you kill any man in Israel for us." So he said, "Whatever you say, I will do for you." Then they answered the king, "As for the man who consumed us and plotted against us, *that* we should be destroyed from remaining in any of the territories of Israel, **let seven men of his descendants be delivered to us, and we will hang them before the LORD in Gibeah of Saul**, whom the LORD chose." And the king said, "I will give *them*." 2 Samuel 21:1-6

We see in these actions, the principles of man's atonement. A curse of famine had fallen upon Israel. In order to remedy the curse, seven men had to die. In this case, the men were relatively innocent. They had not

ATONEMENT

personally committed any crime against the Gibeonites. Yet they were chosen as a Penal Substitution for the sin of their father. Once this action was taken, Israel believed that the sin was forgiven and therefore the rain could return and the drought was over.

This element of the death of the innocent is an important part of human atonement. As we see in the story of the Cross of Christ, the innocent must be slain alongside the guilty.

Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And **we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.**" Luke 23:39-41

We shall look at more examples in the Old Testament of the guilty and the innocent having to die for human atonement to take place. As we will discover in chapter 11, the death of the guilty men hung up before the sun on the borders of Canaan along with the guilty Zimri was not enough to secure atonement for Israel. There had to be the death of the innocent before atonement could be secured.

The reason that God told Moses to hang up the men who were leaders in the apostasy of Israel is explained in the story of David and the Gibeonites. He knew this was the only way that forgiveness could be secured in the minds of the people, so he spoke their thoughts back to them. It is step one in the two-step process of atonement. The death of these men does not reflect God's character but rather man's character and what he thinks of God. We see this principle over and over in the Old Testament:

Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. And the LORD said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted *themselves*. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a

MAN'S ATONEMENT

molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!'" Exodus 32:6-8

When Israel was at Mt Sinai and Moses was in the mountain receiving instruction from God, Israel became restless and fell into their old habits of worship from when they were in Egypt. When Moses returned, the people felt their guilt. A sacrifice was required before the people could believe in the forgiveness of God.

...then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, "Whoever is on the LORD's side—*come* to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.'" So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day. Exodus 32:26-28

Once the chief perpetrators were killed, Moses could then seek for an atonement for the sin of the nation.

Then Moses said, "Consecrate yourselves today to the LORD, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother." Now it came to pass on the next day that Moses said to the people, "You have committed a great sin. So now I will go up to the LORD; **perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.**" Exodus 32:29-30

The guiltiest in the apostasy had been sacrificed. But the atonement is not complete. The need for innocent blood remained.

Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written." Exodus 32:31-32

ATONEMENT

As Moses thinks about the sin committed by Israel, he wavers as to whether God can forgive them. The sacrifice of the guilty may not be enough. Maybe if an innocent victim is offered, then God would forgive Israel. Moses offers himself as the innocent offering to complete the Penal Substitution requirement.

From a human standpoint this is an amazing act of love on the part of Moses. It reveals the self-sacrificing love of his Saviour. Yet, this offering is within the confines of the striking of the rock. It is the first step in the process of atonement. This first step contains two elements; the death of the guiltiest alongside the death of the innocent.

God did not accept the offer of Moses because the death of Moses would not bring the atonement Moses desired for the people. From the human perspective, the lack of an innocent victim meant that Israel would continue to doubt their acceptance with God and thus fall into sin. This meant that Israel would continue to be plagued.

And the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. Now therefore, go, lead the people to *the place* of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin." So the LORD plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made. Exodus 32:33–35

If an innocent victim had been sacrificed on behalf of Israel, they might have believed God had forgiven them and the plague would have been stopped.

As we discovered in chapter four, the desire to kill is a manifestation of the human enmity against the Son of God and the woman who led Adam to eat the fruit. The desire to slay the guilty is an expression of satanic retaliation. The desire to slay the innocent is a revelation of Satan's desire, from the beginning, to slay the Son of God. These two principles, slaying the guilty and the innocent play out in the stories of the Bible and are manifestations of the original seed of Genesis 3:12 – "the woman whom you gave to me."

MAN'S ATONEMENT

The story of the apostasy at the Jordan with Midian ultimately concludes in Numbers 31 with the slaughter of innocent children. Before we examine this story, we need to examine the gospel principle of how God allows our sinfulness to manifest so that we can see ourselves as we truly are so that we might repent.

CHAPTER 10

WHERE SIN
ABOUNDED GRACE
DID MUCH MORE
ABOUND

What is the process by which God leads a sinner to salvation? How does God show to man the enmity that is hidden in his heart?

The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; who can know it? Jeremiah 17:9

How easy it would be for the Son of God to tell us, “You are trying to kill me” and for us to believe Him, fall on our knees with tears and ask for forgiveness and believe that God is so merciful that we are forgiven.

We see what happens when Jesus tried to tell some people they were trying to kill Him.

Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?” The people answered and said, “You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?” John 7:19-20

How do you confront something that is hidden deep in someone's heart for which they are not even fully aware exists? Without using force, God allows us to face the consequences of our own choices in order that what is inside of us will manifest so we can see it.

Take for instance the story of the foreign woman who begged Jesus to heal her daughter. The disciples of Jesus were blinded to their racial intolerance. Jesus might have told them what was hidden in their hearts, but they would have been offended or simply rejected Him because of His asking them to come into a reality they were not prepared to accept.

And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." Matthew 15:22-23

If Jesus had immediately granted the woman's request, the disciples would not have begun to realise how bad their condition was. In staying silent, the racial sin of the disciples manifested in the request to send her away. But Jesus does not stop there. He appears to agree with the disciples in the way He speaks.

But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Matthew 15:24

Jesus appears to confirm their prejudice. To the disciples, this statement sounded like Jesus was excluding her because she was not a Jew in the flesh. But Jesus is the Saviour of the whole world, thus the house of Israel comprises all those who receive the true Spirit of God.

For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in the flesh; but *he is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God. Romans 2:28-29

For those listening in the framework of the flesh, they would only hear Jesus excluding this woman and thus confirming their bias against her.

This fact is vital to understanding *all* the commands of God in the Old Testament that appear to encourage violence.

This is why the Word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword. The Word of God brings out of man the seed that is residing in him. If self

This is why the Word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword. The Word of God brings out of man the seed that is residing in him.

rules the heart, then God's Word will appear to confirm their own thinking, but for those who are listening to the Spirit of Christ, they will hear in a way that reflects the character of Christ.

For those listening to the Spirit of God, they would hear the words of Jesus to this woman as an invitation. It is the hearer who determines the meaning of the words. The words of Jesus speak to both the flesh and the Spirit.

Obviously, the woman was in the Spirit because she did not abandon her request, but came closer and worshipped Jesus, pressing her request.

Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"
Matthew 15:25

This precious daughter of God saw something in Jesus that did not discourage her from continuing her appeal. But there was something inside of her that still needed to come out. The possession of her daughter by evil spirits speaks to some of the darkness this woman had experienced. She felt worthless inside. Embracing worthlessness is a sin in the light of the value we have in God's eyes. He says we are beloved, and to believe we are worthless denies the truth of our identity to God. Jesus reaches further into her soul by reflecting her thoughts about herself and what the disciples felt about her.

But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw *it* to the little dogs." Matthew 15:26

The ear that is in the flesh will hear that Jesus just called her a dog, thus amplifying either their own racial feelings or conversely their own worthlessness. But in the Spirit, the ear notices that Jesus did not call her a dog but was actually asking her whether she believed she was a child of God. She might have answered, "I am a child of God" and pressed her petition in this context. Instead, she then reveals her self-judgment as one who is worthless. At this moment, the Spirit of God convicts her of super abounding grace.

And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Matthew 15:27

It is the Spirit of Christ drawing her to overcome her feelings of being a dog, and instead to believe she can be set free from her deep anxiety over her daughter as well as her feelings that she is being punished for her sins.

The delight in the heart of Jesus is manifested in the single letter word "O" — It speaks of the love of Jesus for His daughter.

Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great *is* your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour. Matthew 15:28

How shocked the disciples would have been! Following each statement of Jesus in the flesh, they would have been completely confused by what appears to be a sudden change by healing the woman's daughter. This would have tested their confidence in Him, but thankfully they held on. It was not until the night before the crucifixion that the enmity in the hearts of the disciples was truly revealed. They had no idea it was there. Jesus gently tried to warn them:

Then saith Jesus unto them, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, 'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.' But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." Peter answered and said unto him, "Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended." Matthew 26:31–33 (KJV)

ATONEMENT

Jesus lovingly warns the disciples of what is inside them. Instead of asking for help, Peter denies what Jesus says and strongly asserts his own judgment of himself. If Peter had listened to Jesus and asked for help, then he might not have failed or at least the fall would have been far less dramatic.

But all this was done, that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled. Matthew 26:56

And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are *one* of them, for your speech betrays you." Then he began to curse and swear, *saying*, "I do not know the Man!" Immediately a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So he went out and wept bitterly. Matthew 26:73–75

Poor Peter, the enmity in his heart against the Son of God was manifested in the most dramatic way. His story proves true the words of Scripture.

Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more. Romans 5:20

Jesus might have prevented events playing out which allowed the disciples to forsake Him. He might have freed Himself from the Jewish leaders and led them to safety, but they would have never known what was in them; the enmity would have remained.

Reconciliation with our Father in heaven requires the removal of the hidden enmity in our hearts. This process is accomplished through God allowing circumstances to arise that reveal what is deep in our subconscious. When these things surface, the Spirit of God pours His grace upon the sinner and invites them to receive forgiveness. This is how atonement takes place. Paul expresses it in another context like this:

And we have such trust through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God, who also made us

sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. But if the ministry of death, written *and* engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was passing away, how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? For if the ministry of condemnation *had* glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory.
2 Corinthians 3:4–9

Paul presents to us the work of the two covenants. The glorious work of the Old Covenant is a ministration of death. It reveals to us the enmity in our hearts. But the work of the New Covenant is even better. It delivers us from our enmity and sin. We receive the assurance of forgiveness. The condemnation of the law in the Old Covenant does its work to bring us to Christ. At the feet of Jesus, we can find all the grace we need to be delivered of our hidden enmity and be reconciled to God and receive atonement.

The work of the law is represented by Moses because the law was given to him. But God wrote the law and gave it to Moses. We should not think that this means the law is manmade – Christ gave the law to Moses via His angels.

For the law was given through Moses; *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. John 1:17

For *there is* one God, and one Mediator between God and men, *the* Man Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 2:5

Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.*
Galatians 3:19 (KJV)

Without the law bringing conviction of sin to our hearts, we would never know the true depth of our depravity. You can't have healing without a correct diagnosis. The law diagnoses our problem at the

ATONEMENT

moment our hidden enmity is exposed. In the very place of exposure Christ appeals to us that we are forgiven and this allows us to be delivered from the enmity. Paul continues in Galatians:

Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. Galatians 3:21

The law is not against the promises of God. The law cannot give life, but its role is to lead you to the one that has life.

For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God. Hebrews 7:19 (KJV)

If you take out the supplied word of the translators, then you have perfect harmony with what David wrote in the Psalms:

The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple. Psalm 19:7

The law can't make anyone perfect, but it brings in the better hope. This is how it converts the soul. It acts as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. (Galatians 3:24). Therefore, the Old Covenant speaks to the old man in man's language. It speaks in a way to magnify his wrong ideas just as the words of Jesus seemed to indicate He was not sent to help the Canaanite woman. When a crisis occurs and the truth comes out, then grace is offered for the soul to come into the New Covenant experience.

This is a narrow gate to enter through, because Jesus told us that few in this world will choose to enter through this process of having their sins exposed and revealed through the law, to then receive the loving forgiving grace of God.

If we apply this framework of the Old Covenant and New Covenant working together to bring us to salvation, we can place some of the things we have considered previously into this framework to give us a clearer picture of how this actually works.

WHERE SIN ABOUNDED GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND

Old Covenant	New Covenant
Strike the Rock	Speak to the Rock
Brass Altar — Courtyard	Ark of Gold — Most Holy Place
God Requires Sacrifice	Man Requires Sacrifice
Justice Demands Death	Justice Freely Offers Mercy
God Killed Christ	Man Killed Christ
Man's Thoughts	God's Thoughts
Man's Atonement	God's Atonement

God's thoughts are not our thoughts, but God meets us where we are thinking, and brings those of us who are willing into His understanding. Each of us pass through this two-step process to be brought into harmony with God; to receive the atonement.

This process is vital to understand. For each of us to receive atonement, the hidden enmity in our hearts must be revealed [Old Covenant] in order that we might receive God's abundant grace [New Covenant]. When we understand this two-covenant process then we have the correct framework to understand stories like the slaughter of innocent children in Numbers 31.

CHAPTER 11

THE SLAUGHTER OF INNOCENCE

Within one of the most beautiful statements of Scripture there is contained an unrealised enmity.

Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. Exodus 32:32 (KJV)

At Mt Sinai, Moses wrestles in his mind between the limits of God's forgiveness and the justice system that all men understand – death as the punishment for transgression. As a young man, Moses demonstrated his belief that the guilty must be punished with death.

Now it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. So he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. Exodus 2:11-12

Forty years in the wilderness caring for sheep, softened this principle of retribution in Moses but without the complete revelation of God's character as revealed in Christ, it was extremely difficult to totally remove this false idea.

God, knowing how hard it is to eliminate such deep-rooted misconceptions in man and being unwilling to force a different understanding upon man, teaches man where he is at, chronicling the details of His attempts to reach man, so that one day in the future man can put the pieces together and come to a more accurate understanding of His character and His justice. This is all that God can do and what He has done for 6000 years: He walks with men through their darkened understanding as they eat the bitter fruit of their choices, all the while speaking gently to them through His Spirit of a better way.

Now the man Moses *was* very humble, more than all men who *were* on the face of the earth. Numbers 12:3

Moses was the most patient, caring man on the earth at that time and there would be very few after him who would possess his level of humility. Yet the hidden treachery of Adam was still concealed in the character of Moses. Our heavenly Father wanted to free Moses from this hidden hostility.

As we discovered in the last chapter, the only way to do this was to allow the natural tendencies of Moses to abound in a tough situation. This would allow God's grace to much more abound. At the moment that Moses struck the rock twice in anger because of the faithless ingratitude of the people, the hidden enmity in Moses surfaced. The striking of the rock was a symbol of the striking of Christ. Before Moses would climb Mt. Nebo and go to the grave, God would reveal the depth of hostility within Moses to such an extent that it could be seen that Moses possessed the same nature as the Pharaoh who tried to kill him as an infant.

In chapter 9 we saw the killing of the guilty within Israel for allowing false worship and sexual immorality into the camp. Now it was time for the guilty nation of Midian to reap what it had sown. God speaks to Moses:

"Take vengeance on the Midianites for the children of Israel. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people." Numbers 31:2

ATONEMENT

Here is the final task for Moses before he dies; vengeance on the Midianites. But whose vengeance was being satisfied here? Consider two other translations:

“Execute the vengeance of the sons of Israel against the Midianites – afterwards thou art gathered unto thy people.” Numbers 31:2 (YLT)

Let [avenge with punishment the sons of Israel] on the Midianites; and at *the* last you shall be added to your people. Numbers 31:2 (Apostolic Polyglot)

What did Moses and the Israelites understand by vengeance?

So Moses spoke to the people, saying, “Arm some of yourselves for war, and let them go against the Midianites to take vengeance for the LORD on Midian.” Numbers 31:3

Vengeance to Moses meant to kill and destroy those who had done wrong. Moses expressed human vengeance as God’s vengeance. This is projecting onto God the character traits of Israel, including Moses. The cunning treachery of Balaam in league with the Midianites causes the offense of Moses to abound. (Romans 5:20). God spoke to Moses of the vengeance of the sons of Israel. Moses spoke of the vengeance of Jehovah. Moses tells the Israelites to arm themselves for war. God did not mention the word *war* or being armed. How does God avenge Himself on His enemies?

Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, “vengeance is mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. Therefore **“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.”** Romans 12:19–20

God’s vengeance is to feed His enemies and give them something to drink when they thirst. When your enemy is kind to you, it tortures the conscience (if there is any conscience left) and it causes great discomfort to the soul. This is how God turns his enemies, which include all men

in their natural state, into His friends — His goodness towards us leads us to repentance and reconciliation. (Romans 2:4).

How did Elisha treat his enemies?

Now when the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, “My father, shall I kill *them*? Shall I kill *them*?” But he answered, “You shall not kill *them*. Would you kill those whom you have taken captive with your sword and your bow? Set food and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master.” Then he prepared a great feast for them; and after they ate and drank, he sent them away and they went to their master. So the bands of Syrian *raiders* came no more into the land of Israel. 2 Kings 6:21-23

Why did the bands of Syrian raiders no longer come into the land of Israel? It is because of the coals of fire on their heads. These soldiers thought they were going to die. To instead be treated to a great feast reached into their hearts and made them ashamed of their desire to kill the Israelites, so they stopped.

But as we stated, it was not God’s vengeance that was being executed; it was the vengeance of Israel. Moses struck the rock, a symbol of Christ, again by saying it was God’s vengeance which was being executed. It was a manifestation of the hidden enmity which originated in the heart of Adam.

The meekest man in all the earth suddenly reveals the hidden hostility within him in the desire to slaughter the Midianites. If God had not said what He did, this hidden hostility might not have surfaced.

It is the misunderstanding of what God means that causes God to be shrouded in darkness. There is no darkness in God, but as men who represent God misunderstand His character, this causes darkness to surround God.

There is no darkness in God, but as men who represent God misunderstand His character, this causes darkness to surround God.

ATONEMENT

The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad! **Clouds and darkness surround Him**; righteousness and justice *are* the foundation of His throne. Psalm 97:1–2

What are these clouds?

Therefore we also, **since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses**, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. Hebrews 12:1

In the book of Hebrews, Paul compiles a list of many of the heroes of the Old Testament. These are witnesses to God through history. Yet their misunderstanding of God's character cause God to be surrounded by dark clouds. The light of God seeks to shine through this darkness. It is in the person of Jesus that the pure light shines through the darkness.

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6 (KJV)

When God spoke to Israel on Mount Sinai, He spoke to them through clouds of darkness. This darkness is not in God but in humanity. The earthquake, lightning and thunder is a reflection of men's thoughts about God.

Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there **were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain**; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who *were* in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai *was* completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. Exodus 19:16–18

Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and

when the people saw *it*, they trembled and stood afar off. Then they said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." And Moses said to the people, "Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin." So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God *was*.
Exodus 20:18-21

God allowed the natural elements to reflect what men think about God. The earth was under the dominion of men and it bore witness to what they thought of Him. In this process God causes the law to enter that the sin of men might become more apparent to them.

As we stated earlier, it is vital that the depth of hostility in Moses be revealed before he dies. God does not do this to condemn Moses, but that Moses might receive abounding grace. God never condemns; He only convicts to bring healing of the enmity for deeper reconciliation, but it is man that, in his misunderstanding, perceives this work of conviction as being condemning, and in guilt and fear he perishes.

Israel went to war with Midian with the thought that they were fighting God's war and taking His vengeance. The Midianites were decimated. Israel made certain that Balaam, that false prophet, was destroyed also. But when they return, Moses reacts with great anger.

But Moses was angry with the officers of the army, *with* the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, who had come from the battle. And Moses said to them: "Have you kept all the women alive? Look, these *women* caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD. Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man intimately." Numbers 31:14-17

Did God say anything to Moses about killing baby boys? In what way had the baby boys of Midian seduced Israel causing a plague to destroy 24,000 Israelites? All women that have ever slept with a man were put

to death. But the girls who had not slept with a man were kept alive to be groomed to sleep with Israelite men and to be their slaves.

It is not hard to understand the human logic of why the women were put to death but in the light of the character of Jesus who forgave the woman caught in adultery, it reveals to all of us where our hearts are on this question.

Moses' life was spared when the Pharaoh of Egypt commanded that all Israelite baby boys were to be killed and the baby girls were to be spared.

Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one *was* Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; and he said, "When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see *them* on the birthstools, if it *is* a son, then you shall kill him; but if it *is* a daughter, then she shall live." Exodus 1:15–16

It is also of interest that when Moses fled Egypt he found refuge in the land of Midian.

When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well. Exodus 2:15

Moses married the daughter of Jethro, the priest of Midian. (Exodus 2:16-21). All of these things should cause us to tremble. Moses was the meekest man that lived. When the right test came, it was revealed that Moses could display the same attributes as Pharaoh who sought to slay the Israelite children.

If you truly want to know what is hidden deep in your soul, look into the face of Moses and see yourself. All these things were written for our learning. (Romans 15:4). There is nothing good in man; there are none who seek after God. (Romans 3:11–12). As Jesus told us, there is none good but One, God.

In the slaughter of the kings of Midian, we see the sacrifice of the guilty. In the women who had seduced Israelite men, we also see the sacrifice

of the guilty. In the death of the women who had not seduced Israel and the baby boys of Midian, we see the sacrifice of the innocent – and this completes the atonement of Penal Substitution. All of this has echoes of the garden accusation “the woman whom you, (the Son), gave to me.”: the guilty woman and the innocent Son are condemned to death in order to complete the atonement for Adam.

The rest of the chapter speaks of the spoils of war and how they were divided and what was devoted to God. Then we read something extremely important on the subject of the atonement.

Therefore we have brought an offering for the LORD, what every man found of ornaments of gold: armlets and bracelets and signet rings and earrings and necklaces, **to make atonement for ourselves** before the LORD. Numbers 31:50

In putting the Midianites to death and taking the spoils of war and making an offering to God, the Israelites made atonement *for themselves*. But how do men make atonement for themselves when there is none righteous, no not one? As God had stated, it was Israel’s vengeance that was being satisfied, therefore the atonement made was for themselves.

For a brief moment, Moses appears like Pharaoh, with the same seed of enmity driven by the desire to preserve his nation. The critical point to remember is that God does not condemn any person for their failures but He will show them the truth so that He might give them mercy and spiritual healing if they accept the truth.

Many people are horrified at the suggestion that Moses acted wrongly. This is an attempt to justify the hidden hostility in their hearts. Jesus never ordered the slaying of anyone; it is not part of His character. Christ endured the Cross in the death of all those Midianites, so that the gospel process in Moses could be completed.

Make no mistake, the Midianites received the natural consequences of their choices. They were seeking to destroy Israel and God allowed the iniquities of the fathers to be visited upon the children. God did not

ATONEMENT

prevent the consequences to fall, but God's character is not represented in the slaughter of the Midianites.

It is my prayer that in reading these stories with fresh eyes the principles of the atonement will take on a far greater significance. I pray that the depravity of all human nature will be revealed and laid in the dust so that all of us will cling to Christ as our only hope of salvation. There is no one who is good, no not one. This is why this history is given to us; they are "written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come." 1 Corinthians 10:11 (NIV).

We all have the same flesh as Moses and Pharoah. We have the potential to do exactly as they did even if we are the meekest person on earth.

Next, we turn to the Mosaic Sanctuary to understand more deeply how the Son of God deals with our hidden treachery in order to bring us into reconciliation with God.

CHAPTER 12

THE VEIL OF HIS FLESH

Your **way**, O God, *is* in the sanctuary; Who *is* so great a God as *our* God? Psalm 77:13

The primary meaning of the word *way* is “road”. “Your road is in the Sanctuary.” The starting point of the road is where fallen man sits in darkness, while the end point is where our Father of light is represented. The road between these two points is revealed in the Sanctuary, representing Christ. Parallel to this Jesus says “I am the Way” which in Greek is *τρός* which also means *path* or *road*. “Your way, O God, *is* in the Sanctuary” and Christ is the way to the Father. Jesus says, “No man comes to the Father except through Me.” This way starts where man is, and it ends where God is.

Start **MAN**  **GOD**

Now, on this road, we can place another layer of understanding and that is Isaiah 55:8-9. If we lay that down onto this chart, we have man’s ways and God’s ways.

Start **MAN**  **GOD**
Man’s Ways God’s Ways

ATONEMENT

What is the difference between those two? The difference between righteousness and sin. They are completely opposite. The path, in order to reach from man's ways to God's ways, is going through a complete transformation as represented elsewhere in Scripture as darkness to light.

We have another verse we can lay down over this. Ezekiel 36:26, "I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh." We are not saying that God is flesh but it represents the softness, the gentleness, the meekness of God rather than the cruel, stern, stony, character of man. These are some of the parallels where opposites exist. In order for God to reclaim us and to reach us, God sent his only begotten Son. God had to send His Son down to where we are.

We are represented by the lost sheep. Christ comes to us because "There is none who seeks after God." (Romans 3:11). Man is not walking towards God. Christ is walking or running towards man to take those who are willing back to the Father.

The condition of man in the darkness of sin is dire because when the light of righteousness comes to us, the Bible tells us that we naturally turn away from the light. By nature, we neither understand the light nor desire it.

And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. John 1:5

And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. John 3:19

Since God's thoughts are not our thoughts, everything He says is interpreted in our darkness as something against us and for our harm. We see this in the children of Israel at Mt. Sinai:

The sight of the glory of the LORD *was* like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. Exodus 24:17

The beautiful glory of God appeared as consuming or devouring fire to the people. In order for God to reach man, He had to come right to where man was. But when God comes toward us, we naturally fear that He is coming to harm us for our sinfulness. We therefore need a mediator to plead our case before the One we think seeks our punishment and death.

The enmity that originated in the heart of Adam against God and has passed to the whole human race prevents the possibility of effective communication without a mediator. Such a mediator is Christ, the Son of God.

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, [G1378]** so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace. Ephesians 2:13–15

Christ overcame the wall of separation between us and God through the veil of His flesh. Most Christians believe this passage is referring to the wall between Jew and Gentile being broken down by the removal of the law of Moses. Notice what the Good News Bible says:

For **Christ himself has brought us peace by making Jews and Gentiles one people.** With his own body he broke down the wall that separated them and kept them enemies. **He abolished the Jewish Law** with its commandments and rules, in order to create out of the two races one new people in union with himself, in this way making peace. Ephesians 2:14–15 (Good News Bible)

Most people understand the word *ordinances* as expressed in the King James as referring to the law of Moses. This is a translation of the Greek word *dogma*.

ATONEMENT

If you search the Greek Old Testament (LXX) for *dogma*, it never refers to the law of Moses but rather to manmade decrees and often decrees of punishment and death.

- Ezra 6:8 – Persian decree to build the temple.
- Ezekiel 20:26 from verse 25 – God gave them up to statutes that were not good. God spoiled them in their own decrees.
- Daniel 2:13 – Death decree to slay wise men.
- Daniel 3:10,29 – Death decree on the plain of Dura by the king of Babylon.
- Daniel 4:6 – Decree to bring in all the wise men.
- Daniel 6:8,10,12,13,15,26 – Sign the death decree to worship no God but the king.

Here is how the same word is used in the New Testament:

- Luke 2:1 – A decree of Caesar.
- Acts 16:4 – A decree of the Apostles to limit what is taught from the law of Moses due to the excessive position of some of the Jews on this question.
- Acts 17:7 – A decree of Caesar.
- Ephesians 2:15 – Christ has abolished the commandments contained in (human) decrees.
- Colossians 2:14 – Blotting out the human decrees that were against us.

Looking at how this word *ordinances* is used throughout the Bible reveals that it has nothing to do with the laws that Moses wrote in the Old Testament. Rather, it speaks to human enactments and demands and often enactments involving punishment and death. Do you see how the animosity in man causes him to understand what Paul says as

removing the law of God given through Moses rather than removing the condemning decrees of humanity?

As we discussed in chapter four about Adam's hidden iniquity, the first human decree was that the Son of God should die for the events that unfolded in the Garden of Eden. Adam passed this nature of judgment to all of his children and so this condemnation resides within all men in their natural state. Human nature tries to hide this hatred and professes to love God, much like the subjects of a totalitarian nation who fear they will be killed if they don't honour the head of state (Example: North Korea).

In order to reach us, Christ had to take on our flesh to break down the wall of separation created by our false justice system that led to condemnation and death decrees. In becoming one of us, He could plead our case before the Father whom we wrongly imagine is against us and pay the price that we wrongly imagined needed to be paid. He could show man the true way to relate to God, without idolatrous ideas of His character and deeply repressed distrust.

Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you have prepared for me."
Hebrews 10:5

The justice of God did not demand this death. He never wanted sacrifices, but instead a human body was prepared for Jesus that would allow Him to come close to us. That human body was not of the seed of Adam before the fall, rather it was the seed of David after the fall of man.

Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was **made of the seed of David according to the flesh.** Romans 1:3 (KJV)

Christ taking our flesh upon Him, subdued the glory in Him to the extent that we could bear to be in His presence. If Christ had come in a flesh different to ours, the enmity and judgment in us would have been projected onto Him and like Adam who fled in the garden, we would flee from Him. His glory unveiled would seem as devouring fire in our eyes.

ATONEMENT

We see evidence of this from when Jesus cleansed the temple in Jerusalem. Divinity flashed forth from Him and those who had hostility in their hearts against Christ immediately fled for their lives. As we all have this enmity, none of us would be able to remain in His presence, so He clothed His divinity with humanity – our humanity, and came close to us and convinced us that He could talk to the Father on our behalf.

If Christ reached out to man in His divine nature, He would only appear to us like His Father. Christ being a perfect mirror would cause man to see Christ approaching with the intent to kill him. Man sees a death decree coming towards him to kill him because he thinks in death decrees; he imagines God thinks like him. (Psalm 50:21).

In taking our nature Christ could remove this reflected enmity; He could veil it with our flesh so that the strength of our hatred towards Him would not be reflected back to us so strongly. This principle takes a little time to understand but when you can see that condemnation came from Adam and not God, then we can grasp that whatever condemnation we see in God is actually our own perceptions projected onto Him.

There is such depth of meaning in Hebrews 10:5 as it relates to the atonement. God did not want sacrifice or offering but a human body was prepared for Christ that He might in this body remove the enmity, reveal the character of the Father, and at the same time identify Himself fully with the human race, being made of a woman, made under the law. (Galatians 4:4).

The human nature of Christ is intimately linked to the subject of the atonement. Both in His ability to overcome our enmity and come close to us on earth, as well as to qualify Him to be a true mediator for man toward God.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. Hebrews 4:15 (KJV)

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.
Hebrews 2:14

Christ is the great anti-type of the Sanctuary pattern given to Moses. A body was given to Christ that He might dwell with us as reflected in the type in this verse:

And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.
Exodus 25:8

The Sanctuary roof was covered with badger skins which kept hidden the brilliant golden walls and the furniture that was inside. When Christ came to this earth, He had no outward beauty that we should desire him. (Isaiah 53:2).

The Sanctuary service is symbolic of the process that Christ is taking humanity through in order to come to atonement. There is a progression in reconciliation, due to increased awareness of ourselves and of God.

Christ veiled His divinity with humanity to come to our starting point. Then He leads us through the way of the Sanctuary to the Most Holy Place. The veil of separation between the Holy Place and Most Holy Place of the Sanctuary symbolises the veil of Christ's flesh. The Most Holy Place represents the divine nature of Christ and the Holy Place represents the human nature of Christ. The Courtyard is where Christ meets us in our brass man-made thinking.

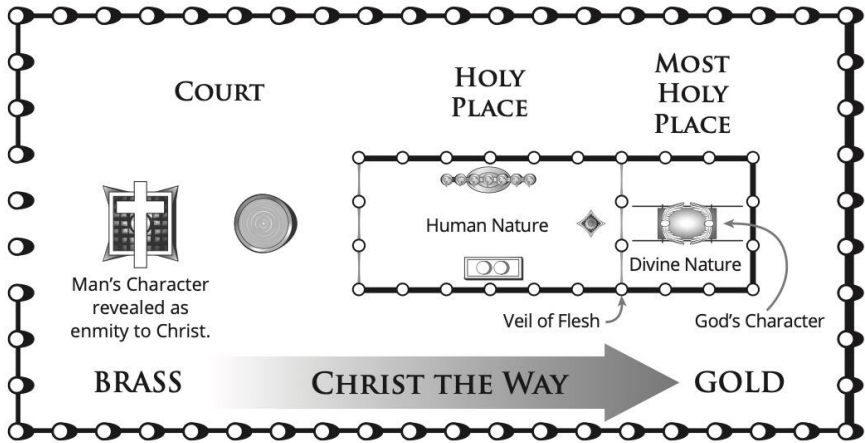
The two rooms of the tabernacle are one building representing the two natures blended together in one.

The death decree placed on Christ through Satan's justice system as represented upon the altar of brass reflects the death of Christ on the Cross. Christ satisfies human justice in order that He might then take us by the hand as our mediator and lead us away from our brass thinking towards the gold of His Father's character. Christ takes us through the Sanctuary, the new and living way to the Father.

ATONEMENT

By a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh. Hebrews 10:20

YOUR WAY IS IN THE SANCTUARY



The Sanctuary provides for us clues to the progression of the path from the Court to the Most Holy Place. All the furniture in the Court is made of brass, which represents man-made thinking about atonement. The altar of brass represents the slaying of the Son of God by the enmity that is in man inherited from Adam.

We esteemed Christ smitten of God and afflicted (Isaiah 53:4) at the altar. Our perceptions of justice demanding punishment causes us to see Christ as dying to satisfy God's justice when in reality it is satisfying our justice and revealing our enmity against God and His Son.

With our wrong view of God, we confess our sins at the altar of sacrifice, and have hope that God indeed does forgive us because we have an intercessor to present our case. The Spirit of Jesus then begins to clean us at the laver. Our minds begin to open to the word of God and we begin to change. As we walk into the Holy Place, the depth of our enmity against God is made bearable by the veil between the Holy and the Most Holy Place. This allows us to enter into the first apartment.

As we enter the Holy Place, Christ feeds us for He is the bread of life. (John 6:48). He also gives us light for He is the light of the world. (John 8:12). He also intercedes for us for He is the one mediator between God and man. (1 Timothy 2:5). The closer we come to God the more intense the sense of judgment because of the hostility that still exists in us. But where this sin abounds, grace does much more abound for those who believe.

The majority of Christians halt in the way. As they become more aware of their evil character while approaching the Most Holy Place, Satan tempts them to project their own evil onto others rather than be crucified with Christ. The way is narrow as Jesus says and there are few that find it because men love darkness rather than light.

For those who hold onto Jesus in faith, we continue to feed on the living bread and our path is lighted, we begin to learn more about our depraved natures. The law begins to enter more deeply into our hearts and we painfully accept how offensive our character is. Jesus encourages us with His grace, mercy and forgiveness. The more we see how evil we are, the greater the temptation to fear punishment and project this punishment onto others. Our false sense of justice causes us to fear that we will be punished for our sins. We are tempted to doubt we can be forgiven.

In order to deal with doubt, as we have stated, some focus on the sins of others and point out their faults and weaknesses, seeking to divert attention from their own flaws. Through all this, the Spirit of Jesus draws us to consider His character of mercy and forgiveness. As we approach the Most Holy Place, we are invited to see that God does not desire sacrifice and offering.

Unless we can become free of the enmity of false justice, we will not be able to enter the Most Holy Place. The closer we approach God, the more our false justice system will reflect in His character. Christ veils this enmity while we are in the Holy Place, but unless we find freedom from a wrong understanding of justice, we will never become free of the fear of death.

ATONEMENT

As long as we hold the idea that God will forcefully destroy the wicked, (rather than it being a natural consequence of their decisions), we will have fear of punishment. Every time our sins are revealed to us, we will be tempted to fear we will fail and be lost.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment [penal infliction]. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 1 John 4:18

God is love and when we know God as revealed in His Son, we will know that our Father does not harm or kill anyone. We then can repent

God is love and when we know God as revealed in His Son, we will know that our Father does not harm or kill anyone.

of our condemning natures that demand death and the enmity can be slain in us. This will free us to walk into the Most Holy Place. As we no longer hold onto a death decree in ourselves through false justice, we will no longer see it reflected in the character of God.

Since our fear is gone, we will not need to defend ourselves through projecting our evil justice system onto God. We can stop this mischief of framing the law in the context of justice that demands death.

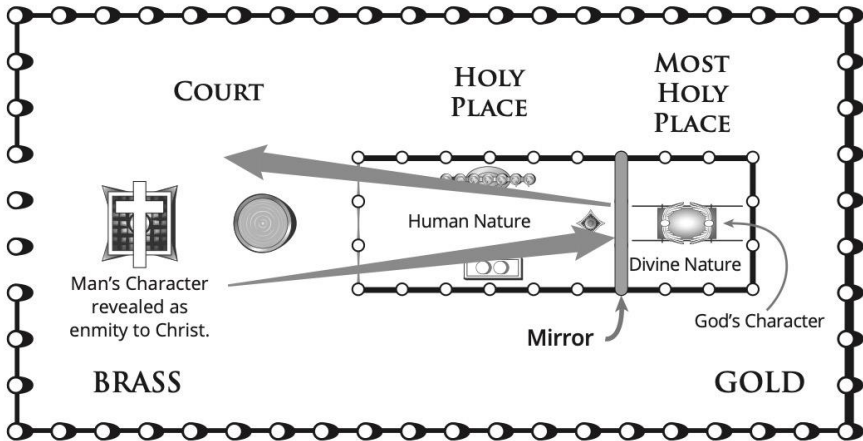
Without Jesus taking our nature and slaying the enmity by stopping it from being reflected back to us in the mirror of His perfectly spotless character, we could never approach God.

The subject of the nature of Christ is therefore vital to the atonement process. I give thanks to the Father that He allowed Himself to be seen as a condemning Judge that I might be able to approach Him. He allowed Himself to be seen like me, but as we come towards the light of His character, He can gently rebuke us for our wrong understanding and set us free.

You sit *and* speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son. These *things* you have done, and I kept silent; **you**

THE VEIL OF HIS FLESH

thought that I was altogether like you; but I will rebuke you, and set them in order before your eyes. Psalm 50:20-21



Without the veil of Christ's flesh our enmity is amplified in the mirror of God's character

Our false justice causes us to speak against each other because we think God is like us. But thankfully He draws us to Himself and sets in order before us the truth of the matter, that is, if we will let Him draw us through the body of His Son.

Christ took our hateful enmity into Himself so we could look upon Him without immediately running away. Carrying this enmity is the deeper reality of the Cross of Christ. He carries upon Himself our nature which is the true meaning of these verses in Isaiah:

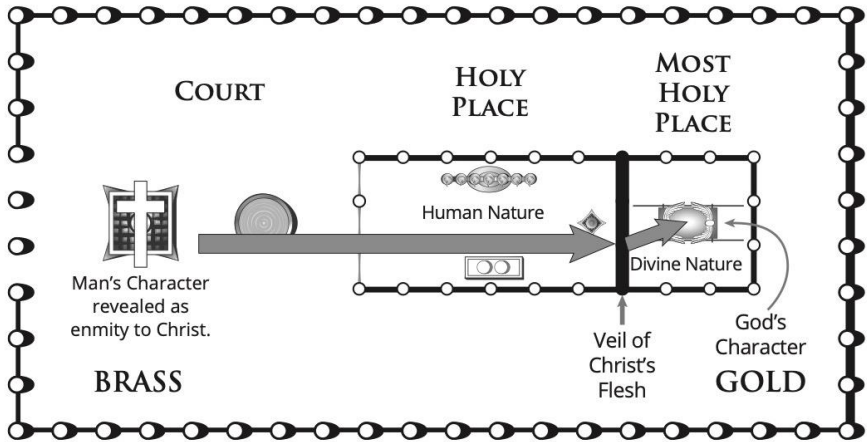
Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. Isaiah 53:4

In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old. Isaiah 63:9

Then He said to *them* all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Luke 9:23

ATONEMENT

It is a grief and a sorrow to condemn people around us. It is a very terrible thing to carry hate in our hearts. Jesus has to carry all this hate upon His shoulders just so we will not run from Him when He comes to us.



The veil of Christ's flesh absorbs our enmity and allows intercession to God

The completion of the atonement process is for our hearts to be freed from the need for condemnation, punishment, and death. We will freely accept God's mercy and be happy to extend this to all around us. Then we will have no more consciousness of sin (Hebrews 10:2) because the enmity is completely removed from us; we therefore will no longer project this onto our precious heavenly Father and we will cease to believe Him to be One who kills those who transgress Him. We will be free of the torment that comes from the fear of penal infliction from our Father. We will come to complete rest in the arms of our Father.

All this is accomplished through the body of Christ who broke down the middle wall of partition between us and God through the veil of His flesh. Praise the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ revealed the truth of the Father's character when He was here on earth. Christ took the enmity of man to the grave with Him and came out without it. If the truth of God's character could have gone to all the world at that time, the end could have occurred within one generation.

THE VEIL OF HIS FLESH

God signified this by tearing the veil of the temple apart showing that the truth had been revealed which would give entrance into the Most Holy Place.

Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split.
Matthew 27:51

Sadly, it would take another 2000 years before the enmity Christ took to the grave would be slain in the final saints of earth's history — the 144,000.

Our Father was not caught off guard by this reality. Daniel was told 600 years before Christ came of the coming little horn power who would subvert the gospel through its abominable teachings.

But before we go to Daniel, we need to address two subjects. Firstly, how God brings us to salvation through the two covenants. Secondly, how this applies to the sacrificial system and especially the story of Abraham offering his son Isaac.

CHAPTER 13

CONTEXT FOR ABRAHAM AND ISAAC STORY

The story of Abraham and Isaac is a pivotal story and a critical key in understanding the atonement. Martin Luther praised Abraham for his “blind faith” in his refusal to question whether it was right to kill Isaac. Immanuel Kant counters this, arguing that such an immoral command could not have come from God. Before we can get to the kernel of this story, we need to set the stage.

The introduction of the sacrificial system to the human race afforded us the opportunity to see the enmity that existed within us. It was a mirror to magnify the resentment within the Patriarchs to lead them to grace through faith. Abel discerned the meaning of the sacrifices, confessed his enmity and found salvation.

By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.
Hebrews 11:4

Cain was not ignorant of the meaning of the sacrifices, but he refused to accept that the slain lamb was a symbol of what existed in his heart toward the Son of God. As a result, he chose only to bring an offering reflecting the work of his own hands.

And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat.... Genesis 4:3-4

It is worthy of note that the phrase *process of time* actually means *at the end of the days* or *end of the year*. This is expressed in the Young's Literal Translation:

And it cometh to pass **at the end of days** that Cain bringeth from the fruit of the ground a present to Jehovah. Genesis 4:3 (YLT)

Our Father in heaven did not desire for the abundance of the spilling of blood, it was only once a year that a sacrifice was to be brought. Without this painful sacrificial mirror, the animosity within Adam and his sons would remain completely hidden.

Satan inspired the descendants of Adam to interpret the sacrifice through the lens of his false justice. Through the arts of psychological projection, the sacrifices came to be understood as something that God demanded to satisfy His wrath against our sinfulness.

It naturally follows that if God is demanding a sacrifice to be appeased, then the more costly the gift sacrificed, the greater the satisfaction of divine wrath. The prophet Micah speaks into this thought process in this way:

With what shall I come before the LORD, *and* bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil? **Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression**, the fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul? Micah 6:6-7

ATONEMENT

It became common amongst pagan nations to offer their children to their gods in appeasement. Moses was instructed to prevent these horrific acts as follows:

And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through *the fire* to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the LORD. Leviticus 18:21

This was a very important command because the land that Israel was going into had practiced child sacrifice for centuries:

And shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood. Psalm 106:38

In the time of Abraham the practice of child sacrifice was widespread. Having come out of the region of Babylon, and especially when he entered into the land of Canaan, Abraham was aware of this practice.

Abraham loved God and faithfully obeyed the command to come out of Babylon and leave behind all the comforts of family association. Abraham and Sarah had a problem though, they were not able to produce an heir. This was an opening for doubt to enter into the mind of Abraham, which Satan chipped away at because he hated the faith of Abraham.

When entering into the land of Canaan, Abraham entered into an alliance with some Amorite tribes as a means of security against potential threats. When Abraham's nephew Lot was taken captive in the war with Chedorlaomer and his allies, Abraham joined forces with his Amorite allies to take on this formidable force.

Through providence, Abraham and his allies won a great victory. Magnanimous in victory, Abraham took no spoils. He received the blessing of Melchizedek because he needed the assurance of God's love. The conflict with Chedorlaomer revealed in Abraham the enmity that was previously hidden. He had previously been a man of peace, but this event revealed a spirit in him not previously manifested.

Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. 1 John 3:15

When Abraham's nephew was taken, the spirit of war was awakened in his soul. "Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward." Job 5:7 When returning home from the battle, Abraham no doubt was harassed by dark thoughts. As he recalled the faces of dying men impaled with swords and spears, he feared for the retribution that might come upon him. Every man who takes life, like Cain, fears for his life to be taken.

"For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."
Matthew 26:52 (KJV)

Jesus said that to Peter, explaining that violence leads to driving away the peace-loving Spirit of God, leaving man confused and dreading the repercussions of his actions. This is how Abraham felt, and God seeks to assure Abraham of His love and protection:

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I *am* your shield, your exceedingly great reward." Genesis 15:1

"After these things" meaning after the conflict with Chedorlaomer, God tells Abraham not to be afraid. "I am your shield," meaning "I will protect you," and be your exceeding great reward. What a promise.

Abraham was struggling to believe this because there was a ministration of death occurring in Abraham's life through the inability to have children. As he recalls the feelings of enmity in his soul as he drove his spear through the torsos of those who took his nephew and looked into their eyes as they collapsed to the ground, he feared he would lose his grip on the promises of God.

The delay in Abraham having a child brought these fears to the surface. When God reminded him that He was Abraham's great reward, the doubt within him surfaced:

Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!" Genesis 15:3

God had previously promised Abraham, descendants and land. (Genesis 13:14-16). They were to be more than he could number. But by the time of Genesis 15, Abraham is having doubts that God is able to fulfil His promise because of his previous failures. He suggests to God the solution of an adopted son.

God rejects this fig leaf solution and states again His promise to Abraham to give him children from his own body. A wonderful moment occurs when Abraham overcomes his doubts and in faith takes hold of the promise again.

Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. Genesis 15:5-6

But when God promises Abraham all the land he has further doubts.

Then He said to him, "I *am* the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it." And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?" Genesis 15:7-8

Abraham, fresh from the horrors of conflict, was confronted with the thought that this meant more warfare on his part. Just as previously Abraham had conceived a plan to have an heir outside the promises of God, now he thought of having to fight all his neighbours and all the tribes in these lands to take them. This would be a gigantic task in the flesh. At this moment the faith of Abraham stumbles and he doubts as to how this could happen.

Why does Abraham doubt? The remaining enmity within him prevents him from fully embracing the promise of God. In order to show Abraham the problem, God speaks words that act as a mirror into Abraham's soul.

So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." Genesis 15:9

God does not tell Abraham what to do with these animals, but they are familiar to Abraham, for they were animals customary to be used for making a covenant between men. To Abraham, the cutting of the animals in half was his promise to God to be obedient in all things. To God, the slaughter of these animals represented the hatred in man that slaughters His Son. God condescends to enter into this covenant with Abraham in exactly the same way that He was willing to enter into a covenant with Israel where they promised, just like Abraham, to be obedient in everything. This is the ministration of death; it is the Old Covenant experience intended to cause sin to abound in order that it might be confessed and freely forgiven.

We know Abraham was in an Old Covenant frame of mind in this transaction, because in the very next chapter Ishmael is born through the plan of Sarah to obtain a child through her maid, Hagar.

Paul in commenting on this story sheds some vital light.

For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. **But he *who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants:*** the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar—for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children—but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. Galatians 4:22-26

The inability of Sarah to bear a child, was symbolic of the enmity that still existed in the heart of Abraham. God might have let Abraham bear a son right away but because He saw in Abraham a precious son that was willing to listen to Him, God tested him and brought to the surface the hidden hostility, inherited from Adam and prospered by Abraham. This He did because He wanted Abraham to experience true peace and rest, which could only happen if this enmity was recognised and let go of by Abraham.

Sarah, in her desperation, and sense of shame for not producing a child, encourages Abraham to bear a child through Hagar, her maid. In listening to the voice of his wife, Abraham revealed his lack of faith in the promise and revealed his desire to work out the promise himself by his own works.

13 years after the birth of Ishmael God appears to Abraham. It was at this time that God changed Abraham's name from Abram. Abram means *high father* while Abraham means *father of a multitude*.

God lays out to Abraham the promises once again, adding more and more detail. Even as God is speaking Abraham is struggling to believe. At 99 years of age how could Abraham become the father of a great multitude? How would he possess all the land? It seemed difficult to believe.

Once again, God manifests the enmity within Abraham through the command of circumcision. Circumcision originated in Egypt, according

*For God to instruct
His people concerning
a pagan practice, it
must form part of the
mirror that reveals
the sinfulness in man.*

to the Greek historian Herodotus.²⁶ When Abraham went to Egypt, Hagar became Sarah's servant. It may have been through Hagar that circumcision was introduced to their family, due to her Egyptian heritage. Circumcision in Egypt was conducted on young males between boyhood and manhood. Ishmael was 13 when God appeared to Abraham and Hagar might have been

raising this issue in regard to her son Ishmael.

While we can't be certain, one thing is sure; it was a pagan practice. It did not originate with God's people. For God to instruct His people concerning a pagan practice, it must form part of the mirror that reveals the sinfulness in man.

²⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_circumcision

Due to the fact that Abraham was not able to simply believe God, a token of suffering or pain was manifested. A symbol from a rite of passage in Egypt, as a display of manhood, was now enlisted by God to magnify the unbelief of Abraham to lead him to repentance. Paul lays out clearly that circumcision was not critical to righteousness by faith.

Does this blessedness then *come* upon the circumcised *only*, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. Romans 4:9-10

As the sacrificial system was instructed to Adam and his sons because of the hidden enmity in them, so circumcision was given to Abraham and his offspring to magnify their sin to lead them to repentance. Of course, in the Old Covenant framework, it was a mark of honour and distinction to Abraham. If circumcision had been an eternal principle it would have remained forever but like the sacrificial system, it's use was no longer of value after Christ had revealed the character of the Father and taken the enmity of Adam to the grave.

Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God *is what matters*. 1 Corinthians 7:19

The evidence that Abraham still lacked faith while God was promising him everything is found further in the story.

Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall be* her name. And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother of nations*; kings of peoples shall be from her." Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "*Shall a child* be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear *a child*?" And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!" Genesis 17:15-18

Abraham laughed at God in his heart. This is unbelief. This caused God pain. Do you like to be laughed at when you promise something

ATONEMENT

amazing to those you love? And beyond this to have them propose something else to you as a solution?

God graciously condescends to accept circumcision as a seal of the faith that Abraham had expressed earlier in believing that God would give him an heir.

And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had while still* uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also. Romans 4:11

When the time came for Isaac to be born, God delivered the message to Abraham. Sarah listening in the tent follows her husband's unbelief and laughs at the thought of bearing children after menopause. To earthly appearance this was impossible.

Then they said to him, "Where *is* Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the tent." And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which *was* behind him.) Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; *and* Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear *a child*, since I am old?' Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." But Sarah denied *it*, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!" Genesis 18:9-15

Despite their struggle to believe, God graciously gave Abraham and Sarah a son. Abraham had demonstrated faith in Genesis 15 concerning the promise and despite his stumbling, where sin was abounding, God's grace still much more abounded.

The overwhelming joy in Abraham's home didn't last too long because Hagar didn't appreciate her son being put in the shade in comparison

to Isaac. The rivalry previously manifested before the birth of Isaac surfaced again through the persecution of Isaac by Ishmael. Sarah pressed her case to Abraham:

And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing. Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *namely* with Isaac." Genesis 21:9-10

God tells Abraham to listen to his wife. Even in these words, the sin of Abraham is magnified, because Abraham had listened to his wife in the first place to create this problem. So now in listening to his wife again, the pain of his actions were magnified and his realisation of his failures of the past becomes more apparent. How sorrowful it would have been for Abraham to have to part with his son Ishmael. It would have been extremely painful for him; much more painful than cutting off his foreskin in circumcision. We see in Abraham the work of the Old Covenant. It is a growing ministration of death. It is intended to bring super abounding grace to him.

Through these humbling experiences, Abraham's reliance on himself decreased and he grew stronger in faith. God discerned that in Abraham, the hidden treachery of Adam might be manifested in order that he, as well as the rest of humanity, could see manifested the enmity of man against God and His Son; a complete sin abounding event in order that God's amazing grace might much more abound.

CHAPTER 14

THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM

At the summit of Mt Moriah, all of humanity is seated in judgment. We are called to decide the meaning of God's command to Abraham to offer up his son, the son that Abraham had waited for all his life; the son that God had promised him and in whom all his hopes rested. As Kierkegaard stated: "Just as Abraham's faith is tested by God in the Book of Genesis, so the reader's own faith is tested by personal reflection on the biblical story."

Martin Luther once read the account of Abraham offering Isaac on the altar of sacrifice. His wife, Katie, with all the compassion of a mother said, "I do not believe it. God would not have treated his son like that!" "But, Katie," Luther replied, "He did."

Rembrandt captures the story in the most confronting manner. Abraham's hand is pushed over Isaac's face in what appears to be tacit support for what Alice Miller suggests is child abuse.²⁷

²⁷ Alice Miller, *The Untouched Key: Tracing Childhood Trauma in Creativity and Destructiveness*, (New York: Doubleday, 1990)

In order to climb Mt Moriah without being caught in the same thicket as the ram, let us remember the things we have considered in the previous chapters leading to this point.

In chapter 3 we examined human perceptions of divine justice. Christianity presents God as inflexibly severe in His dealings. He is understood as a being who is relentless in hunting down lawbreakers and punishing either them or a substitute.

In chapter 4 we considered the hidden treachery of Adam; the fatal misunderstanding of the words of God that in the day you eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, you will die. Thinking that God demanded the death of his wife, he summoned God before his internal judiciary and condemned God for what he believed was God's intention. We underscore the vital point that Adam misunderstood the meaning of God's words and framed them in the context of a death penalty inflicted by false justice. In self-defence, Adam projects his false perceptions onto God and becomes very afraid of Him. Any attempted approach by God towards him is experienced as a harbinger of death. Adam and his posterity harbour a deep-seated hatred towards God, but it is concealed deep within his psyche.

In chapter 5 we see the Sun of righteousness bursting forth light into the darkened mind of humanity in the complete revelation of God's character to man in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Never did Jesus display a justice that required Him to forcibly end the life of another person. Through this lens we are invited to walk with Jesus on the road to Emmaus and let Him reveal to us in the books of Moses and the Prophets all the things concerning Himself. (Luke 24:44).

In chapter 6 we discovered Satan's counterfeit justice and how he mischievously framed the law of God through his false perceptions of justice. The story of Absalom pulls back the curtain on the satanic aspiration to take the throne of God.

In chapter 7 we see how God meets man in his darkened perceptions of reconciliation and atonement. The serpent lifted up in the metal of man-made brass, stamped with the hallmarks of pagan atonement while

ATONEMENT

containing the hint of a fiery seraph that fell from heaven, reveals to us that God was meeting man in the dark place of his corrupted imagination. Stained with the corrupting principles of satanic justice, humanity cannot but conceive of deity as one who demands death for transgression.

In chapter 8 we revealed the truth that only through the death of Christ upon a pagan Roman cross could man begin to believe that God could offer us mercy. This reality was symbolised in the command to Moses to strike the rock at the beginning of the wilderness wandering, while at the end of that journey, he was instructed to speak to the rock to receive the life-giving water. This was to confirm that without the shedding of blood there could be no atonement; for mankind, saturated with false justice, could not accept that God could forgive without the death penalty being applied.

In chapter 12 we begin to appreciate with wonder the saving agency of God in Christ taking a human body like ours in order to absorb our enmity against God thus allowing Him to come close and tabernacle amongst us. This punctuates the truth that God did not desire sacrifice but rather a body was prepared for Christ to come close to us and lead us to have confidence in Christ as a mediator. We also looked at the Sanctuary system as a pathway from brass to gold and from false human ideas of atonement to God's real atonement.

In chapter 10 we included the vital step of the two-covenant process of being reconciled to God. The human soul is unaware of the true extent of his depravity. Through the ministration of the Old Covenant, the depth of our sinfulness is magnified through the consequences of our own actions. This is done that our sin might become fully understood by us. In the moment of realisation, the grace of the New Covenant is offered to us that we might be released from our enmity and be reconciled to God. As we discovered in the story of the Canaanite woman, her understanding of what Christ was saying, although incorrect, was the catalyst for the perfecting of her faith. This is the context for the story of Mt Moriah.

While it is difficult to absorb all these layers of thought and apply them at once to the story of Abraham and Isaac, the final layer we discussed in chapter 10 can serve as an entering wedge, aided by the thought of Christ's life on earth being the sum total of the character of God. If we can take at least these two layers of thought into the story, then we have the opportunity to bring the other layers in later to complete the picture. It is a picture of sublime grace on the part of God instead of the traumatising horror of a God demanding Abraham to kill his precious son.

Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." Genesis 22:1-2

We recall the words of Jesus to the Canaanite woman, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw *it* to the little dogs." (Matthew 15:26). The woman's response indicates that she believed that Jesus called her a dog. She misunderstood what He said, thus making the test of her faith much greater than it needed to be. The statement of Jesus was a mirror of her own thoughts about herself. Jesus did not think this precious woman was a dog, but He framed His words in such a way as to teach both this woman and the disciples important lessons.

The same thing occurred when Abraham asked God for evidence that he would possess the land that God promised. God told Abraham to bring a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old lamb and a turtle dove. These words had meaning to Abraham in his own context. God was well aware of that. God never told him what to do with them, but Abraham went forward in the frame of reference which he understood those words. God allowed Abraham to do what he thought God wanted, in order to teach him important lessons.

When God told Abraham to take his only son, the meaning of the words provided a clue that Abraham acted within his own understanding of those words. God knew he would understand it this way, and used this

misunderstanding on the part of Abraham to bring to the surface the inner thinking of Abraham while making the test of faith all the greater.

Consider the phrase “offer him for a burnt offering.” The word *offer* contains the following meanings in *Brown, Driver and Briggs Dictionary*:

To bring up, cause to ascend or climb, cause to go up, to bring up, bring against, take away, to bring up, draw up, train, to cause to ascend, to rouse, stir up (mentally), to offer, bring up (of gifts), to exalt, to cause to ascend, offer – Hiphil form of H5927

Within this context we see how the Young’s Literal Translation renders this word:

And He saith, “Take, I pray thee, thy son, thine only one, whom thou hast loved, even Isaac, and go for thyself unto the land of Moriah, and **cause him to ascend there** for a burnt-offering on one of the mountains of which I speak unto thee.” Genesis 22:2 (YLT)

As they were going to climb Mt Moriah, the word ascend is a natural choice for such a journey. The word for burnt offering carries two meanings. The first is a burnt offering and the second is *ascent, stairway or go up*. The Strong’s Concordance renders it this way.

Feminine active participle of H5927; a step or (collectively stairs, as ascending); usually a holocaust (as going up in smoke): – ascent, burnt offering (sacrifice), go up to. See also H5766.

See how the word for burnt offering is translated in this verse:

And *there were* seven steps to **go up** to it, and the arches thereof *were* before them: and it had palm trees, one on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts thereof. Ezekiel 40:26 (KJV)

Therefore, what God spoke could be translated this way:

Then He said, “Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and **ascend** there and **go up** on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” Genesis 22:2

This detail is important to explain the mirror that is operating in the text. God knew how Abraham would understand the words He spoke to him. Firstly, let us consider what God says about child sacrifice:

They have also built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire *for* burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or speak, nor did it come into My mind. Jeremiah 19:5

God indicates through Jeremiah about the time when Israel came out of Egypt.

For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. But this is what I commanded them, saying, "Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you." Jeremiah 7:22-23

As we stated earlier, the sacrificial system was given to man as a mirror of what his thoughts were towards God and His Son. God never desired sacrifices. Man seeking to defend himself against the gross charge of wanting to murder the Son of God, projects this onto God as something that God desires. It is a cruel thing for man to do to God, but in the end, it only makes the tests that man has to face all the greater.

The way that Abraham understood God reveals what was in him. Abraham was raised in an environment of child sacrifice; the people of the land of Canaan, where he dwelt, practiced these abominations. The sins he had committed previously all pressed down upon him, thoughts of judgment and therefore punishment.

Abraham's guilty conscience was tempted to believe that he wasn't forgiven of God unless he sacrificed something to God. God therefore reflected this flawed, Old Covenant thinking back to Abraham to bring him out of it. God wanted Abraham to have a loving relationship with Him without continually falling back into fear and insecurity because of his misunderstandings of God's character.

ATONEMENT

If God actually did command Abraham to kill his son, the following words must leave us with puzzling questions.

And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only *son*, from Me." Genesis 22:12

Did God deceive Abraham in commanding him to kill his son and then at the last excruciating moment stop him, indicating that He is now satisfied that Abraham is worthy? The idea is extremely problematic.

It makes much more sense in the context of all we have considered that Abraham understood God's words in a brass, man-made, justice system. God knew Abraham would understand Him this way, but it was the only way to reveal the hidden enmity in his heart.

The command to slay Isaac reveals the seed which was hidden in the bosom of Adam. Adam thought that God was going to kill his wife. He could not bear the thought of separation from her. He thought God wanted her dead, just as Abraham thought God wanted Isaac dead.

The Christian world uses this story as the framework of the atonement and a key element to Substitutionary atonement. Listen to Spurgeon:

Remember that in Abraham's case Isaac was the child of his heart. I need not enlarge on that, you can readily imagine how Abraham loved him; but in the case of our Lord what mind can conceive how near and dear our Redeemer was to the Father? Remember those marvellous words of the Incarnate Wisdom, "I was by him as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." Our glorious Saviour was more the Son of God's love than Isaac could be the darling of Abraham. Eternity and infinity entered into the love which existed between the Father and the Son. Christ in human nature was matchlessly pure and holy, and in him dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily; therefore was he highly delightful to the Father, and that delight was publicly attested in audible declarations, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." **Yet he spared him not, but made him to be the**

substitute for us sinners, made him as a curse for us, and to be hanged on a tree. Have you a favourite child? Have you one who nestles in your bosom? Have you one dearer than all others? Then should you be called to part with him, you will be able to have fellowship with the great Father in delivering up his Son. — Charles Spurgeon, *The Gospel of Abraham*.

Just as the Canaanite woman thought Jesus called her a dog, so Abraham thought God wanted him to offer his son as a sacrifice. This story is vital because it diagnoses the human problem. In the command of God, sin was caused to abound in Abraham and reveal that which was hidden.

Like the Canaanite woman, her wrong understanding of the words of Jesus made her test much harder than it could have been, but her brass understanding made this unavoidable. So with Abraham, there was no way to avoid the severity of the test, not because God required it but because of the wrong understanding Abraham had about God's character.

What is so beautiful about Abraham, is that despite his wrong understanding, he still held on in faith to God believing that God could raise his son from the dead.

By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. Hebrews 11:17-19

Abraham stepped past the failure of Adam. Adam did not push past his wrong understanding to embrace the promise of God to provide all his needs. He thought he would lose Eve forever. The faith of Jesus in Abraham enabled him to see through the portals of the tomb. He trusted God to raise his son to fulfil the promise that he would be the father of a great multitude. Thus we read:

ATONEMENT

And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore "It was accounted to him for righteousness." Romans 4:19-22

We note carefully that his faith was *accounted* as righteous. His wrong understanding of the character of God was not righteous, but the faith he manifested in God was accounted to him as righteous.

If we take this story as Spurgeon and most Christian writers believe, then when Isaac was spared and the ram was slain, the work of Abraham in raising the knife to kill his son is understood as God demanding the death of something to be satisfied. It frames the whole atonement in the context of sacrificial appeasement.

This was my former understanding of the gospel story as written in the early editions of my book *Identity Wars*:

Try to picture God in the story of Abraham and Isaac and see that there was no one to step into the gap for Jesus, **no one to release the Father from the heart rending task of sacrifice, no one to stay the divine hand from plunging the knife.** In the earthquake and darkness of that fateful day when the greatest love that has ever been was severed because of our sins, I hear the cry of the Father, "My Son, My Son, how can I give you up? How can I let you go?" Here is Hell right here. Both Father and Son have experienced Hell in the severing of their relationship on our behalf. What else can the essence of Hell be but the very opposite of what God's kingdom stands for—loving, intimate relationship? – *Identity Wars*, 2012 Edition

As I read it now, I am pained at the picture it presents. While some theologians instinctively try to soften the blow of the Father killing His Son, I stumbled blindly into the implications of a divine justice that demands death, even the death of His Son. At the time of writing this I

had no idea of Satan's false justice nor the idea that judgment and condemnation came from Adam, not God. With the above picture of atonement, the Father is seen as the one who kills His Son. Luther tried to soften this blow by attributing the killing to the law of God.

The law growls: "All right. If Your Son is taking the sins of the world, I see no sins anywhere else but in Him. He shall die on the Cross." **And the law kills Christ. But we go free.**²⁸

Again, as we discussed earlier, a further step is taken into the Trinity to present this death as a self-sacrifice rather than the Father killing His Son. But all of these things are masks to keep covered the hostility in man against God, presenting Him as the one who demands death to satisfy His severe and exacting justice. It makes the Father seem foolish; His creation sins and therefore God's innocent Son

It makes the Father seem foolish; His creation sins and therefore God's innocent Son must die before the Father can be satisfied? It seems arbitrary; why can't You just forgive?

must die before the Father can be satisfied? It seems arbitrary; why can't You just forgive? This reminds us of the story of Saul and Jonathan:

And the men of Israel were distressed that day, for Saul had placed the people under oath, saying, "Cursed *is* the man who eats *any* food until evening, before I have taken vengeance on mine enemies." So none of the people tasted food. 1 Samuel 14:24

Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." And Jonathan told him, and said, "I only tasted a little honey with the end of the rod that *was* in my hand. So now I must die!" Saul answered, "God do so and more also; for you shall surely die, Jonathan." But the people said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who has

²⁸ Martin Luther, *Commentary on St Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*

ATONEMENT

accomplished this great deliverance in Israel? Certainly not! As the LORD lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day." So the people rescued Jonathan, and he did not die. 1 Samuel 14:43-45

In the framework of the character of Jesus and the two covenants, the command of God to Abraham was the work of the Old Covenant to cause his hidden sin to abound. Abraham manifested a divine faith, through the darkness of false understanding.

It is through this same darkness that Christ had to hold on to the love of His Father.

At about three o'clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means "My God, My God, why have You abandoned Me?" Matthew 27:46 (NLT)

Jesus was struggling with the doubt that His Father had forsaken Him. Like Abraham, He trusted His Father despite the dark cloud around Him and committed Himself into the hands of God. Why did Jesus have to walk through this cloud of doubt? He was carrying upon Himself our misunderstanding of God, thinking He will abandon us. Both Jesus and Abraham conquered the darkness and triumphed, demonstrating Jesus is the seed of Abraham.

Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. Galatians 3:16

Abraham is the father of faith (Romans 4:16). Christ the seed of Abraham, magnified the work of Abraham with a faith that pierced the darkness of the whole world.

In the light of these things, the principles of the atonement are seen in a completely new light. They will allow us to speak to the rock rather than striking it. This information is vital for the perfection of the saints through the Time of Jacob's Trouble just before the Second Coming of Christ.

Alas! For that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it; and it *is* the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. Jeremiah 30:7

As we will explore later in greater detail, God's people will go through a test where they are tempted to feel that God has completely forsaken them. If we know our God and His character, the feelings of abandonment will be mitigated by the knowledge of the truth that God has never desired sacrifice and offering. We shall be able to pierce that darkness when the whole world is gathered against those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

At the darkest hour, God's people will triumph over the natural enmity within and will say:

...Behold, this *is* our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This *is* the LORD; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. Isaiah 25:9

In telling the story of Abraham, we have laid the groundwork of the development of the human wrath against God. It was concealed in the bosom of Adam, manifested in Cain killing Abel and culminated in the picture of Abraham killing his son; a manifestation of what Adam thought God wanted to do to him. Adam was a son of God. (Luke 3:38). The deep dark shadow of Abraham with a knife raised to plunge into the chest of his son is the stark manifestation of what humanity thought of God's demand for justice.

Let us now trace this human indignation against God, which is projected as God's demand for blood sacrifice.

CHAPTER 15

DANIEL AND THE ABOMINABLE TREACHERY OF THE LITTLE HORN

The story of the fall of Adam and Eve combined with the story of Cain killing Abel provide us with the original seed from which all manifestations of human wrath, war, bloodshed, sacrifice, and worship find their source. Adam originates the wrath against God through his false understanding of the warning of God to the potential transgressor. The initial feelings of Adam towards the Son of God are unmasked in Cain killing Abel.

For man to receive atonement with God, he must acknowledge his wrath against God, and his desire to kill His Son. Adam and Abel humbled themselves to confess this crime in the sacrifices they offered. Conversely, the aggrieved Cain manifested indignation against the holy covenant, forsaking it in refusing to bring a lamb to kill, representing the hostility that resided within him towards the Son of God. He

magnified himself against the Prince of the host, the Son of God, whose Spirit dwelt in Abel, and killed him.

In this we learn a profound lesson. In refusing to slay the lamb, Cain denied that he had a hidden enmity in him. "That may be Adam's sin, but it isn't mine," Cain may have thought. He thought he was fine and didn't need to acknowledge the appropriate channel of grace that God offered. But the consequence was terrible: God wanted him to channel his hatred into the ritual of the lamb sacrifice; having not done it, that hatred burst forth in an inappropriate channel – at his beloved brother. This should warn us that when we deny the sinfulness that God has shown us, or God's ways to deal with it, that iniquity will explode out of us in a chaotic and destructive manner, hurting ourselves and those around us.

This principle is true on the individual level, the family level, the community level, the national level, and of the whole human race. This story has been repeated many times in human history as Solomon wisely expresses:

That which is, has already been, and what is to be, has already been;
and God requires an account of what is past. Ecclesiastes 3:15

The book of Daniel provides the essential framework to unmask the treachery of Adam; it details the relevant aspects of human history showing this hostility in action in successive epochs.

To understand the history connected to the prophecies of Daniel, we are indebted to the work of William Miller and his associates who developed the most complete, systematic explanation of these prophecies in the 19th century. For a detailed analysis of these prophecies, I recommend the books *Daniel and Revelation* by Uriah Smith²⁹ and *Daniel the Prophet* from Stephen Haskell.³⁰ For a condensed

²⁹ Download from this link: <https://maranathamedia.com/download/view/daniel-and-revelation-uriah-smith-1897>

³⁰ Download from this link: <https://maranathamedia.com/download/view/story-of-daniel-the-prophet-sn-haskell-1903>

overview of chapters 7 and 8 of Daniel, see chapter 15 of the book *As You Judge*, available from *fatheroflove.info*.

I will provide a brief summary of these books I have just mentioned to provide context for chapter 8 of Daniel.

I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great. And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand. Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven.
Daniel 8:4-8

The angel Gabriel gives to Daniel the identities of the ram and the male goat symbolised in the vision.

The ram which you saw, having the two horns—*they are* the kings of **Media and Persia**. And the male goat *is* the kingdom of **Greece**. The large horn that *is* between its eyes *is* the first king.
Daniel 8:20-21

The decisive history of Greece defeating Medo-Persia occurred in 331 B.C.

Alexander first vanquished the generals of Darius at the River Granicus in Phrygia. He next attacked and routed Darius at the passes of Issus in Cilicia, and afterward defeated him on the plains of Arbela in Syria. This latter battle occurred in 331 B.C., and

marked the fall of the Persian Empire. By this event Alexander became master of the whole country.³¹

Persia and Greece like most nations contained religious practices that involved animal sacrifices.

Animal sacrifice is the ritual killing of an animal as part of a religion. **It is practiced by adherents of many religions as a means of appeasing a god or gods or changing the course of nature.** It also served a social or economic function in those cultures where the edible portions of the animal were distributed among those attending the sacrifice for consumption. **Animal sacrifice has turned up in almost all cultures,** from the Hebrews to the Greeks and Romans (particularly the purifying ceremony *Lustratio*), Egyptians (for example in the cult of Apis) and from the Aztecs to the Yoruba. The religion of the ancient Egyptians forbade the sacrifice of animals other than sheep, bulls, calves, male calves and geese.³²

The animal sacrifices of the nations find their source in the events of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel. As the quote above indicates, the sacrifices of pagan nations were a process of appeasing their gods or manipulating outcomes. This is evidence of the universal refusal to accept the buried animosity within all of us and the instinct to project the desire for sacrifice onto God to appease His anger.

The **Babylonian and Persian priests offered daily sacrifices to their gods.** The Babylonians and the Persians also had a religious system with which **they likewise had daily or continual offerings.**

This has been made manifest by the discovery of the Cylinder of Cyrus (538-529 B.C.), the inscription upon which has been translated as follows:

“Daily he planned and in enmity, he allowed the regular offering to cease; he appointed — he established within the city.” — See

³¹ Uriah Smith, *Daniel and Revelation*, page 168

³² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacrifice>

ATONEMENT

Landmarks of Civilization; Assyrian and Babylonian Literature, by Albert F. Harper, page 171.

Another translation reads: "He planned daily and in enmity he caused the established sacrifice to cease." *Archaeology and the Bible*, by George A. Barton, Second Edition, page 385.³³

We read of the intense fury of the male-goat towards the ram. As I indicated earlier, all anger towards others is a manifestation of our hidden anger towards God. The apostle John says that if you hate your brother, you are in darkness. (1 John 2:9).

The conflict between Persia and Greece is a manifestation of that internal enmity that men have for God. Jesus said, "Inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me." (Matthew 25:40). Men are insecure due to their estrangement with God, causing us not to see each other as fellow members of the family of God. This is manifested by our need to appease the gods, and our need to dominate our fellow man.

The symbolism of the goat destroying the ram in the book of Daniel contains an echo to the first murder in human history. The goat is a symbol of Satan and the ram or sheep is a symbol of Christ. In the story of Cain and Abel, Cain, inspired by the goat, Satan, became extremely angry with Abel, who was inspired by the sheep, Jesus, and killed him even as Greece destroyed the power of Persia through the slaughter of many men.

The symbolism of the ram and goat connected to Cain and Abel connects us to the original wrath from the first family on earth. The reason this history is important is because of what Daniel describes next.

And out of one of them came a little horn which **grew exceedingly great** toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious *Land*. And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down *some*

³³ F.L. Sharp, *Antiochus or Rome*. Download from this link:

<https://maranathamedia.com/download/view/antiochus-or-rome-fl-sharp>

of the host and *some* of the stars to the ground, and trampled them. He even exalted *himself* as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily *sacrifices* were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. Daniel 8:9-11

In the events described by Daniel, a power arose out of Greece that would magnify himself even to the prince of the host – meaning Jesus, the Son of God. Without going into the details of how this power arose, we see that Rome was the only power that became greater than Greece, as indicated in the prophecy.

Connecting these points, the wrath manifested in Cain against Abel, grew much greater in the war between Persia and Greece and then exceedingly great through Rome who ultimately crucified the Son of God, thus fully manifesting the treachery of Adam in the flesh.

In this broader context, the prophecy of Daniel is not simply giving a list of successive kingdoms from the time of Babylon until the last days, but rather it gives us the history of how the treachery of Adam has manifested in human history. This connection gives much more power to this prophecy and gives us a tool to predict further iterations of this wrathful seed, especially in the final scenes of earth's history.

Gabriel tells Daniel that this principle of wrath or indignation will cease at the time of the end.

And he said, "Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the **latter time of the indignation**; for at the appointed time the end *shall be*." Daniel 8:19

This indignation has continued from the time of Adam until the present day. It has manifested in every war and every violent death from the time of Abel. It is Adam's treachery magnified and manifested, and it will continue to manifest until the Prince of the host will cause the desire for sacrifice and offering to cease. (Daniel 9:27).

He even exalted *himself* as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily *sacrifices* were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. Because of transgression, an army was given over

ATONEMENT

to the horn to oppose the daily *sacrifices*; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did *all this* and prospered. Then I heard a holy one speaking; and *another* holy one said to that certain *one* who was speaking, "How long *will* the vision *be, concerning* the daily *sacrifices* and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?" And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed." Daniel 8:11-14

Before we can dig deeper into the language of Daniel 8:11-14 and its relationship to the atonement, we need to give a little more history to provide context. William Miller and the Advent movement of the 19th century sheds important light on these important verses.

CHAPTER 16

WILLIAM MILLER, THE DAILY AND THE TRANSGRESSION OF DESOLATION

In chapter two we mentioned the teachings of Aquinas who took the logical progression of Anselm's assertions into rationalising the burning of heretics. Burning people to death is a manifestation of the hidden enmity against God and His Son. Over the next 500 years, the world suffered the tyranny of Roman power in the coercion of conscience under pain of death. The powers of Protestantism and Islam checked the power of the Papacy while still manifesting similar indignation and wrath. One of the most significant expressions of reactionary wrath towards Rome came through the French revolution culminating in the French General Berthier taking the Pope prisoner on February 15, 1798.

It was this event which sparked a revival of Bible study at the time. Men began to run to and fro through the book of Daniel and knowledge was increased. (Daniel 12:4).

One of the men who began to study the Scriptures shortly after this time was William Miller. He was a captain in the Vermont Militia and part of the U.S. forces that defeated the British in the Battle of Plattsburgh on Lake Champlain, September 11, 1814.³⁴

William Miller was almost certain the vastly outnumbered Americans would be defeated by the disciplined Red Coats, but to his great surprise the Americans won. A convicted Deist at the time, he became convinced of the involvement of a higher power in the affairs of men and determined to resolve what he previously had considered as the many contradictions of the Bible.

I have personally visited the home of William Miller in Low Hampton, Upstate New York and sat at the desk where he did his Bible study. I have walked the path from his home to the grove of trees where he prayed after unlocking the meaning of Daniel 8:14 and was asked to “tell it to the world.”

And he said to me, “For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.” Daniel 8:14

Many Christian scholars understood in the time of William Miller, just as most scholars understand today, that the little horn power described in Daniel 8:11 referred to Antiochus Epiphanes in the 2nd century B.C. when he stopped the sacrifices in Jerusalem. The principal idea was the forces of evil seeking to stop the Jewish sacrificial system. This doesn't fit the pattern of the prophecy, for what is spoken about is kingdoms, not individual kings. Scholars also miss that the power described here as the little horn was in fact **greater** than the power of Greece.

Therefore the male goat [Greece] grew **very great**;... Daniel 8:8

And out of one of them came a little horn which **grew exceedingly great** toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious *Land*. Daniel 8:9

³⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Plattsburgh

The only power in the development of history that grew out of Greece and was greater than Greece was Rome. In any case most Bible scholars conclude that the prophecy of Daniel 8 finishes before the birth of Christ.

One of the many problems with this is the words of Christ concerning the abomination or transgression of desolation.

“Therefore when you see the ‘**abomination of desolation,**’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand). Matthew 24:15

Jesus tells those who see this “abomination of desolation” to flee from Judea into the mountains. Luke clarifies exactly what the sign is that tells them when they should flee:

“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.” Luke 21:20

The power that compassed and destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was Rome, thus associating the “abomination of desolation” to Rome. Daniel speaks of this desolating power in Daniel 8:13:

Then I heard a holy one speaking; and *another* holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, “How long *will* the vision *be, concerning* the daily *sacrifices* and the **transgression of desolation,** the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?” Daniel 8:13

The fact that Jesus refers to this power as future from when He was speaking to the disciples proves that what Daniel is writing about could not be related to events in the 2nd century B.C. This fact places greater emphasis on the question of *how long* will be this vision as asked in Daniel 8:13 because it extends way beyond the second century B.C., through the birth of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem, into the future. So how long will this terrible history go on for?

The answer to that question involves understanding what is the *daily sacrifice* and the *transgression of desolation* and how long the Sanctuary and the Host are trodden under foot.

The King James translators of this passage, starting from verse 11, have added the word *sacrifice* into the passage to give life to the idea that the events described are referring to an attack on God's sacrifice system that was a central feature of the Jewish Sanctuary. Three times the word *sacrifice* in italics was added to the text.

Yea, he magnified *himself* even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily *sacrifice* was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given *him* against the daily *sacrifice* by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered. Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain *saint* which spake, How long *shall be* the vision *concerning* the daily *sacrifice*, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? Daniel 8:11-13

William Miller addresses the issue of sacrifices as follows:

1st, the "daily sacrifice." This may be understood, by some, to mean the Jewish rites and ceremonies; and by others, the Pagan rites and sacrifices. As both Jews and Pagans had their rites and sacrifices both morning and evening, and their altars were kept smoking with their victims of beasts, and their holy fire was preserved in their national altars and temples devoted to their several deities or gods, we might be at a loss to know which of these to apply this figurative expression to, did not our text and context explain the meaning. It is very evident, when we carefully examine our text, that it is to be understood as referring to Pagan and Papal rites, for it stands coupled with "the abomination of desolation," and performs the same acts, such as are ascribed to the Papal abomination, "to give both the sanctuary and host to be trodden under foot." See, also, Rev. 11:2, "But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city

shall they tread under foot forty and two months." This last text only has reference to the Papal beast, which was the image of the Pagan; but the text in consideration has reference to both Pagan and Papal. That is, How long shall the Pagan transgression and the Papal transgression tread under foot the sanctuary and host? This must be the true and literal meaning of our text; it could not mean the anti-Christian abomination alone, for they never desolated the Jewish church; neither could it mean Antiochus, the Syrian king; for he and his kingdom were made desolate and destroyed before Christ; and it is evident that Christ had an allusion to this very power, when he told his disciples, Matt 24:15, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place." I believe all commentators agree that Christ meant the Roman power--if so, then Daniel has the same meaning; for this is the very passage to which Christ alluded.³⁵

Miller makes clear that the prophecy of Daniel must extend to the time of Christ and beyond. This being the case, then the 2300 days can't be literal days for they must extend from the time of Daniel beyond the time of Christ. The second vital point here is that the terms daily and transgression of desolation refer exclusively to pagan ceremonies and sacrifices and not the Jewish sacrificial system.

To infer that this passage speaks of an attack on God's sacrificial system by the little horn power suggests that God indeed wanted sacrifices and offerings and Satan through the little horn power was trying to stop them.

The interpretation of the little horn as Antiochus Epiphanes reinforces the notion that God desired sacrifices which fuels the error of a false justice that demands death. It is further evidence of the darkness of men seeking to project their enmity onto God.

³⁵ William Miller, *Miller's Works Vol. 2*, Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ About the Year 1843

ATONEMENT

Miller understood that the term *daily* referred to Paganism and its appeasement system of sacrifices and that the term *transgression of desolation* referred to the papal appeasement system. The manner in which these two powers operated is found in Daniel 8:11 where the daily power is taken away by the transgression of desolation. To explain this process Miller referred to 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

“And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” [2 Thess 2:5-10] Here Paul shows plainly, that there was one abomination then at work, which would hinder the rise of the last abomination, until the first was “taken out of the way.” Then the second would be revealed, whom the Lord would destroy with the brightness of his coming. The question then would be, when was Paganism taken out of the way? I answer, it must have been after the ten horns arose out of what is called the Western empire of Rome, which were to arise up and rule one hour, 1 (a little time) with the beast, pagan: for this little horn was to arise or be “set up” among the ten horns. It could not be until after the year 476 after Christ, when the Western empire fell, and was divided into ten kingdoms. It could not come until “they,” the ten kings, had “polluted the sanctuary of strength,” (meaning Rome)³⁶

Miller concluded that the 2300 days were in fact 2300 years that reached from the time just after Daniel lived until the year 1843. It was at this time that the Sanctuary would be cleansed or restored to its rightful

³⁶ William Miller, *Miller's Works Vol. 1, Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology*

state. He reached this conclusion in 1818, just 25 years before the cleansing of the Sanctuary which he understood to be the earth. He concluded that the cleansing of the Sanctuary was the cleansing of the earth by fire at the coming of Christ.

At its height the Millerite message went to every mission station around the world proclaiming the soon coming of Jesus. Miller had pieced together many elements to reach the date of 1843 which later became 1844 with the correction of the no zero year between B.C. and A.D. epochs.

Our focus on this history relates to Miller's identification of the two desolating powers of pagan and papal Rome that continued to trample God's people from the time of Daniel until just after the time the Pope was taken captive in 1798.

One point that is important to examine in this transition is how the papal power took away the pagan power.

Yea, he [The Little Horn] magnified *himself* even to the prince of the host, [Jesus Christ] and by him the daily *sacrifice* was taken away, [H7311] and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. Daniel 8:11 (KJV)

The word for "taken away" in Hebrew is the word *rum*. In Hebrew this word is actually repeated twice in the text and carries the following meaning:

Strong Concordance [H7311]: to be high actively to rise or raise (in various applications, literally or figuratively): – bring up, exalt (self), extol, give, go up, haughty, heave (up), (be, lift up on, make on, set up on, too) high (-er, one), hold up, levy, lift (-er) up, (be) lofty, (X a-) loud, mount up, offer (up), + presumptuously, (be) promote (-ion), proud, set up, tall (-er), take (away, off, up), breed worms.

What the text is actually saying is that the papal power took up the principles of Paganism while at the same time removing the pagan framework and replacing it with a Christian one. The important point

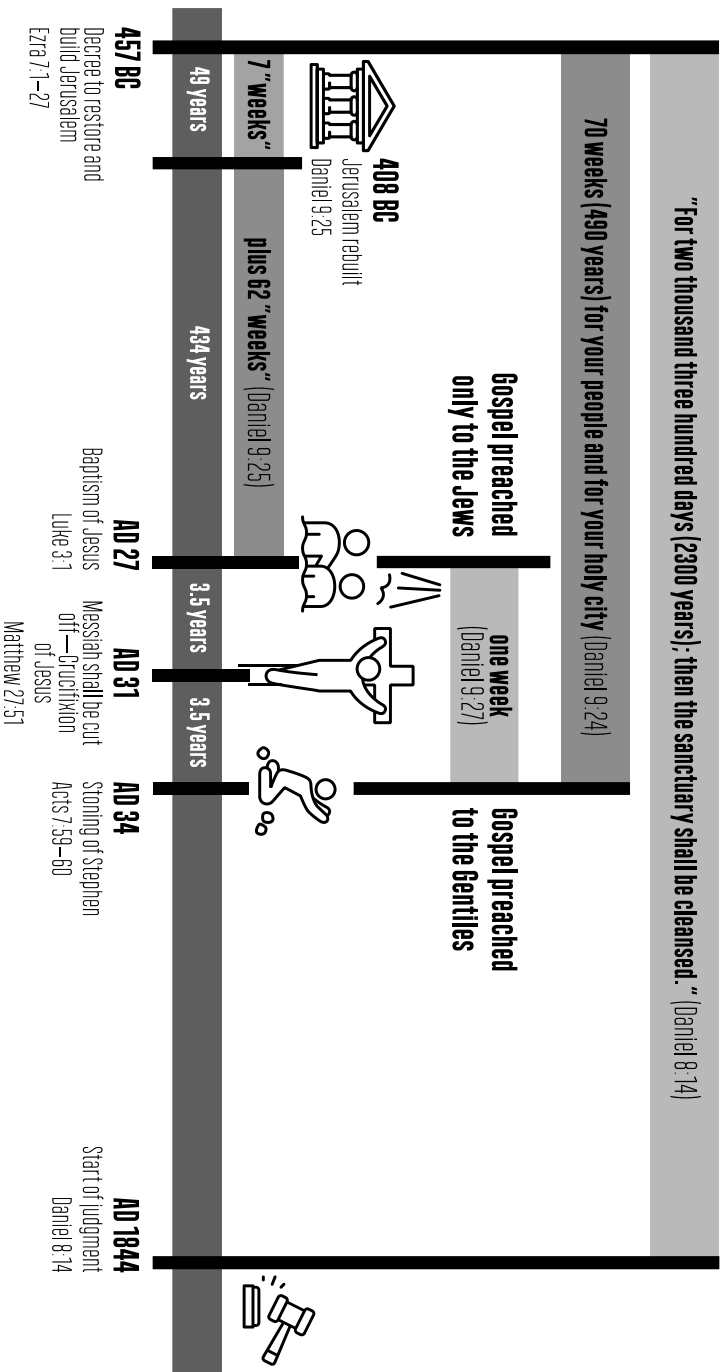
ATONEMENT

here is that the appeasement of the gods in the pagan system was lifted up and transformed into Roman Christianity and continued. Therefore, the two powers, pagan and papal Rome, continue the same principle of appeasement through sacrifices.

What is significant about the close of the 2300-year prophecy connected to Daniel 8:14 is that the Sanctuary is cleansed or restored. This suggests that the principles of appeasement would be cleansed from the Sanctuary. A movement would begin at the close of the 2300 years in 1844 which would discover that the gospel is completely free of the need for appeasement. The removal of the need for appeasement is the key element in bringing atonement between God and man and thus reconciling man back to God.

THE 2300 YEAR PROPHECY

According to Daniel 8:14 and 9:24-27



CHAPTER 17

THE CLEANSING OF THE SANCTUARY

The Millerites suffered a terrible disappointment when Christ did not return on October 22, 1844. As we discussed previously, God leads His people through their incorrect understanding, drawing out their faith into grace much more abounding. Of the more than 50,000 devoted followers of the message of William Miller regarding 1844, only about 50 people had faith to press forward to discover their mistake and enter into a deeper revelation of truth about the meaning of the cleansing of the Sanctuary.

The day after the great disappointment, a man named Hiram Edson decided to go and encourage some of the other believers. As he and his companion were crossing his cornfield, he was suddenly struck with the thought that the Sanctuary cleansed was not the earth, but the Sanctuary in heaven.

Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, **a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.**
Hebrews 8:1-2

William Miller was aware of the heavenly Sanctuary. In a letter to a friend, Joshua Himes, he lists nine options that the Bible gives as the Sanctuary, and gives the following reason for why he felt it could not be the heavenly Sanctuary:

The question now arises, which of these sanctuaries does Daniel mean, or the saint who talked with Daniel, when he said, "Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed?" I answer, not the first, Christ, for he is not impure. **Not the second, heaven, for that is not unclean.**³⁷

A group of Bible students who held fast the 2300-year prophecy went back and studied the subject of the cleansing of the Sanctuary and its meaning. As they studied the ceremonies and types in the Old Testament, they came to see that there was indeed something in heaven that needed cleansing. Uriah Smith, one prominent leader in this group, who later became known as Seventh-day Adventists, gave the following summary of the cleansing of the heavenly Sanctuary:

Does the reader object to the idea of there being anything in heaven which needs to be cleansed? The book of Hebrews plainly affirms the cleansing of both the earthly and the heavenly sanctuary: "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified [Greek, *katharizesthai*, cleansed] with these; but the heavenly things themselves [cleansed] with better sacrifices than these." Heb 9:22-23. In the light of foregoing arguments, this may be paraphrased thus: "It was therefore necessary that the tabernacle erected by Moses, with its sacred vessels, which were patterns of the true sanctuary in heaven, should be cleansed with the blood of calves and goats; but the heavenly things themselves, the sanctuary of the Christian Era, the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man, must be cleansed with better sacrifices, even with the blood of Christ."³⁸

³⁷ William Miller, Letter to Joshua Himes on the Cleansing of the Sanctuary, 1842

³⁸ Uriah Smith, *Daniel and Revelation*, (Review and Herald, 1897), page 195

But what is it that needs cleansing in the heavenly Sanctuary and how does this occur? Uriah Smith explains:

The closing chapters of Exodus give us an account of the construction of the earthly sanctuary, and the arrangement of the service connected therewith. Leviticus opens with an account of the ministration which was there to be performed. All that is our purpose to notice here, is one particular branch of the service, which was performed as follows: The person who had committed sin brought his victim to the door of the tabernacle. Upon the head of this victim he placed his hand for a moment, and, as we may reasonably infer, confessed over him his sin. By this expressive act he signified that he had sinned, and was worthy of death, but that in his stead he consecrated his victim, and transferred his guilt to it. With his own hand (and what must have been his emotions!) he then took the life of his victim on account of that guilt. **The law demanded the life of the transgressor for his disobedience; the life is in the blood (Lev.17:11,14); hence without the shedding of blood, there is no remission; with the shedding of blood, remission is possible; for the demand of life by the law is thus satisfied. The blood of the victim, representative of a forfeited life, and the vehicle of its guilt, was then taken by the priest and ministered before the Lord.**

The sin of the individual was thus, by his confession, by the slaying of the victim, and by the ministry of the priest, transferred from himself to the sanctuary. Victim after victim was thus offered by the people. Day by day the work went forward; and thus the sanctuary continually became the receptacle of the sins of the congregation. But this was not the final disposition of these sins. The accumulated guilt was removed by a special service, which was called the cleansing of the sanctuary. This service, in the type, occupied one day in the year; and the tenth day of the seventh month, on which it was performed, was called the day of atonement. On this day, while all Israel refrained from work and afflicted their souls, the

priest brought two goats, and presented them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.³⁹

Uriah Smith expresses the universal understanding of atonement through the satisfaction of divine justice by the death of a substitute. The pioneer Adventist understanding tells us that the sins of the transgressor were transferred to the Sanctuary and the vehicle that transferred the sin to the Sanctuary was the blood of the victim. As the Seventh-day Adventists continued to study they noted that the transfer of sin not only occurred through blood, but also by the priest eating the roasted flesh of the sin offering in the Holy Place.

The priest entering into the sanctuary to present the blood of the sin-offering before the Lord, was a forcible symbol of Christ who, by His own blood, entered into the heavenly sanctuary, "having obtained eternal redemption for us." By the blood and by the flesh the confessed sins of the sinner were in type transferred to the sanctuary.⁴⁰

It is significant to note that when a priest or the whole congregation offered a sin offering, the blood was sprinkled on the veil between the Holy and Most Holy Place and placed on the horns of the altar of incense. When a ruler or common man offered a sin offering, the blood was placed on the horns of the altar of sacrifice and the priest would eat the flesh of the roasted sin offering in the holy place. (Leviticus 4; 6:26-30; and 10:16-20).

The difference between the blood being placed on the different altars appears to relate to accountability. The knowledge of the priest was superior to that of the common man and had the greater potential to reach beyond a brass understanding into the gold.

³⁹ Ibid, page 196-197

⁴⁰ Stephen Haskell, *The Cross and Its Shadow*, (Review and Herald, 1914), page 125

ATONEMENT

The sins would be transferred to the Sanctuary throughout the year and accumulate in the Sanctuary until the feast of the Day of Atonement when the Sanctuary itself was purged of the sins of the people.

The Seventh-day Adventist pioneers made a connection between the cleansing of the Sanctuary in Daniel 8:14 with the cleansing of God's people mentioned in Leviticus 16 as related to the Day of Atonement celebrated once each year in the Jewish religious calendar.

For on that day shall *the priest* make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that ye may be clean* from all your sins before the LORD. Leviticus 16:30 (KJV)

On the Day of Atonement, a special service was conducted with two goats. A lot was taken to choose the Lord's goat, leaving the other to be known as Azazel or the scapegoat. The Lord's goat was sacrificed as a sin offering.



The High Priest laid both hands on the head of the scapegoat and confessed all the sins of the people over it. The goat was then led away into the wilderness bearing the sins of the people. (Leviticus 16:1-21).

During this time, the people were to confess their sins and afflict their souls. Any person who did not humble themselves before God was cut off from the children of Israel. (Leviticus 23:27-31). This means this day was a day of judgment.

It is for this reason the Jewish understanding of the Day of Atonement, which occurs on the 10th day of the seventh Jewish month, is understood as the day of judgment.

Rosh Hashanah is the Day of Judgment for all of mankind. On this day man is judged for all of his actions, and all that will transpire and occur during the coming year is recorded....

On Rosh Hashanah all of mankind passes before Him like sheep - they pass by Him one by one, one after the other, yet He scrutinizes them all with a single glance. Thus, the verse (Psalms 33:15) states: "He created all of their hearts together and understands all of their actions"; G-d, Who is the Creator, sees all of their hearts together (with a single glance) and understands all of their actions.

R. Cruspedai said in the name of R. Yochanan: Three ledgers are opened on Rosh Hashanah: one for those who are entirely wicked, one for those who are entirely righteous, and one for those who are in the middle. The entirely righteous are immediately inscribed and sealed to live. The entirely wicked are immediately inscribed and sealed to die. The fate of those in the middle is held in balance between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

If they have merit [i.e., if they repent), they are inscribed to live. If they do not have merit [i.e., if they fail to repent), they are inscribed to die (ibid. 16 a,b).⁴¹

The prophetic framework developed by William Miller helped Seventh-day Adventists to identify when in human history the great final judgment would occur of which the Day of Atonement feast each year pointed towards.

The sequence of history described in Daniel 7 contains a list of kingdoms leading up to the Second Coming of Christ. Within this list is described a scene where God is depicted in judgment of the whole earth. Daniel chapter 8 largely parallels Daniel 7, connecting the idea of

⁴¹ https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/4399/jewish/Day-of-Judgment.htm

ATONEMENT

the cleansing of the Sanctuary in Daniel 8 with the judgment scene that occurs in Daniel 7. We can chart the parallel as follows.

Daniel 7	Event	Daniel 8
Lion	Babylon	
Bear	Medo-Persia	Ram
Leopard	Greece	Male Goat
Beast	Rome	Little Horn
Judgement Scene	Judgement	Cleansing of the Sanctuary
Christ's Kingdom	Second Coming	Broken without human hand

When the question was asked in Daniel 8:13 how long shall God's people be oppressed by the appeasement systems of Paganism and Papalism, the answer is, as we have discussed, 2300 symbolic days which is 2300 literal years.

Seventh-day Adventists came to the conclusion that the final period of judgment would commence in 1844 when the Day of Atonement that year was celebrated.

During this time God's people are confessing their sins and repenting as God examines the books of record. Those who have confessed their sins and humbled themselves before God are retained in the Book of Life. Those who do not repent and hold onto their sins will be removed from the Book of Life. Christ intercedes for all those who have confessed His name and pleads His blood on their behalf. When the work of judgment is completed, all the sins of the people are placed

upon the head of the scapegoat who represents Satan. He is the one who caused the fall of man, separated him from God and enticed all men to sin against God.

With this understanding, sin has been dealt with and those who humbled themselves before God receive atonement. There is nothing between them and God anymore and they are ready to enter into Christ's everlasting kingdom.

Now that we have laid out the framework for how the Day of Atonement was understood by both the Jews and Seventh-day Adventists we are almost ready to apply the things we have learned in the first part of this book about the atonement process. But first we need to distinguish between a typical Protestant view of the atonement and the Adventist understanding in light of the Old Testament Sanctuary system.

CHAPTER 18

COMPARISON BETWEEN PROTESTANT AND ADVENTIST ATONEMENT

In chapter 3 we examined how the Christian notion of atonement developed around the idea of satisfaction of divine justice. If God's justice demands punishment, and God's wrath is satisfied in such punishment, then it stands to reason that once the punishment has been applied, the atonement process is completed. Here is one expression of this idea:

In Christianity, atonement refers to the needed reconciliation between sinful mankind and the holy God. **This reconciliation is possible through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ**, as expressed in Romans 3:25, Romans 5:11, and Romans 5:19. atonement is the Bible's central message.

"Receiving the atonement is our actual reconciliation to God in justification, grounded upon Christ's satisfaction," according to Matthew Henry's Commentary. "We Christians, we believers, have

now, now in gospel times, or now in this life, received the atonement, which was typified by the sacrifices under the law, and is an earnest of our happiness in heaven."⁴²

The common Christian idea is that atonement means reconciliation. The article we have quoted above goes further to explain how this occurs:

atonement is a word that's found in some translations in Romans chapter three, verse 25. **God offered up Jesus as a sacrifice of atonement.** Other translations would use the word propitiation, and the idea there is of wrath absorbing substitute. Okay?

Jesus Christ on the cross absorbs the wrath of God. It's a transaction between the father and the son. The father pours out his anger towards sin on Christ, and his wrath is actually satisfied. And because of that, the guilty sinner who trusts in Christ gets to go free. It's somewhat related to justification, but it's the way that justification is actually possible.⁴³

The website we have quoted from is seeking to explain the Christian principle of atonement in simple terms for those unfamiliar. Bible scholars have expressed this in far more nuanced language but the implication is that God is reconciled to man by the substitutionary death of Christ. This satisfies God's anger and justice. The sinner confesses his sin and says he is sorry, but it is the death of Christ that effects the atonement because it is God's justice that is seen as needing reconciliation. He can't just accept our saying sorry; His justice needs satisfaction.

In this context it is evident that once Jesus dies on the Cross, the atonement is completed. There is nothing remaining except to believe it. As long as the sinner clings to Christ, he is shielded from the condemnation of God against sin.

⁴² <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/salvation/what-is-atonement-biblical-meaning-and-definition.html>

⁴³ Ibid

Christians do make reference to the Old Testament sacrificial system as pointing to the death of Christ on the Cross, but there is little consideration given to the sequence of events in the Jewish religious year as holding any meaning beyond the Cross itself.

Seventh-day Adventists argued that the list of feasts given in Leviticus 23 actually provide a step-by-step process from the time of Christ until the Second Coming, symbolising a series of events rather than a single event connected to the atonement. In linking the Day of Atonement to the cleansing of the Sanctuary in 1844, a deeper level of understanding of the atonement was introduced.

The Adventists, in pointing to the types, stated that the atonement was effected through the ministration of the priest *after* the animal was sacrificed, not *at* the moment of sacrifice. Joseph Waggoner, another Adventist leader explains it this way:

It has been seen that the sinner brought his offering; that it was slain; and that the priest took the blood and made the atonement; and here it is further established that the atonement was made in the sanctuary. **This most clearly proves that the killing of the offering did not make the atonement, but was preparatory to it; for the atonement was made in the sanctuary, but the offering was not slain in the sanctuary.**

These things, of course, were typical, and have their fulfillment in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. That he is a High Priest, and the only mediator in the gospel, will be readily admitted; but the order and manner of his service must be determined by the Scriptures.⁴⁴

The Adventist view of the atonement maintained the same view of justice as the rest of Christianity, but pointed to the types in the Old Testament which showed that the sinner did not atone for his sins simply by killing a sacrifice, but rather the priest had to apply the blood

⁴⁴ J.H. Waggoner, *The atonement in the Light of Nature and Revelation*, (Review and Herald, 1884), page 187

of the sacrifice to the Sanctuary and therefore it is through the priest's intercession of the blood of the sacrifice that the atonement is secured. This occurred in the Sanctuary itself and not in the Courtyard.

For mainstream Christianity, the appeasement of God's justice occurs on the Cross, while for Adventists this appeasement takes place, according to the typology of the Old Testament, through the mediation of our High Priest in heaven after the sacrifice was made on the earth. Waggoner continues:

"All agree in the idea of the displeasure of the Deity being appeasable by an innocent victim being sacrificed in the place of the guilty." This must be the correct idea. **The justice or displeasure of the Deity is rendered appeasable by the sacrifice, but is really appeased by the mediation of our High Priest.**⁴⁵

The emphasis of the atonement for Adventism was on the living Christ pleading His blood before the Father in the heavenly Sanctuary above. The death of Christ on the Cross was critical to the work of Jesus pleading His blood before the Father, but the Cross itself was not the completed atonement. There could be no effective ministration in heaven to complete the atonement without the blood of Christ, but without the intercession of Christ in heaven as our High Priest the sacrifice would not be a completed atonement.

The whole framework of the Adventist view of the atonement was based upon the Sanctuary system. The ceremonies of each Jewish year tell the story of the plan of salvation from the Cross to the Coming of Christ at the end of this world.

The subject of the sanctuary was the key which unlocked the mystery of the disappointment of 1844. It opened to view a complete system of truth, connected and harmonious, showing that God's hand had directed the great advent movement and revealing

⁴⁵ Ibid, page195

ATONEMENT

present duty as it brought to light the position and work of His people.⁴⁶

While mainstream Protestants present the Old Testament sacrificial system as all pointing to the Cross, Adventists delved deeper into the types because of the prophetic framework they discovered in Daniel and Revelation connecting the work of judgment on the Day of Atonement to the date October 22, 1844.⁴⁷ It was seen that while the feast of the Passover pointed to the death of Christ on the Cross, the rest of the feasts represented successive events in Christian history from the time of the Cross until the Second Coming.

Feast	Date	Anti-type
1. Passover	14 th day of 1 st month	Cross of Christ
2. Unleavened Bread	15-22 nd day of 1 st month	Christ in the Tomb
3. First Fruits	Day after Sabbath during Unleavened Bread	Resurrection of Christ
4. Feast of Weeks	50 days after First Fruits (during 3 rd month)	Day of Pentecost
5. Trumpets	1 st day of 7 th month	Announcement of the Judgment
6. Day of Atonement	10 th day of 7 th month	Day of Judgment
7. Feast of Tabernacles	15-22 nd day of 7 th month	Second Coming of Christ

⁴⁶ E.G. White, *The Great Controversy*, (Review and Herald, 1911), page 423

⁴⁷ For more on this subject see chapters 15-19 of the book *As You Judge* available at fatheroflove.info

Christianity would indicate that God's way is through the Cross. Adventism would point to Psalms 77:13 and say that God's way of salvation is in the Sanctuary. The Cross is central to the whole plan, but the plan of salvation is a process not simply an event. The culmination of the plan of salvation is the great day of judgment which according to the sequence in Daniel 7 and 8, occurs before the Second Coming of Christ.

Adventist pioneer, Uriah Smith, points out a very critical implication of this Atonement difference between Protestants and Adventists:

In the long retinue of subjects with which the question of the sanctuary stands so intimately connected, and in the understanding of which it exerts so controlling an influence, the doctrine of the atonement occupies a prominent place.

We have already seen that the cleansing of the sanctuary, the investigative Judgment of the saints, the blotting out, or remission, of sin, and the finishing of the mystery of God, are all one and the same thing. We now make the additional statement that this is also the atonement.

The frequency with which the expression is made that Christ atoned for our sins upon the cross, shows how widely the idea is entertained that the shedding of his blood and the atonement are the same thing. But this leads to two ultra and fundamental errors. Men have been driven by this idea to the extremes of error in opposite directions, and have spent their time in an unnecessary and fruitless warfare.

The Scriptures plainly declare that Christ died for all. Now, with the view that the death of Christ is the atonement, **the conclusion is easily reached that the sins of all have been atoned for, and hence that no condemnation can ultimately remain to any. This branch of the argument blossoms at once into Universalism.**

But the Scriptures just as plainly assure us that all will not be saved; that some do now, and will in the end, rest under condemnation. For these, of course, no atonement is made; and if

the atonement and the death of Christ are the same thing, it follows that his death reaches no farther than the atonement, and hence that he did not die for all, but only for a chosen few. On this branch of the argument we find the bitter fruit of ultra Calvinism.

The subject of the sanctuary relieves us from the false claims of both these errors. The trouble in either case lies in the premise common to both, which is defective; and with a false premise, however sound the reasoning based upon it, it is impossible to reach a correct conclusion. **The death of Christ and the atonement are not the same thing. And this relieves the matter of all difficulty.** Christ did not make the atonement when he shed his blood upon the cross. Let this fact be fixed forever in the mind. – Uriah Smith *The Sanctuary and the 2300 Days*, (1877) pages 275,276

The Sanctuary holds vital truths that will save the Bible reader from the errors of Calvinism and conversely Universalism. In an age when Universalism is making a resurgence amongst God’s people, it is important to note that neither the subject of the Sanctuary nor the Atonement is correctly understood when following this path.

We will close out this section by emphasising the great difference between mainstream Christian thought and Adventism. There is only one key objective in Christian thought: that by the slaying of the substitute for man, God’s justice could be satisfied. While this corresponds to the striking of the rock and the slaying of the lamb on the brass altar, it does not address the symbolism of speaking to the rock or the true meaning of the two goats presented on the Day of Atonement.

Through the two foundational principles of:

1. The Prophetic framework of Daniel
2. The Sanctuary system of the Jewish Year,

the plan of salvation becomes a process covering the entire period of Christian history with two main focal points comprising the atonement:

1. The Cross of Christ in A.D. 31 and
2. The Judgment commencing in A.D. 1844

These two focal points have the capacity to not only strike the rock but take the next vital step of speaking to the rock. But as we will discover, because Adventism did not escape from Satan's justice system – a system that demands death – the Adventist concept of atonement only manages to intensify the problem of Satan's false justice and punishment.

This does not suggest the path Adventists have walked is incorrect. On the contrary, the work of God, as we have discussed previously is to cause sin to abound so that we might find true grace. The Adventist doctrine of the judgement, or as they call it, the Investigative Judgment, intensifies the false justice system residing in all of us.⁴⁸ It lays out the correct framework for coming into the glorious light of the true gospel but this movement halted in the way and retreated from its destiny. Adventism gave to the world a legacy of intensified justice without taking the final steps into a New Covenant understanding of the judgment that is freed from condemning justice demanding sacrifice.

Daniel was shown that the appeasement sacrificial system of Paganism and Papalism was to last until 1844. From this time a message would come which would free the gospel from the false notion of God's justice needing appeasement. As we will discuss further, a message did come in the late 1800s that offered to Adventists the key by which they might escape Satan's appeasement system, but the message was rejected and so the church could do nothing but retreat from the intense sense of condemning judgment to the more mainline view of the gospel found in the Protestant churches.

⁴⁸ See the book *As You Judge*, chapter 19. Available at fatheroflove.info

ATONEMENT

But now let us turn to the completion of the original Adventist understanding of how sin is removed from the Sanctuary and blotted out before the Second Coming of Christ.

CHAPTER 19

THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

If you have read up to this point, then you are deep in the heart of the Adventist framework for the plan of salvation. Working through these points does take effort to fit them all together, but I pray you will discern the value in this process.

At the centre of the Adventist doctrine of the atonement was the belief in a literal Sanctuary in heaven.

Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. Hebrews 8:1-2

James White, one of the founders of the Adventist movement, lays out the argument for the heavenly Sanctuary as follows:

Our position is that a change has taken place in the position and work of **our literal High Priest in the literal Sanctuary in heaven**, which is to be compared to the coming of the bridegroom in the marriage. This view is a perfect safeguard against spiritualism. [spiritualism meaning a method of Bible study] **We not only**

believe in a literal Jesus, who is a “Minister of the Sanctuary,” but we also believe that the Sanctuary is literal. – And more, when John says that he saw “one like the Son of man” “in the midst of the seven candlesticks,” that is, in the Holy Place, we know not how to make the candlestick spiritual, and the Son of man literal. We therefore believe that both are literal, and that John saw Jesus while a “Minister” in the Holy Place. John also had a view of another part of the Sanctuary, which view applies to the time of the sounding of the seventh angel.

...The Most Holy, containing the Ark of the ten commandments, was then opened for our Great High Priest to enter to make atonement for the cleansing of the Sanctuary. If we take the liberty to say there is not a literal Ark, containing the ten commandments in heaven, we may go only a step further and deny the literal City, and the literal Son of God. Certainly, Adventists should not choose the spiritual view, rather than the one we have presented. We see no middle ground to be taken.⁴⁹

This was a novel idea within Christian thought. In commenting on Hebrews 8 and the Sanctuary, Adam Clarke expresses the common view.

The tabernacle was the place among the Jews where God, by the symbol of his presence, dwelt. **This could only typify heaven, where God, in his essential glory, dwells,** and is manifest to angels and glorified saints; and hence heaven is called here the true tabernacle, to distinguish it from the type.⁵⁰

But what about the pitching of this tabernacle? What was it that the Lord pitched in heaven? Clarke continues:

The Jewish tabernacle was man’s work, though made by God’s direction; **the heavens, this true tabernacle, the work of God alone, and infinitely more glorious than that of the Jews. The tabernacle was also a type of the human nature of Christ,** John

⁴⁹ James White, *The Parable*, page 16

⁵⁰ Adam Clarke, Commentary on Hebrews 8:2

1:14: And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, και εσκηνωσεν εν ημιν and tabernacled among us; for, as the Divine presence dwelt in the tabernacle, so the fullness of the Godhead, bodily, dwelt in the man Christ Jesus. And this human body was the peculiar work of God, as it came not in the way of natural generation.⁵¹

Clarke indicates that the tabernacle erected by God in Hebrews 8:2 is heaven and perhaps in an effort to present something more specific, he suggests the human nature of Christ as a body temple. For the Adventists to present the idea of a specific building within heaven in which God and His Son operate clashes with standard Christian theology largely on the basis of their creeds and what it says about God Himself. For example, the first article of the Anglican faith states:

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, **without body, parts, or passions**; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.⁵²

A belief in a three-in-one God that has no body renders any literal conception of a real building in heaven in which God moves and acts as futile. Listen to the experience of Carol, who was raised on this creed.

When my God was without body, parts, or passions, I felt like a seagull on a beach shrouded in fog. Somewhere above me, I knew a glorious power ruled the heavens, but it was all mystery and the cold white light of intellect. Above my paygrade but comforting at the same time because he was in charge, and I didn't have to think much about it.⁵³

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² http://anglicansonline.org/basics/thirty-nine_articles.html

⁵³ <https://donnacarolvoss.com/2015/02/08/without-body-parts-passions/>

The feeling of being shrouded in fog is the effect of spiritualism on the doctrine of God. Joseph Bates, another founder of the Adventist movement, colourfully explains the situation:

To my mind this spiritualizing system, when God's word admits of a literal interpretation, and – according to rule – the literal first; is, to use a sailor phrase, like a ship groping her way into Boston Bay in the night, in a thick snow with the moon at full. Nothing could be more deceptive to the mariner; the flying clouds at one moment light up the firmament by the thinness of its vapor, (encouraging the mariner to believe that he shall now see the light house) the next moment it grows darker, and so it continues to deceive them, until of a sudden the breakers are roaring all around them – the ship is dashed upon the rocks – one general cry goes aloft for mercy! and all hope is forever gone – ship and mariners strewn all over the beach! Good God! help us to steer clear of these spiritual interpretations of Thy word, where it is made so clear that the second coming and kingdom of Christ will be as literal and real, as the events that transpired at the first Advent, now recorded in history.⁵⁴

The God of the Adventist pioneers was in stark contrast to the Catholic and Protestant mysterious one. James White lays it out straight, confronting the first article of the Anglican faith:

What is God? He is a material, organized intelligence, possessing both body and parts. He is in the form of man. What is Jesus Christ? He is the Son of God, and is like his Father, being “the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.” He is a material intelligence, with body, parts and passions; possessing immortal flesh and immortal bones.⁵⁵

When James White states God is in the form of man, his meaning is that we are made in God's image not only in our morals, but also in form. I will let him explain the position.

⁵⁴ Joseph Bates, *The Opening of the Heavens*, (Press of Benjamin Lindsey, 1846), page 22

⁵⁵ James White, *Review and Herald*, August 19, 1858

MAN was made in the image of God. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." Gen.i,26,27. See also chap.ix,6; 1Cor.xi,7. **Those who deny the personality of God, say that "image" here does not mean physical form, but moral image,** and they make this the grand starting point to prove the immortality of all men. The argument stands thus: First, man was made in God's moral image. Second, God is an immortal being. Third, therefore all men are immortal. But this mode of reasoning would also prove man omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, and thus clothe mortal man with all the attributes of the deity. Let us try it:

First, man was made in God's moral image.

Second, God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.

Third, therefore, man is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.

That which proves too much, proves nothing to the point, therefore the position that the image of God means his moral image, cannot be sustained. As proof that God is a person, read his own words to Moses: "And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by. And I will take away mine hand and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen." Ex.xxxiii,21-23. See also chap.xxiv,9-11. Here God tells Moses that he shall see his form. To say that God made it appear to Moses that he saw his form, when he has no form, is charging God with adding to falsehood a sort of juggling deception upon his servant Moses.⁵⁶

It should be sufficient from what we have presented that the doctrine of the heavenly Sanctuary as Adventists first expressed it is intimately linked to their views on the doctrine of God. Their denial of the spiritualistic Trinity teaching is what logically allowed them to present

⁵⁶ James White, *The Personality of God*, 1861

the teaching of a literal Sanctuary in heaven. The Catholic and Protestant creeds negate this completely and render such propositions as absurd. The Trinity doctrine spiritualises away the Adventist doctrine of the atonement, thus neutering the meaning of the Old Testament typology as related to the atonement. Again, listen to the logic process of Joseph Bates, based upon his view of God.

And Daniel, the prophet, teaches the same doctrine. "I saw in the night visions: and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, (described in the ninth verse) and they brought him near before him; and there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, never to be destroyed." Dan. 7:13,14. Now we all admit this personage was Jesus Christ; for no being on earth or in heaven, has ever had the promise of an everlasting kingdom but him. **And does not the Ancient of days give it to him? Would it not be absurd to say that he gave it to himself? How then can it be said (or proved) as it is by some, that the Son is the Ancient of days; – this passage, and the one in fifth Revelations, distinctly prove God and his Son to be two persons in heaven.** Jesus says, "I proceeded forth and came from God: neither came I of myself, but he sent me." John 8:42. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world and go to the Father."⁵⁷

It is impossible for a Trinitarian mind to actually believe that the Father is giving a literal kingdom to His Son. It can only be a symbolic gesture for the purposes of the plan of salvation – and this is the desolating genius of the Trinity. It forces the mind into a metaphorical gear and then strips the mind of the realism of the Sanctuary, the Son of Man and the Ancient of Days. These realities are replaced with metaphorical labels that are just hung on a wall for us to admire as if we were in an art gallery.

⁵⁷ Joseph Bates, *Opening of the Heavens*, 1846, page 18

As we will detail later, the Adventist movement ultimately gave up the opportunity to grasp the truth in 1888 and finally changed its view of God back to the Trinity. Consequently, its understanding of the atonement ran aground, as Bates warned would happen. It gave up the literal understanding of the two apartment Sanctuary and therefore was left with no option but to retreat to the standard views of the atonement. Thus, the appeasement theology of Paganism lifted up by Rome and expanded by her Protestant daughters has become the standard teaching of present day Seventh-day Adventists. Like

The appeasement theology of Paganism lifted up by Rome and expanded by her Protestant daughters has become the standard teaching of present day Seventh-day Adventists.

Samson who flirted with Delilah, Adventism's eyes have been gouged out and she presently grinds out corn for the spiritual Philistines.

The doctrine of the atonement as expressed in the typology of the Old Testament can only find traction by being founded upon the doctrine of the One God, the Father and His only begotten Son.⁵⁸

Joseph Waggoner provides some of his systematic reasons for why the Trinity and the doctrine of the atonement can't work together.

Many theologians really think that the atonement, in respect to its dignity and efficacy, rests upon the doctrine of a trinity. But we fail to see any connection between the two. To the contrary, the advocates of that doctrine really fall into the difficulty which they seem anxious to avoid. Their difficulty consists in this: They take the denial of a trinity to be equivalent to a denial of the divinity of Christ. Were that the case, we should cling to the doctrine of a

⁵⁸ For more on this subject see the books *Understanding the Personality of God* by Lynnford Beachy; *The Wisdom of God* and *My Beloved* by Adrian Ebens available at fatheroflove.info

trinity as tenaciously as any can; but it is not the case. They who have read our remarks on the death of the Son of God know that we firmly believe in the divinity of Christ; but we cannot accept the idea of a trinity, as it is held by Trinitarians, without giving up our claim on the dignity of the sacrifice made for our redemption.⁵⁹

Waggoner, addresses a different issue which relates to who or what actually died on the Cross. Waggoner explains:

Trinitarians hold that the term “Christ” comprehends two distinct and separate natures: one that was merely human; the other, the second person in the trinity, who dwelt in the flesh for a brief period, but could not possibly suffer, or die; that the Christ that died was only the human nature in which the divinity had dwelt. Both classes have a human offering, and nothing more. No matter how exalted the pre-existent Son was; no matter how glorious, how powerful, or even eternal; if the manhood only died, the sacrifice was only human. And so far as the vicarious death of Christ is concerned, this is Socinianism. Thus the remark is just, that the doctrine of a trinity degrades the atonement, resting it solely on a human offering as a basis. A few quotations will show the correctness of this assertion:

“As God, he obeyed all the requirements of the law, and made it honorable in the justification of sinners; as man, he bore its curse on the tree, and endured its penalty.” — Manual of atonement, p. 25.

“The sufferings of Christ were endured in his human nature. Though possessing a divine nature, yet in that he could not suffer and die. His sufferings were endured in his human nature.” Id., p. 88.

“It is no part of the doctrine of the atonement that the divine nature, in the person of the Saviour, suffered.” — Barnes on atonement, p. 224.

⁵⁹ J.H. Waggoner, *The atonement*, page 165

“It was meet that the mediator should be man, that he might be capable of suffering death; for, as God, he could not die.”—Buck’s Theol. Dict.,

“Trinitarians do not hold to the sufferings or death of divinity.”—Mattison on the Trinity, p. 39.⁶⁰

Although Waggoner argues within the framework of appeasement, his argument is still valid and shows another of the many problems that the doctrine of the Trinity creates for the atonement. The Bible student is faced with the prospect that only part of Jesus died, which ultimately robs the doctrine of Penal Substitution of its power. This creates confusion causing many to abandon any attempts to understand the atonement.

How does this relate to the subject of the literal Sanctuary in heaven? The entire framework of this Sanctuary system depends upon a belief in a literal Father who brought forth His Son. This establishes the realism of God and His Son both possessing body and parts and therefore can operate in a real Sanctuary made of material elements. Notice what later Adventists, having embraced the Trinity, do to passages such as Daniel 7 that describes God sitting on a throne and presiding over the judgment in the Sanctuary in heaven.

Worthy of note is the fact that this statement makes no comment on whether the members of the Godhead have physical or material bodies. Adventists have been reticent to speculate as to this aspect of God’s nature. Speaking of Him, they emphasize His attributes, such as personality, self-existence, transcendence, immutability, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, holiness, and love. It’s true that in the Bible, God is represented as having ears (Ps. 17:6), nostrils (2 Sam. 22:9), a mouth (Deut. 8:3), a hand (Zech. 2:9), feet (Ps. 18:9). But these are usually considered as being anthropomorphisms, that is, expressions attributing to God human

⁶⁰ Ibid, pages165-166

ATONEMENT

characteristics. They are attempts; it is claimed, to help human beings understand God, who is much above them.⁶¹

If you want to follow Jesus into the Most Holy Place by faith, you will find that the doctrine of the Trinity will ultimately subvert this process if you are intellectually consistent. I can testify to this by virtue of the fact that when I studied at an Adventist theological college, almost no one believed in a literal Sanctuary in heaven, nor adhered to the Adventist doctrine of the atonement as taught by its pioneers.

Let us return to how the original Adventists understood the atonement process, and then we will frame it in the context of what we have presented in the first half of this book.

⁶¹ Don F. Neufeld, *Review and Herald*, October 6, 1977

CHAPTER 20

THE JUDGMENT AND BLOTTING OUT OF SIN

I think the words of J.H. Waggoner are a good place to launch into the Adventist understanding of the judgment and the rationale behind the blotting out of sin before the coming of Christ.

There are no isolated, independent truths in the great plan of salvation, even as there is no special “saving” duty in Christian life. It takes the sum of all the graces to make a perfect Christian character; and so also **it takes all the truths and doctrines of the gospel to make the one complete system of salvation.** The great foundation of the whole is the sacrifice of Christ; the shedding of his blood for the sins of the world. Heb. 9:22. To us belongs reconciliation through his death. Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:20. As the work of the priests under the law only reached its ultimate object when the high priest went into the most holy place with the blood of the sin offering, and cleansed the sanctuary of God from the sins of the people, so **the result of the gospel of remission is fully accomplished, not by the death of the sacrifice; not by our repentance and reconciliation to God; but, by the action of our**

great High Priest, who appears in the presence of God for us, in blotting out our sins and removing them forever from the presence of the throne of the Most High.⁶²

Waggoner makes the critical point that according to the types in the Old Testament, atonement is completed by the actions of our High Priest in heaven. These sins are not simply forgiven but are removed through the mediatorial work of Christ in the heavenly Sanctuary.

We mentioned in an earlier chapter how two goats were selected on the Day of Atonement. One was the Lord's goat and the other the scapegoat. I will defer to Stephen Haskell to explain the process of the Day of Atonement in the ancient Jewish economy. Each step is important, and I am deeply thankful for the work these Adventist pioneers have done in piecing together this material to give us the correct foundation for the understanding of the atonement.

The high priest killed the Lord's goat, and then, clad in his gorgeous robes, with the breastplate of judgment bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel over his heart, and the sacred onyx stones with the names of the tribes on his shoulders, he passed with the blood of the goat into the most holy place. Just as he entered within the second veil, carrying the golden censer filled with coals of fire from the altar [of incense] before the Lord, and his hand full of incense, he placed the incense upon the coals in the censer, that the cloud of fragrant incense might cover him as he passed in before the visible presence of God, as manifested between the cherubim above the mercy-seat. With his fingers he sprinkled the blood upon the mercy-seat above the broken law of God. Then going out into the first apartment, he touched the horns of the golden altar [of incense] with the blood.

When he had "made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar," he went out into the court. In type the high priest now bore in his person all the sins of

⁶² J.H. Waggoner, *The atonement*, page 200

the children of Israel which had been confessed and transferred to the sanctuary. He then laid his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, and confessed "over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat," and the goat was sent away, "by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness." The goat bore upon him all the iniquities unto a land "not inhabited," a "land of separation."

Going back into the tabernacle of the congregation, the high priest laid aside his gorgeous priestly robes, and put on his other garments; then coming again into the court, he cleansed the court from its defilement of sin. The bodies of the animals whose blood had been taken within the sanctuary, were carried out of the camp and burned. When the sun set on the day of atonement, the sins were all gone into the "land of separation," and nothing but ashes remained as a reminder of them.⁶³

Having explained in detail the symbolism of the types, Elder Haskell now presents their meaning in the anti-type fulfilment.

Thus was carried on the type of that heavenly work which is to decide the eternal destiny of every soul that has ever lived upon the earth. In type and shadow the confessed sins of Israel had been transferred to the sanctuary during all the year; the cleansing of the sanctuary was the removing of those sins. "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these [the blood of animals]; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

Every sin is marked before the Lord in heaven. When sins are confessed and forgiven, they are covered. This was typified by their being transferred to the sanctuary, where no human eyes except those of the priest ever beheld the stains of the blood of the sin-offering upon the horns of the golden altar before the veil.

⁶³ Stephen Haskell, *The Cross and Its Shadow*, (Review and Herald, 1914), pages 210-211

ATONEMENT

It could not be possible that the books of heaven will always hold the records of sin, or that Christ will always bear the sins of the world. As the typical work was performed at the close of the year, so the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary will take place near the end of Christ's priestly work. The cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary necessitates an examination of the records – an investigative judgment.⁶⁴

The work of the High Priest in placing his hands upon the head of the scapegoat involves a transfer of sin to the scapegoat. This transfer of sin involves an examination of the heavenly books of record for this transfer to occur. This is a critical component of the Adventist understanding of the atonement; the searching of the records in heaven to retain the names of those who have confessed and forsaken their sins and to blot out the names of those who claim the name of Christ but refused to humble themselves and repent. What evidence do we find for such records in heaven?

And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, **whose names are in the Book of Life.** Philippians 4:3

All who dwell on the earth will worship him, **whose names have not been written in the Book of Life** of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Revelation 13:8

Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard *them*; **so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name.** Malachi 3:16

You number my wanderings; put my tears into Your bottle; **are they not in Your book?** Psalm 56:8

⁶⁴ Ibid, page 212

The Bible speaks of the Book of Life in which the names of those who accept Christ as their Saviour are recorded. There is also a Book of Remembrance where those who worship God have their lives chronicled before God.

As we stated earlier, the cleansing of the Sanctuary in Daniel 8 has its parallel to the work of examining the books of record described in Daniel 7. Here the deeds of men are recorded. A little further on, Haskell describes the judgment found in Daniel 7.

Behold the scene. The Father is seated on the throne of judgment. The angels, who have been “ministering spirits” to those whose cases are to come in review before God, stand ready to obey commands. The books are opened. But there is something lacking yet. Daniel’s attention is now attracted to the “clouds of heaven” – myriads of angels – bearing the Saviour in before the Father in triumph....The time has now come when Christ is to receive His kingdom, and claim His subjects; and the angels love to bear their mighty Commander in triumph before the judgment-seat, where, as the books reveal one life record after another, Christ confesses the name of every overcomer before the Father and before the innumerable company of angels.⁶⁵

Elder Haskell now explains the work of intercession by Jesus our High Priest, pleading the merits of His blood before the Father on behalf of those who have confessed His name and repented of their sins.

The earthly high priest presented blood to atone for the sins of the people; our High Priest pleads His own blood. “Father, My blood, My blood, My blood.” The earthly high priest carried the censer with the fragrant incense; Christ presents the fragrant righteousness of His own character, which He imputes to every one whose sins are all confessed and covered with His blood when their names come up in review before the great Judge.

⁶⁵ Ibid, page 213

ATONEMENT

In the earthly sanctuary the high priest paused in the first apartment to touch the horns of the golden altar and cleanse it from all sins that had been transferred to it; (Lev. 16:18,19) for while the services of the Day of Atonement were going forward, if one remembered unconfessed sins, he could still bring his sin-offering and be forgiven. (Num. 29:7-11). So while our High Priest officiates before the Father in the investigative judgment, anyone who realizes he is a sinner can come confessing his sins and be forgiven through the merits of Christ, the great Sin-bearer.

Our High Priest, when His work is finished in the inner apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, will tarry a moment in the outer apartment, that the sins which have been confessed while He was in the most holy place may be taken, together with the sins of the righteous of all ages, and carried forth without the sanctuary.

While Jesus pleads as our High Priest, there is hope for every repentant sinner; but when He at last comes forth from the sanctuary, mercy's door will be forever closed. There will be no intercessor then. (Isa. 59:16). In the type, when the high priest came out of the sanctuary, he had "made an end of reconciling." When our High Priest comes forth from the sanctuary, He will proclaim, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." (Rev. 22:11). Every case is decided for eternity. Probation is forever ended. All who wait until that time, hoping to be saved, will find no one to plead their case before the Father; they will be eternally lost.⁶⁶

In following the typology of the Day of Atonement in combination with other Scriptures, the Adventist Bible students noted with great importance that the work of Jesus as an intercessor will end before Christ comes again to this earth. This means that God's people will have ceased to sin before the coming of Christ. They are resting fully in the

⁶⁶ Ibid, pages 214-216

grace of Christ and Christ has been given full control of the lives of the saved who are alive on the earth.

The Bible teaching that the intercession of Jesus on behalf of men can lead them to perfection of character before the coming of Christ is the pivotal issue dividing the ministry of Christ in the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. Within the Holy Place, those asking for forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ have no thought of receiving from Him a perfect character before the coming of Christ.

Those living before the time of the judgment in 1844 believed that Christ covered their sins and they would be perfected at the coming of Christ. This access to heaven through the ministry of Christ in the Holy Place was entirely legitimate. But when Christ entered the Most Holy Place, the nature of His work was to perfect their character.

There are four key issues considered here.

1. Daniel 7 presents a judgment scene in heaven before the coming of Christ.
2. This judgment scene is where the scenes of the Day of Atonement take place in heaven through the work of Christ our High Priest.
3. The Judgment scene takes place in the Most Holy Place of the Sanctuary in heaven and means that Christ's work has changed from the time of October 1844 onwards.
4. All of God's people are to humble themselves and repent of their sins while the books of record are examined. Their faith takes hold of Jesus in such a way that they believe Christ will give them complete victory over their sins.

Building upon the teachings of the Adventist pioneers we now conclude that the hidden enmity in their hearts would have to be fully exposed, confessed and healed by the ministry of Christ. The focus of this judgment is not God's wrath but man's sinfulness and the need for character transformation into the likeness of Christ. The Catholic and

Protestant churches strongly reject the idea that people can overcome sin completely in their lives. This is because the emphasis is not on transformation of the sinner but on the covering and protecting of the sinner from God's wrath. The sinner seeks to improve with Christ's help but there is no urgent motivation to confront every detail of the sinner's life because it doesn't matter. The emphasis is that all things were completed at the Cross and there is nothing to do except believe. It is

The Protestant teaching of Penal Substitution with a completed atonement at the Cross does not give man the opportunity to confront the hidden enmity in his heart.

true that there is the fear of burning in hell if you don't confess Christ but once you accept Christ all urgency is subdued.

The Protestant teaching of Penal Substitution with a completed atonement at the Cross does not give man the opportunity to confront the hidden enmity in his heart. It ensures that the deep-rooted hatred in his heart can

never truly be healed and removed. Penal Substitution does open the door for man to begin to believe that a God who demands death as justice for sin, can forgive him. It is the striking of the rock and it is the beginning of the journey in the Sanctuary but it cannot give men an entrance into the Most Holy Place where Christ can teach him to speak to the rock and have all his sins healed before the end of his life.

It is the Adventist doctrine of the Investigative Judgment and the work of Christ in the Most Holy Place to perfect the characters of His people before returning to the earth that gives to man the opportunity to finally confront the hidden enmity that resides in his soul against God. This hostility as we have stated previously is manifested in the projection of false justice onto God. It is a justice that demands death and therefore must be appeased.

This entrenched resentment must be removed before atonement can be effected. The Christian view of the atonement does not have the power to unmask the hidden deep-seated mistrust in man. As we will

discover, only the Adventist doctrine of the atonement has power to confront our true human condition. The subject of the judgment before Christ comes is vital to help us truly examine ourselves to see the extent of our problem.

As we have already indicated previously, due to the fact that the Adventist system of teaching did not escape the false justice system that demands appeasement, it cannot truly heal the enmity that exists within us. It is not God who is angry with man, needing to be pacified through the blood of Christ. It is man who needs to become aware of condemning judgment that exists in himself. Adam condemned the Son of God in enmity and then projected it onto God as one whose justice demanded death. This lie must be surrendered in order for the atonement to be complete. We must give up the lie that God condemns and kills people before we can be truly free of this enmity.

The Adventist doctrine of the judgment and blotting out of sins provides a vehicle for this to take place. While the Adventist pioneers laid the foundational framework for the need for sacrifice and oblation to cease in the thinking of man, another message needed to come to God's people in order for them to be prepared to stand before God without the urgent need for Jesus to plead "My Blood, My Blood" as a means of appeasing the justice of the Father protecting the sinner from being slain in the presence of God.

Just as Abraham and the Canaanite woman operated under a cloud of misunderstanding, so Seventh-day Adventists, in receiving the light of the judgment, continued to labour under the misunderstanding of God's character as one whose justice must be appeased. The faith of Abraham and the Canaanite woman brought them through their misunderstanding to victory. Will the faith of Adventists also be victorious?

Adventists preached the law until it became as dry as the hills of Gilboa. The thought of the need to overcome sin placed alongside the idea that God will judge, condemn and destroy those who fail to gain the victory increased their burdens dramatically.

Adventists saw themselves as the church of Philadelphia called through the doorway of the Sanctuary into the Most Holy Place.

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, "These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, **He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.**"
Revelation 3:7

For them, the door into the Holy Place, which represented an endless ministry of forgiveness without the need to overcome was ended. A new door was opened inviting them into the Most Holy Place to receive the seal of God.

The problem for them was they tried to enter the Most Holy Place with a wrong perception of justice that demanded appeasement. The effect of this was to turn the faithful Philadelphians into the apathetic Laodiceans.

I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, "I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing" — and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked — I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. Revelation 3:15-18

The Adventist movement had become rich in understanding so many things about the gospel, prophecy, the Sanctuary and many other things but without a correct view of the character of God, they could not be healed of their wretched, poor and naked condition. They were blind to their true state. Rather than repent, they chose to glory in all the wonderful things they had learned and settled into a self confidence that would prove deadly.

Like the Israelites that escaped Egypt, they had escaped the Babylon of false teaching in the other churches. Also, like Israel, they promised the

Lord to keep all His ways; but as they did not discern their true condition, they ultimately failed to enter the promised land and entered a wilderness in their Christian experience.

God desired to bring them through this wrong understanding of His character and the judgment. God wanted his church to finally, after thousands of years to come into the promise of true peace and rest.

God sent a message to His people through two men, E.J. Waggoner and A.T. Jones to begin to correct this misunderstanding. Their message came in the year 1888 and was preached within Adventist churches for the next 7 plus years. This message, which centred on the understanding of the Old and New Covenants, was rejected. Thus, it is the covenants that we must investigate next, placing their true understanding in relation to the atonement.

CHAPTER 21

BREAKING THE YOKE OF COVENANT DUALISM

Reading the Old Testament convinces most that God can be severe, forceful and deadly through His determination to maintain order. When we read the story of the flood or Sodom and Gomorrah, it seems obvious that the justice of God will destroy the breakers of His law. This reinforces the conclusion that sacrifices and offerings were required to pacify the wrath of God against sin. The animal sacrifices pointed towards the death of Christ, who satisfies divine justice and makes everything good again.

The life of Christ on earth appears to be completely different to how God appears in the Old Testament. Many attempts have been made to reconcile the contrast between the two accounts. In chapter 5 we looked at the life of Christ as the complete revelation of the character of God and the amazing prayer Jesus prayed indicating that the work His Father commissioned Him to do was completed the night before His crucifixion. This must cause us to question the foundational framework of Christianity and the meaning of the Cross.

One of the central features of the yoke that Christianity has laid upon its shoulders, to prevent the truth of the character of God being fully revealed, is found in the subject of the two covenants.

Christians teach that the Old Covenant was an agreement between God and the children of Israel. Its essence was a covenant of law. God expected them to keep the law and while God could be gracious and patient, He would not hesitate to punish and kill unrepentant souls who broke His law. When Jesus came, the New Covenant was introduced and sinners were now under grace and not under law. The New Covenant is said to replace or supersede the Old Covenant. This forever separates the Old and New Covenant.

The Cross then is seen as a great time divider. It separates the religion of Israel from Christianity because the Jewish religion is said to be focused on law but Christianity on grace. It also divides the Bible into two classes of relevance. The New Testament speaks of reality while the Old Testament speaks largely in shadows.

This time-divided covenant system was championed by the famous Roman Catholic theologian, Augustine, and carried right through into the Protestant churches. It was then inherited by the Adventist movement and assumed as true, as there was no other lens to understand the covenants.

In that testament [covenant], however, which is properly called the Old, and was given on Mount Sinai, **only earthly happiness is expressly promised.** Accordingly that land, into which the nation, after being led through the wilderness, was conducted, is called the land of promise, wherein peace and royal power, and the gaining of victories over enemies, and an abundance of children and of fruits of the ground, and gifts of a similar kind are the promises of the Old Testament [covenant]. And **these, indeed, are figures of the spiritual blessings which appertain to the New Testament [covenant]**;⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Philip Schaff, "Augustine, Anti Pelagian Writings," Nicene and Post Nicene Father Series 1, Vol 5

ATONEMENT

Augustine argues that what was promised to the Jews only pertained to this life. It only serves as a limited example of what blessings are available in the New Covenant.

This foundation was built upon by much of Protestantism. While they did make efforts to break this yoke, all failed to break free. Here is a quote from a Baptist confession of faith:

The two classes of covenants, resolved into two covenants; their nature, and contrast; **old covenant fulfilled, and superseded by the new**; preparation of the Gentile world for Messiah's coming; nature and excellence of the gospel.⁶⁸

This understanding of the covenants is another example of the enmity in man against God.

Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. Romans 8:7

It destroys the work of the law as a schoolmaster to bring him to Christ. (Galatians 3:24). It rips up the foundations of the truths that were given to Moses and nails them to a Roman cross.

Paul speaks of the two covenants as the two experiences Abraham passes through with the two marriages he contracted with Sarah and Hagar.

For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, **which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants**: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar. Galatians 4:22-24

Abraham married Sarah first. The lack of faith in Abraham was revealed and expanded in his marriage to Hagar. The experience Abraham had with Hagar humbled him and brought him to the feet of His Saviour.

⁶⁸ <https://founders.org/covenants/the-covenants-chapter-viii/>

The trauma of having to send away his son, Ishmael, tortured him and showed him the futility of trying to fulfil God's promises through his own efforts.

Therefore the work of the Old Covenant is part of the plan of salvation. Paul calls it glorious.⁶⁹

...who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. But if the ministry of death, [Old Covenant] written *and* engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which *glory* was passing away, how will the ministry of the Spirit [New Covenant] not be more glorious? For if the ministry of condemnation *had* glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. 2 Corinthians 3:6-9

It is true that Christ revealed the truth about God in such a way that it divided the history of the world, but everything that Christ revealed is found in seed form in the Old Testament. Christ always referred to the Old Testament as His authority for what He said.

In this light, the two covenants represent two experiences within the Christian life of each person. They are not two periods of time before and after the Cross. Abraham, Moses and David were justified by faith just as Christians are today. Christ said that Abraham saw His day and rejoiced to see it. (John 8:56). Paul says that the gospel was preached to Abraham. (Galatians 3:8).

This truth concerning the covenants was the foundation of the message given to two young ministers named E.J. Waggoner and A.T. Jones. In speaking to this question, Waggoner wrote in 1888:

Justification by faith is something that each individual must experience for himself. Thousands who lived at Christ's first advent knew nothing of this experience, while thousands who lived long

⁶⁹ For more on this see the booklet *Faith Journey* available at fatheroflove.info

before He came, were actually brought to Christ for pardon, and they received it. Abel was counted righteous through faith; Noah was heir of the righteousness which is by faith; and Abraham actually saw Christ's day, and rejoiced in it, although he died 2,000 years before the first advent. **And this most positively proves that the apostle, in the third chapter of Galatians, is speaking of individual experience, and not of dispensational changes.** There can be no Christian experience, no faith, no justification, no righteousness, that is not an individual matter. People are saved as individuals, and not as nations.⁷⁰

The covenant system used by Christians that divides around the Cross creates a type of dualism through which people read the Scripture. Dualism denotes polar, binary opposition such as we see in the conflict between good and evil. The Old Testament era of law and the New Testament era of grace present God as oppositional in His character. It makes God seem inconsistent, two-faced. Before the Cross God operates mostly through the law. After the Cross He operates mostly through grace. This aligns with the eastern Yin/Yang principle where a white dot is contained within the black half of the circle and a black dot is contained within the white half of the circle.

We might contrast these two views of the covenants as follows:

1. DISPENSATIONS OF TIME



Old Covenant before the cross, New Covenant after Israel saved by law and Christians by grace. Symbolic forgiveness in the Old Testament. Real forgiveness after the cross.

⁷⁰ E.J. Waggoner, *The Gospel in Galatians*, (1888), page 33

2. TWO EXPERIENCES



Old Covenant brings to New Covenant. All pass from Old Covenant to New Covenant.

Old Covenant reveals sin; New Covenant gives grace.

Once this framework is accepted, the mind is fragmented in its reading of the Bible. It accepts opposites as normal. Take for instance this verse:

For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. John 1:17 (KJV)

Using the covenant framework of Augustine, the law refers to the period before the Cross and “grace and truth” refers to after the Cross. The law and Christ are separated in this verse through the wrong framework. Now let’s read it in another Bible version without the supplied word *but*.

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. John 1:17 (NIV)

The word *for* can also be translated as *because*. It is because the law came through Moses that grace and truth come by Jesus Christ. The law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. This process was the same in the days of Abraham as it is today; in all periods of history the law shows us our sinfulness that we would recognise our need for a Saviour. Your understanding of the covenants dramatically affects how you read Scripture. Consider another text. See how the translators add an extra word to make it fit the opposing covenant system.

For the law made nothing perfect, *but* the bringing in of a better hope *did*; by the which we draw nigh unto God. Hebrews 7:19 (KJV)

The law is contrasted with the better hope. The law makes nothing perfect at all. It is the better hope that does this. But this interpretation does not reflect the truth that it is the law that brings you to the better hope. As David in the Psalms states:

The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple. Psalm 19:7

How you understand these texts depends on what covenant system you are using. When the two covenants become the experience of each person, both law and grace work together. They are not in opposition to each other but work together.

Coming back to the character of God. When you use the typical covenant system, the death and destruction attributed to God in the Old Testament can seem to sit harmoniously with the light and mercy of God through Jesus in the New Testament. For instance, how do we harmonise these two statements; one from Joshua in the Old Testament and one from Jesus in the New.

And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, **Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.** And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. Joshua 10:24-26 (KJV)

And suddenly, one of those *who were* with Jesus stretched out *his* hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?" Matthew 26:51-53

What Joshua says is directly opposite to what Jesus says. We can harmonise this by saying that Joshua lived under a system of law, the Old Covenant system. Jesus was in the New Covenant. This is how you can make opposites fit together and never question further as to why they are opposite.

When we use the correct covenant system as taught by Waggoner and Jones, we can begin to see that God is allowing the natural enmity in Joshua and Israel to abound. This is for the purpose to cause grace to much more abound. This will bring a consistency of understanding to the character of God through the whole Bible. The other system encourages the mind to think in opposites.

Dualism was first seen implicitly in Egyptian Religious beliefs by the contrast of the Gods Seth (disorder, death) and Osiris (order, life). The first explicit conception of dualism came from the Ancient Persian Religion of Zoroastrianism around the mid-fifth century B.C. Zoroastrianism is a monotheistic religion that believes that Ahura Mazda is the eternal creator of all good things. Any violations of Ahura Mazda's order arise from druj, which is everything uncreated. From this comes a significant choice for humans to make. Either they fully participate in human life for Ahura Mazda or they do not and give druj power. Personal dualism is even more distinct in the beliefs of later religions.⁷¹

The Egyptian religion developed dualism to unify a god of life with a god of death. The two-covenant dispensational system of Christianity allows the God of the Bible to be both a God of life/grace and a God of death/law at the same time.

This covenant dualism is a natural progression of the dualism manifested in the Trinity. The Son of God is presented as the same as the Father and yet in the process of being begotten of the Father. The oneness of the Son with Father gives Him the same attributes as the Father who is unbegotten. At the same time the Son of God is begotten of the Father and

⁷¹ <https://slife.org/dualism/>

yet is in an endless process of being begotten. These ideas do not naturally harmonise unless you frame them within dualism.

The message of Waggoner and Jones broke the yoke of dualism that was subtly laid into the Scriptures through the early “church fathers” who were heavily influenced by Greek philosophical ideas.

If the two covenants operate consistently throughout human history, then it must be the case that when Jesus says He is the resurrection and the life, that this principle is consistent throughout Scripture. When God is said to be a God of the living and not of the dead then this must be consistent through all of Scripture. (Matthew 22:32).

Therefore, the truth about the covenants brought by Waggoner and Jones was a critical step in unmasking this dualism framed around Scripture by the Catholic and Protestant world that facilitated thinking in opposites and accepting contradictions.

Adam was the one who judged our Father in heaven as a God of death. This enmity in his heart was enabled to remain concealed through the covenant dualism teachings by Catholics and Protestants.

In restoring the covenants to their correct understanding, light could flood upon the Scriptures to prove the following true:

“For I *am* the LORD, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.” Malachi 3:6

Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever. Hebrews 13:8

Christ told us that He had manifested fully the character of His Father on earth to the disciples that followed Him.

I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. John 17:6

As E.J. Waggoner began to apply a consistent view of Scripture through a corrected covenant framework, he began to see things like this:

“But,” someone will say, “You have made the reconciliation all on the part of men; I have always been taught that the death of Christ reconciled God to man; that Christ died to satisfy God’s justice, and to appease Him.” Well, we have left the matter of reconciliation just where the Scriptures have put it; and while they have much to say about the necessity for man to be reconciled to God, they never once hint of such a thing as the necessity for God to be reconciled to man. **To intimate the necessity for such a thing is to bring a grave charge against the character of God. The idea has come into the Christian Church from the Papacy, which in turn brought it from Paganism, in which the only idea of God was of a being whose wrath must be appeased by a sacrifice.**⁷²

Waggoner identifies the heart of the issue. To suggest that Christ died to satisfy God’s justice is to bring a grave charge against the character of God. This idea came from the Papacy which got it from Paganism. These are the two powers named in Daniel 8 as the daily and the transgression of desolation. It is through this appeasement system that God’s people are suppressed by these two desolating powers. Waggoner unmasked it in 1893. The following year he went further:

The idea of a propitiation or sacrifice is that there is wrath to be appeased. But take particular notice that it is we who require the sacrifice, and not God. He provides the sacrifice. The idea that God’s wrath has to be propitiated in order that we may have forgiveness finds no warrant in the Bible. It is the height of absurdity to say that God is so angry with men that He will not forgive them unless something is provided to appease His wrath,

To suggest that Christ died to satisfy God’s justice is to bring a grave charge against the character of God. This idea came from the Papacy which got it from Paganism.

⁷² E.J. Waggoner, *Present Truth UK*, September 21, 1893, page 386.7

and that therefore He Himself offers the gift to Himself, by which He is appeased...

The Christian idea of propitiation is that set forth above. The heathen idea, which is too often held by professed Christians, is that men must provide a sacrifice to appease the wrath of their god. All heathen worship is simply a bribe to their gods to be favourable to them. If they thought that their gods were very angry with them, they would provide a greater sacrifice, and so human sacrifices were offered in extreme cases. They thought, as the worshipers of Siva in India do to-day, that their god was gratified by the sight of blood. The persecution that was carried on in so-called Christian countries in times past and is to some extent even now, is but the outcropping of this heathen idea of propitiation. **Ecclesiastical leaders imagine that salvation is by works and that men by works can atone for sin, and so they offer the one whom they think rebellious as a sacrifice to their god** not to the true God, because He is not pleased with such sacrifices.⁷³

These are such profound statements in a Christian context. This would provide the necessary tools to finally understand the atonement.

Waggoner challenged Luther, Calvin and all the Protestants in these statements. The Sanctuary could now truly begin to be cleansed of the enmity of man, concealed for millennia and the atonement could finally begin to take place.

Let us stop to summarise these points of how the cleansing of the Sanctuary can take place.

1. Adam wrongly believed God intended to kill his wife for eating the fruit of the tree.
2. Adam judged and condemned God in his heart and took the fruit in rebellion. What he thought God wanted to do to his wife, he desired to do to God and His Son.

⁷³ E.J. Waggoner, *Present Truth UK*, August 30, 1894, page 550

3. Cain revealed this enmity, when he killed Abel his brother as a manifestation of the enmity he felt towards God.
4. The sacrificial system given to show man the animosity that was inside him was twisted by men to be something men did to appease God's wrath against them. The enmity of men against God was projected onto God as the one who had animosity against them.
5. Many pagan nations developed systems of sacrificing animals or people to appease their gods, perverting the original design of the sacrifices in Eden.
6. The appeasement principles of sacrifice came into the Christian church through the teaching that God demanded the death of His Son to satisfy His wrath and justice.
7. The Christian teaching of the atonement taught that God's justice was vindicated in the death of His Son.
8. Seventh-day Adventists introduced the teaching of the Investigative Judgment before the Second Coming of Christ. The two vital ingredients underpinning this was the prophetic sequence of kingdoms in Daniel combined with the Sanctuary system of the Old Testament.
9. The Adventist system shifted the focus of the atonement to the work of Christ the High Priest in heaven and the need for the removal of sin in man before the coming of Christ.
10. The Investigative Judgment intensified the condemning judgment of man. It caused sin to abound but it did not bring super abounding grace.
11. The 1888 message of Waggoner and Jones broke the dualistic covenant system of Christianity and restored the unity of Scripture.

ATONEMENT

12. This allowed them to unmask the appeasement system of sacrifices and therefore began to transform the entire meaning of the atonement.

It is to this transformation of the atonement that we turn next.

CHAPTER 22

COMING TO MANHOOD — THE CROSS A PRESENT THING

Now I say *that* the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Galatians 4:1-7

Paul speaks of the Christian life in the context of a child that has the feeling of a slave in his father’s home. He doesn’t know the father’s heart and thus life with him feels harsh and over regulated. A transformation

takes place when he grows up and comes to know his father and what he is really like. He comes to see things in a completely different way.

The messages given to Waggoner and Jones offered the opportunity for the Christian church to finally come to manhood; to understand the heart of the Father without the false perception of appeasement.

Christianity has looked upon the Cross of Christ in the same manner as Israel looked upon the brass serpent on the pole. As we observed in chapter 7, God's command to Moses to make an image of the thing that was biting and killing them was in accordance with pagan ideas of atonement. The idea that God's justice is satisfied in the death of His Son is just as pagan as the raising of the brass serpent; it provides satisfaction to human perceptions of justice.

Our natural understanding of God's justice causes us to subconsciously see God's action as a slave master who is severe, harsh and where needed, punishing. Under the elements of the world, we interpret the actions of the Father as One who forcefully crushes transgression.

The Father has patiently and agonisingly waited for His children to begin to truly comprehend Him. He knew that human beliefs about appeasement would continue and expand from the time of Daniel in 600 B.C. right down to the 19th century. The two desolating powers described in Daniel 8 would run their course before a window could open for a small segment of the human race, before the light could penetrate fully into human hearts and minds.

Would Seventh-day Adventists have the faith to speak to the rock or would they, like Moses, strike it twice in anger, spoiling the chance for the people to see a new and living way to approach the Father?

As Waggoner and Jones continued to search the Scriptures unhindered by the veil of the Augustinian covenant system, precious truth spilled from their voices and pens.

In writing upon the subject of the Cross, Waggoner penetrated the New Covenant reality that had been hidden for millennia. Previously it only appeared for brief segments of time as flickers of light in a dark world.

“Who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified?” Jesus was set forth before the Galatians, when Paul preached to them, as openly crucified before their eyes. So vivid was the presentation, that they could actually see Christ crucified. It was not skillful word-painting on the part of Paul, nor imagination on the part of the Galatians, for then it would have been only deception. No; it was an actual fact; Christ was there, crucified, before their eyes, and Paul by the Spirit enabled them to see Him.

We know that it was not Paul’s skill in making beautiful word pictures that enabled them to fancy that they saw the crucifixion, for elsewhere Paul says that he determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and that he purposely and carefully refrained from using the wisdom of words, for fear that he should make the cross of Christ without effect. 1Cor.1:17,18; 2:1-4. The experience of the Galatians in this matter was not peculiar to them. **The cross of Christ is a present thing. The expression, “Come to the cross,” is not an empty form of words, but an invitation that can be literally complied with. Christ is crucified before us, and each blade of grass, each leaf in the forest, reveals the fact. Yea, we have the testimony in our own bodies, in that, although sinful and corruptible, we yet live. Not until one has seen Christ crucified before his eyes, and can see the cross of Christ at every turn, does one know the reality of the Gospel.**⁷⁴

Such an astounding thought. How could this be possible? Christ suffering and in agony every day?

“The Cross is a present thing!” Furthermore, that until we realise that, we don’t “know the reality of the Gospel!” This is a challenge to all Christianity. Waggoner’s words strike the mind like a burst of light, dispelling childish notions of atonement and burning up the entire framework of Penal Substitution in a moment.

⁷⁴ E.J. Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, (Pacific Press, 1900), pages 99-100

The demand for punishment found in Penal Substitution presents the Cross as a one-off event in the stream of human history. It has taken away cognisance of the agony of the Father and Son in carrying our sinfulness through the entire history of our race.⁷⁵ But much more than this, it presents God as the one seeking vengeance for wrongdoing. Waggoner opens up a completely new reality. The scene of the Roman soldiers beating Christ, spitting in his face, belting the crown of thorns into His head are not the events of a single day but of millennia. What Christ revealed in the flesh was actually a window into what Christ experienced in the Spirit everyday as men crucify to themselves afresh the Son of God. (Hebrews 6:6).

Waggoner strides into Christian adulthood; he begins to comprehend the heart of the Father and the Son and their agony as parents in dealing with their hard-hearted, self-deceived children.

The prodigal son who took his father's inheritance had no thought or comprehension of his father's pain while he was gone. Remaining at home, the father knelt in tears at his bedside pleading to God for his son to be kept safe and to return to his bosom. The son had never grasped his father's love while in his father's house. He acted as a slave and remained in the outer Court of brass; having ears but not hearing, having eyes but not seeing.

From the moment Adam judged and condemned His heavenly Father in the garden, the agony pierced the heart of both the Father and the Son. All parents taste this who are rejected by their children. Adam had no comprehension of the self-denial required on the part of God to continue to carry him and give him breath. The Son of God was slain or pierced from the foundation of the world by Adam's hidden enmity. (Revelation 13:8).

As we stated earlier in the book, Christ never spoke of the Cross as an instrument of satisfaction to the Father's justice. He only spoke about it

⁷⁵ For more on this see the book *Cross Examined and Cross Encountered* available at fatheroflove.info

as a present continuous self-denial in the face of human ingratitude and selfishness. This contrast is vital to understand the atonement.

Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.”
Matthew 16:24

This is the true Cross and this is what God and His Son do every day:

But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have *your* cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.”

Christ never spoke of the Cross as an instrument of satisfaction to the Father's justice. He only spoke about it as a present continuous self-denial in the face of human ingratitude and selfishness.

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. Matthew 5:39-45

The apostle Paul spoke of the Cross as a present reality in which the disciple enters into the crucifying experience of self-denial with his master.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
Galatians 2:20

ATONEMENT

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.
2 Corinthians 4:7-10

Can you grasp the implications? The Cross experience is enduring the rage and contempt of man without reacting back in kind. It is the giving of love in return for hate; it is allowing yourself to be misunderstood without trying to expose others for their lies and deceptions. This is what Jesus is suffering every day. When we do as Christ does, it speaks to the heart of those who persecute us, and as we shall explore more later, it causes atonement to take place in the hearts of those who hate us.

Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:19-21 (NIV)

On the brass altar (representing man's perception) of the outer Court is presented the sacrifice, representing the Cross, making satisfaction for divine justice. But once we are in the Most Holy Place it is recognised as the agony of Christ in bearing the rebellion and hatred of His wicked children; it is the dawning into the child's mind of what the Father is actually suffering due to his wickedness. Then and only then can the Son of God cause our desire for sacrifice and oblation to cease and comprehend with all the angels that God never desired sacrifice for sin.

Seeing the Cross as a present thing rather than seeing it as a once off event helps to explain why Jesus prayed that He had completed the work given Him by the Father *before* He died on the physical Cross. The agony He suffered in Gethsemane was His greatest test, where His

blood was shed or sweated out in the superhuman battle in His mind whether to save humanity or let them face their own consequences.

Our Father condescended to make atonement through a brass/darkened way which we would understand in order to lead us to the place where we would finally know Him, realise our misunderstanding of Him, and then be reconciled and the atonement completed.

The New Covenant Cross is infinitely more attractive than the Old Covenant one, yet both are necessary. It is not one or the other.

In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old. Isaiah 63:9

The Saviour's suffering dawns into the soul in a deeper way. Gethsemane's agony becomes a door into 6000 plus years of sorrowful self-denial. The immensity of the love of God embraces you and it becomes absolutely impossible to resist once you open that door.

At the foot of this Cross, the lost sinner thinks not of himself but of his Father. The sinner groans in agony for the suffering he has caused. Broken and undone, he weeps for his selfish insensitivity to His Father's feelings. The stony heart begins to crumble and the promise of a new heart beckons the sinner forward. In the very place where his sin now abounds, grace, abounding grace draws him into the bosom of love.

As one drawn into this experience, George Fifiield, a colleague of A.T. Jones penned these beautiful words.

The word "atonement" means at-one-ment. Sin had brought misery, and misery had brought a misunderstanding of God's character. Thus men had come to hate God instead of loving him; and hating him, the one Father, men also hated man, their brother. Thus, instead of the one family and the one Father, men were separated from God and from each other, and held apart by hatred and selfishness. There must be an atonement.

ATONEMENT

An atonement can be made only by God's so revealing his love, in spite of sin and sorrow, that men's hearts will be touched to tenderness; and they, being delivered from Satan's delusions, may see how fully and terribly they have misunderstood the divine One, and so have done despite to the Spirit of his grace. Thus they may be led, as returning brethren, to come back to the Father's house in blissful unity.

The atonement is not to appease God's wrath, so that men dare come to him, but it is to reveal his love, so that they will come to him. It was not Christ reconciling God unto the world, but God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. It is nowhere said that God needed to be reconciled unto us; he says, "I have not forsaken you, but you have forsaken me." ⁷⁶

The true nature of the atonement in the New Covenant is not a legal matter but an issue of the heart, for the wise man says:

Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life. Proverbs 4:23

Fifield writes of the atonement as revealing God's love to such an extent that it touches men's hearts and draws them to Himself. He states it is not about appeasing God's wrath but learning about His character and discovering it was our wrath that had to be appeased.

I would reframe what Fifield said in this way. It is in the Old Covenant gaze upon the Cross that justice demands to be satisfied. The New Covenant desires the reuniting of two hearts in love and harmony. For this to occur, the misunderstanding that men have had about the character of God must be removed, otherwise atonement cannot take place.

The Old Covenant Cross appeases our wrath and allows us to forgive God for the hardships we have encountered in life. The New Covenant Cross grants us access to the sacred chamber of the heart of God and

⁷⁶ George Fifield, *God is Love*, (1897), page 48

allows us to count the cost of us sinning against Him, within a place of safety, without condemnation.

The fearful picture of the judge in Daniel 7 who scrutinises our every thought and action is transformed into a picture of the Sanctuary that no longer demands blood, allowing the Sanctuary to be cleansed in Daniel 8.

This is a very narrow path. The law of the New Covenant is spiritual. (Romans 7:14). It is a matter of the heart not a legal code written in stone. Will you choose to come into the Most Holy Place? You must give up your dark notions of the Father as one who seeks appeasement through blood. You must accept that this false idea was projected onto God by Adam and all his descendants and it must be given up. There is no other way to enter the Most Holy Place and stand there without a mediator for sin.

CHAPTER 23

THE MEANING OF BLOOD IN THE SANCTUARY

In removing the Old Covenant veil, the glory of the Old Testament is revealed. This glory is shown to us through the character of Christ.

Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech—unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. But their minds were blinded. **For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.** 2 Corinthians 3:12-14

The shedding of blood is no longer understood to be satisfying the wrath of God, but is in reality an expression of the wrath of man.

...and say, “If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.” Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ *guilt*. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets,

wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. Matthew 23:30-36

The blood of Jesus was not shed by penitent sinners but by men who were filled with rage against Him. The Jewish leaders stated a deep truth when they said:

...“We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.” John 19:7

Just like Cain who was seeking relief from the troubling appeals of Abel, so the Jewish leaders wanted Jesus silenced so their dominion of the people would no longer be disturbed. The law they referred to was the law of Moses. They believed that Jesus was a blasphemer and therefore according to their interpretation of that law, He should die.

The High Priest, Caiaphas used the penal atonement principle to show how the death of Christ would save the nation.

“If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.” And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, nor do you consider that **it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.**” John 11:48-50

Jesus was not offered up by men who realised that their hearts were evil, he was slain by jealous hateful men who desired to take His place. How utterly perverse it is to reframe the murder of Jesus as something that God’s justice demanded. Such ideas mask our hidden enmity against God. Yet, amazingly God met us where we were in our hateful worldview and opened a door into our minds where we could believe in the forgiveness of God.

ATONEMENT

The shedding of blood is our law, as Caiaphas expressed it: "We have a law." This is the real meaning of the words:

And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. Hebrews 9:22

We assume in reading this verse that God is the one who desires blood. But this is simply the enmity of human hearts projecting onto God their own darkened thinking. God places these things in the law to reveal our deep-rooted prejudice, but He never desired them.

Let the reality of this hold onto our minds: The shedding of blood is the manifestation of the sinfulness of man against God. Wherever it is present, the flawed thinking of man is manifested. In man's brass, Old Covenant thinking, the blood cleanses, but in the heart of God it defiles everything.

Regardless of this fact, God accepts our sacrifice. He endures our polluted brass-serpent thinking that He might convince us of His redeeming love. Thus, it is completely true:

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:13

We are the ones who were far off in our wrath. But to our understanding the blood of Christ brings us near to God. God was not far off from us; we were far off from Him. He was not brought near to us by the blood of Christ, but we were brought near to Him in our childish comprehension. Praise be to God who endures with us and carries us in our blindness. Christ had to be lifted up like a serpent before we could embrace God's forgiveness.

In this context we see that blood in the Sanctuary is the manifestation of our wrath against God. God commanded the rituals of the Sanctuary service to be done in such a way as to meet our demands for blood to be shed for forgiveness to become effective. This is the sin that pollutes the Sanctuary. The sprinkling of blood on the veil and the altar within the Sanctuary pollutes it with the sin of appeasement theology.

Our carnal human perspective is that it cleanses, but for God it pollutes because His thoughts are not our thoughts and our ways are not His ways. His love for us causes Him to carry the Cross through our false understanding in the hope that we will be cleansed of the need for blood, so that we will no longer require a mediator of blood.

As we follow the typology of the sin offering in the Old Testament, it makes perfect sense that the common man and even rulers in the community would have the blood of their sacrifices placed on the horns of the altar of sacrifice in the Courtyard, and the blood poured out at the base of the altar of sacrifice. This represents the comprehension of the common people at the brass level of

This represents the comprehension of the common people at the brass level of appeasement, believing that God's justice demands death.

appeasement, believing that God's justice demands death. Man's understanding of the atonement, in this lesser state of maturity in his walk with God, does not reach into the Sanctuary itself.

If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally by doing *something against* any of the commandments of the LORD *in anything* which ought not to be done, and is guilty, or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, then he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed. And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering. **Then the priest shall take *some* of its blood with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour all the remaining blood at the base of the altar.** Leviticus 4:27-30

This is the equivalent of striking the rock to bring forth the living water. It fulfills the law of man, reflected in the mirror of the Old Testament types, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission.

ATONEMENT

The leadership of God's people, who are to listen to Christ's voice in the Word of God and follow Him into the Most Holy Place, should teach the people to speak to the rock. But we see in the typology that when the priest sins, the blood is brought into the Most Holy Place and the priest, in effect, cries with Abraham: "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!" Like Moses they strike the rock and bring blood into the Most Holy Place, rather than come into the presence of God through the gentle begotten Son and speak to Him.

If the anointed priest sins, bringing guilt on the people, then let him offer to the LORD for his sin which he has sinned a young bull without blemish as a sin offering. He shall bring the bull to the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD, lay his hand on the bull's head, and kill the bull before the LORD. Then the anointed priest shall take some of the bull's blood and bring it to the tabernacle of meeting. **The priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil of the sanctuary. And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD,** which is in the tabernacle of meeting; and he shall pour the remaining blood of the bull at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Leviticus 4:3-7

God knows the end from the beginning. He knew that shortly after the close of the 2300 years which were dominated by pagan appeasement and the transgression of desolation, the leaders of God's people would bring blood into the Most Holy Place and shut their ears to the glorious message given by Jones and Waggoner.

Like the Jewish leaders, the Adventist leaders determined to stand by their landmarks and not move an inch from their appeasement system of the atonement. In anger they struck the rock twice. Once in the person of E.J. Waggoner and twice in the person of A.T. Jones. They refused to open the way for God's people to live in the sight of God without a mediator of blood. As one of the witnesses to these events wrote:

Christ has registered all the hard, proud, sneering speeches spoken against his servants as against himself.⁷⁷

Men professing godliness have despised Christ in the person of His messengers. Like the Jews, they reject God's message. The Jews asked regarding Christ, "Who is this? Is not this Joseph's son?" He was not the Christ that the Jews looked for. So today the agencies that God sends are not what men have looked for.⁷⁸

The blood sprinkled in the Sanctuary on the Day of Atonement is a symbol of the rejection of the truth by God's leaders who shut down the ability of His people from receiving it. Within one generation, the message was almost universally rejected.

Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. Leviticus 16:15

In the Old Covenant appeasement system, the slaying of this goat represents man's understanding of atonement through blood. In the New Covenant system of the heart, this represents the rejection of the truth by God's people and their shedding of the blood of Christ and piercing Him through their refusal to enter in, confessing themselves as the ones who have polluted the Sanctuary with blood.

In the laying of the hands and casting their blame upon the live goat, so man reveals his nature to blame someone else for their sins. "The devil made me do it" is the cry of the human race. In the Old Covenant system, atonement takes place when blame is laid at the feet of the one considered to be in error; just as the leaders of the Adventist movement laid the blame for division upon the shoulders of Jones and Waggoner. These men were scapegoated for the calamities coming on the church.

⁷⁷ E.G. White, *Review and Herald*, May 27, 1890, par. 5

⁷⁸ E.G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, (*Review and Herald*, 1897), page 472

It is certainly true that Satan will feel the guilt of his role in the sins of all men. He will wander in the deserts of a broken and destroyed earth for 1000 years, but the converted man no longer seeks retribution on him nor brings a railing accusation against him; he simply allows his Saviour to speak to him saying "The Lord rebuke you." (Jude 1:9).

Only when the desire for retribution and punishment is removed from the soul can the full Spirit of God reside in the heart. Our Father does not seek retribution, nor does He cast blame on others. As God's children we are called into this character experience.

Although the leaders of the Adventist church struck the rock twice and therefore perished in the wilderness of appeasement theology, God will still bring into the Most Holy Place a group who accept the message given by Jones and Waggoner between 1888 and 1895. They will discern the sin that abounded in the judgment message given by the Adventist pioneers. They will realise this picture of judgment with the sprinkling of blood was a reflection of their own image and not God's way.

As we search the Sanctuary, we are given this injunction:

Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. **But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles.** And they will tread the holy city underfoot *for* forty-two months." Revelation 11:1-2

Revelation chapter 10 describes the experience of God's people in eating the words of the little book that had been sealed previously and was now open. The message of William Miller that came in the 1830s was sweet in the mouth, but the experience of the disappointment was bitter in the belly. At this time the power of the little horn was to be broken. The need for appeasing sacrifices in worship was to be exposed. What was the command in Revelation 11 that would allow God's people to cleanse the Sanctuary? "Leave out the court." What was in the Court? The altar of sacrifice which represented the sacrificial system. Why was

this to be left out? Because it represented Satan's system of justice of which humanity was convinced needed to be paid for salvation.

Having convinced us through the striking of the rock, we are to go on to the Most Holy in the light of the character that Christ revealed on earth. We are to leave the altar of sacrifice behind. We are to cease to demand death for transgression. We are to cease to condemn and judge others. When the Spirit of God brings us into this experience, we can then take hold of this verse.

He saw that *there was* no man, and wondered that *there was* no intercessor; therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; and His own righteousness, it sustained Him. For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak. Isaiah 59:16-17

The work of the atonement is to bring God's people to the place where there is no more need for pleading blood in the context of appeasement. That work might have been completed in the Court, but the same appeasement theology came into the Most Holy Place. Christ's intercession there allowed the 1888 message to rise. The completion of this work is to leave out the Court and the need for blood. When blood ceases to come into the Sanctuary, then it can be cleansed.

How does blood cease to come into the Sanctuary? When we cease our feelings of enmity against all people, proving that our enmity against God has ceased. Then there will be no man in the Sanctuary as an intercessor. Then Michael will stand up (Daniel 12:1), because when God's people fully reflect His character, the world will desire to kill them. Instead, Christ will stand up and save them. Hallelujah.

CHAPTER 24

THE PUNISHMENT OF US ALL

As the Protestant reformation was gaining momentum, Martin Luther was asked by his patron, the elector John Frederick of Saxony, to write a list of articles of faith which came to be known as the *Smalcald Articles*.

In these articles, Luther summarised what he believed to be the most important teachings of Christianity. The very first article states:

The first and chief article is this: Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins and was raised again for our justification (Romans 3:24–25). He alone is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29), **and God has laid on Him the iniquity of us all (Isaiah 53:6)**. All have sinned and are justified freely, without their own works and merits, by His grace (Ephesians 2:8-9), through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood (Romans 3:23–28). This is necessary to believe. This cannot be otherwise acquired or grasped by any work, law, or merit. Therefore, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us...

Nothing of this article can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth and everything else falls (Mark 13:31).⁷⁹

Isaiah 53 plays a central role in the Christian understanding of the atonement. God is said to lay upon Christ “the iniquity of us all” and that “it pleased the Lord to bruise him.” What exactly does this mean? Adam Clarke expresses the common understanding:

These fiery rays, which should have fallen on all mankind, diverged from Divine justice to the east, west, north, and south, were deflected from them, and converged in him. So the Lord hath caused to meet in him the punishment due to the iniquities of all.⁸⁰

Albert Barnes concurred:

Yahweh caused them to rush upon him, so as to overwhelm him in calamity, as one is overcome or overwhelmed in battle. The sense is, that he was not overcome by his own sins, but that he encountered ours, as if they had been made to rush to meet him and to prostrate him. That is, he suffered in our stead; and whatever he was called to endure was in consequence of the fact that he had taken the place of sinners; and having taken their place, he met or encountered the sufferings which were the proper expressions of God’s displeasure, and sunk under the mighty burden of the world’s atonement.⁸¹

These expressions of the atonement, as we have stated repeatedly, fulfil our human understanding of the matter. It fulfils the erroneous belief that God was angry with us and wanted to kill us for our transgression.

If we stand in the Most Holy Place, leaving out the altar of sacrifice as we are admonished in Revelation 11:2, we can begin to see a very different picture. Firstly, we find this clue in the same chapter of Isaiah:

⁷⁹ Martin Luther, *The Smalcald Articles*

⁸⁰ Adam Clarke, Commentary on Isaiah 53:6

⁸¹ Albert Barnes, Commentary on Isaiah 53:6

ATONEMENT

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. Isaiah 53:4

The prophet predicts that while Jesus bore with our rejection of Him and carried us, even while we sinned against Him, we would consider this as though it was God who was rejecting and afflicting Him. Commentators are quick to suggest that this refers to those who crucified Him at the time while believing God was punishing Him for His own sins.

It is true the Jewish leaders wished this to be the case and chose to see it this way, but is there a deeper layer in this statement? Standing in the Most Holy Place, could it be that Isaiah is actually saying all of humanity would project their rejection of the Son of God onto the Father and say that it is God who did the afflicting in our place?

If we look closer at the text of Isaiah 53:6 we notice something interesting in the literal reading:

All of us like sheep have wandered, each to his own way we have turned, and Jehovah hath caused to meet on him, the punishment of us all. Isaiah 53:6 (YLT)

The question in reading this text is who desires to do the punishing? Is it God who punished His Son, or is it actually saying that God allowed our hidden feelings of enmity to manifest on His Son so that we could all see our desires for punishment revealed? In other words, does the punishment of us all mean God's punishment of us all, or does it mean all of our punishment of Him (and all those who we think deserve punishment) meeting on Christ?

Consider the previous verse that most translations express as "He was wounded *for* our transgressions." The word *for* suggests that God is wounding Him because of transgressions. But the Hebrew just as easily could be translated *by*. Doesn't that make perfect sense? Christ is wounded *by* our sins. It actually hurts Him when we sin. He is crucified afresh when we choose to ignore Him and welcome Satan into our lives through our sinful choices. Consider some other translations of this text.

But he was **wounded on account of our sins, and was bruised because of our iniquities**: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; *and* by his bruises we were healed. Isaiah 53:5 (Brenton LXX translation)

In our blindness and our natural enmity, we naturally read these texts as God's anger against us. This hides the reality that we are hurting Him, and instead puts the emphasis on God's supposed anger.

Many, if not all people know the feeling of when they have wronged another person and the fury they experience in response. It causes us to forget the wrong we have done, focusing instead on their excessive reaction. This is what the human race is doing to God in its understanding of the Cross.

So, Adam eats an apple that he should not and then God becomes so mad that He wants to kill him. Now we might picture God as storming around with hands raised and yelling how angry He is at Adam for breaking the rules. That would be one way to shift the blame, but what about the calm, cool and calculated response without any display of emotion that quietly utters the words "I will find you and I will kill you." Whatever works to convincingly fit our preconceptions of God, to shift the blame onto God and make him look psychotic. Have not many people had the thought: "All this pain and suffering, Jesus tortured and maimed, all because God needed someone to punish and die — isn't it excessive and irrational? What kind of a God would do that?" This allows us to repress our guilt and avoid acknowledging how our selfish lives have hurt God.

Kill Adam for eating an apple? What kind of a God would do that? Regardless of what we imagine, the endgame is to shift the blame onto God through imagining Him to display an excessive reaction.

How we understand Isaiah 53 defines how we understand what happened in the garden of Gethsemane.

Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." Matthew 26:38

Why was the soul of Jesus exceeding sorrowful? Was it because the Father's wrath was now coming down upon Him? Or was it the full impact of human rejection that He was experiencing from those present, representing all of humanity's reaction to Him? Spurgeon lays out the case before us as he perceives it:

What is it then, think you, that so peculiarly marks off Gethsemane and the griefs thereof? We believe that now the Father put him to

Why was the soul of Jesus exceeding sorrowful? Was it because the Father's wrath was now coming down upon Him? Or was it the full impact of human rejection.

grief for us. **It was now that our Lord had to take a certain cup from the Father's hand. Not from the Jews, not from the traitor Judas, not from the sleeping disciples, not from the devil came the trial now,** but it was a cup filled by one whom he knew to be his Father, but who nevertheless he understood to have appointed him a very bitter

potion, a cup not to be drunk by his body and to spend its gall upon his flesh, but a cup which specially amazed his soul and troubled his inmost heart. He shrunk from it, and therefore be ye sure that it was a draught more dreadful than physical pain, since from that he did not shrink; it was a potion more dreadful than reproach, from that he had not turned aside; more dreadful than Satanic temptation,—that he had overcome: it was something inconceivably terrible, amazingly full of dread, which came from the Father's hand. This removes all doubt as to what it was, for we read "It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." "The Lord hath made to meet on him the iniquity of us all." He hath made him to be sin for us though he knew no sin. This, then, is that which caused the Saviour such extraordinary depression. He was now about to "taste death for every man," to bear the curse which was due to

THE PUNISHMENT OF US ALL

sinner, because he stood in the sinner's place and must suffer in the sinner's stead. Here is the secret of those agonies...⁸²

Spurgeon presents the cup to Christ full of the Father's fury against sin. It is the perfect mask to hide the reality of our natural human hatred against God and His Son. How is it that God made His Son's soul an offering for sin? The Bible tells us clearly:

He who did not spare His own Son, but **delivered Him up** for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?
Romans 8:32

When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But **this is your hour**, and the power of darkness. Luke 22:53

God delivered Christ over to us. Jesus told them, "This is your hour and the power of darkness." The love of God that had sustained Christ seemed to vanish. The Father appears to abandon Him? Did God abandon His Son or more directly did He first inflict His fury upon Him and then leave Him to die? How do we make sense of this? Where did this sorrow come from?

Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill *Him*. Matthew 26:3-4

The leaders of the nation were planning to kill Him. He knew this, and He felt the pain of this rejection by those especially chosen to shine the light of truth to the world.

He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. John 1:11

Maybe the disciples who chose to follow Him would understand the kingdom He came to establish? Shortly before Gethsemane, we read the sad reality:

"But behold, the hand of My betrayer *is* with Me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that

⁸² Charles Spurgeon, *The Agony in Gethsemane*, October 18, 1874

ATONEMENT

man by whom He is betrayed!" Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing. Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. Luke 22:21-24

When Jesus warns them that one of them will betray Him, the disciples are shocked and wonder who it could be. This turns into a debate as to which of them is the greatest disciple. Had they heard nothing that Jesus had taught them? How distressing this was for Jesus. After all the time He has taught them, they still did not grasp the basic principle of His kingdom of love.

As they left the place where they had eaten, Jesus tries to warn them of what they were about to do:

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble." Matthew 26:30-33

Peter rejects the appeal of Jesus. It is further proof that Peter still trusts himself more than Christ. He was merely the spokesperson for all humanity. What was the sorrow that Jesus carried? It is no mystery:

He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, *our* faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Isaiah 53:3

The sorrow comes directly out of the rejection He is facing from men. It is because we hid our faces from Him that He was pierced with sorrow. If you allow yourself to walk with Waggoner into Christian manhood, then you will see that this rejection occurs for Christ every day.

In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old. Isaiah 63:9

It has been all the days of this world that Christ has borne and carried us. While we reject him in our sinful thoughts and actions, He carries us, protects us, intercedes for us and weeps for us. When you can have the courage to leave out the altar of brass, you will see a Cross so bright, so blazingly full of love, that your heart will be touched to the point of being reconciled to God that you might receive the atonement.

In the collective rejection of Christ, in that moment of realisation that there was no one on the planet that wanted Him, He experienced in His heart the reality that:

There is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God.
Roman 3:11 (NIV)

The leaders of Israel later express the universal sentiment, revealing the all-pervading enmity of man against God:

He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, "I am the Son of God." Matthew 27:43 (NIV)

These words are in reality the projection of the thoughts of the human race onto God. The collective sovereign will of the sons and daughters of Adam speak with one voice.

... "Take him away! Take him away! Crucify him!" "Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked. "We have no king but Caesar," the chief priests answered. John 19:15

The heavenly Father does not protest. He allows us to project this onto Him. How? In His silence. The only pulse Jesus can feel is the collective human pulse of rejection. The voice of humanity, aided by Satan and his angels, drowned out the voice of God. God allowed us to sit on His throne to judge and condemn His Son.

Why did He let us do this? That our offense might abound.

These *things* you have done, and I kept silent; you thought that I was altogether like you; *but* I will rebuke you, and set *them* in order before your eyes. Psalm 50:21

ATONEMENT

This is how God delivered up His Son. He allowed us to drown out His voice. He did not retaliate. He did not speak but let us have our way. Let us read it again:

All of us like sheep have wandered, each to his own way we have turned, and Jehovah hath caused to meet on him, the punishment of us all. Isaiah 53:6 (YLT)

Because we turned to our own way, refused to sympathise with Him, and rejected His pleas for us to forgive our enemies and let go of our need to punish, the silence of God caused our designated punishment to meet on His Son.

In the blackness of the night, as Jesus tried desperately to pierce the rejection we had placed on Him, He thought that if only He could know His disciples were praying for Him; if He could know this, then the spell of despair that was upon Him might be broken.

He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You *will*." Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak." Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done." And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. Matthew 26:39-43

After each time He prayed to His Father for a sign of His acceptance, He went to His disciples to see some form of evidence that someone cared about Him. He found them asleep. This pierced Him to the very depths. Satan whispered in His ear that all His work was in vain and that no one cared for Him. He knew that the sleeping disciples, unaided by prayer, would flee from Him as they did. (Matthew 26:56).

The great sorrow of Jesus was not because of this false idea that God's fury was coming down upon Him. This sorrow comes directly out of

our rejection of Him. He was wounded by this transgression. It was the human race that killed the Son of God, not His beloved Father. It was Adam that condemned God, not God who condemned Adam. But we would never know the true effect of our sin until we saw it manifested in the death of Christ.

God delivered up His Son to our wrath that we might see the enmity that resides within and the condemnation that we unwittingly feel towards God.

Standing at the brass altar in the Court, we see God assume the character of a judge. He appears divested of His tender qualities of a Father and appears through the dark clouds as an avenging king. In this mindset of insecurity and terror towards our Father in heaven, the shedding of the blood of Christ convinces us that forgiveness is assured. In this assurance we are invited to walk with Jesus into the Most Holy, where we are offered the opportunity to learn what truly happened and who demanded death.

The majority of the world will refuse the invitation because narrow is the way and few are those who will want to find it.

We do need to ask the question though: What did Jesus mean when He said "Not my will, but thine be done."? The collective rejection of mankind weighed upon Him so heavily that He felt shut out from His Father. The corporate sin of humanity is to believe that Christ was smitten of God and afflicted. Jesus was tempted to believe what everyone else believed about Him. Their rejection of Him stemming from the belief that God was punishing Him caused Him to struggle as to whether this might be the truth.

He began to battle with the incorrect idea that God was indeed punishing Him just as Abraham battled with the incorrect idea that God wanted Him to sacrifice his son. Satan pressed this lie upon Him. Everything around Jesus seemed to confirm what He was feeling. But just as the faith of Abraham prevailed in believing that God could raise his son, so Jesus prevailed in believing that His Father would not ultimately forsake Him but raise Him from the dead. Jesus shattered the

ATONEMENT

darkness when He prayed "Father, into your hands I commit My spirit." (Luke 23:46).

The faith of Jesus overcomes all of our false ideas about the character of God. He was tempted to believe God had abandoned Him, which is what sin causes every man to believe when times get tough, but His perfect faith did not surrender to this lie. He held onto His Father and the Father was with His Son there in the darkness.

He made darkness His secret place; His canopy around Him *was* dark waters *and* thick clouds of the skies. Psalm 18:11

Where did this darkness come from?

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. John 1:4-5

For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. Isaiah 60:2

But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

...to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God,... Acts 26:18

The darkness around the Cross was the visible manifestation of the unbelief of mankind inspired by Satan. Darkness originated from the power of Satan. This power he exercises over the human race, and through humanity Satan tried to place his darkness between God and His Son.

The glory of God's love in giving His Son was hidden in this darkness by our wicked unbelief. As Moses was told by the people to put a veil over his face, so the world veiled the Cross in darkness to hide the light of God's love.

God's face was obscured by *our* darkness. It caused Jesus to feel His Father had left Him when He had not. God did not prevent this darkness from revealing itself because until this darkness manifested, we could not truly have a clue as to the enmity that exists within us.

There were however two people that gave Jesus a glimmer of hope to help Him through the coming tomb: the woman who washed His feet and the thief on the cross. Jesus immortalised the work of the woman who washed his feet by telling His disciples that when the gospel is preached, this story must be told with it. (Matthew 26:13).

When Jesus hung upon the Cross, listening to the people mocking Him and even His disciples expressing doubt as to whether this was the Messiah, the faith of the thief burst forth with the words: "Lord, remember me when you come in your kingdom." What a blessing this was to Jesus, what a comfort to have someone express faith in Him in His darkest hour.

When all the pieces are brought together, we discover that although God allows Himself to appear to pour wrath upon His Son in the Court and lay our sins upon Jesus as our substitute, the truth is that this actually is our enmity seeking to hide itself from the awful truth that we desired to kill God's Son. We are the ones who projected this wrath onto God and claimed that He was smitten of God. We claimed that God laid the iniquity on Him, but the truth is that God allowed our desire for punishment to meet on Him and this is how God made His Son an offering for our sin. He delivered Him up to our wrath that we might in our darkened minds embrace forgiveness.

How deep the Father's love for us, how vast beyond all measure that He would give up His only Son to convince us we are His treasure, as well as to show us that we are the ones who wanted death. When we realise we are the ones that demand death as the punishment of sin and that this is not God's character, then the darkness will vanish and the atonement can be completed.

Our dear Father never wanted sacrifice for sin, He had to give us what we wanted in order to satisfy our ideas of justice. There was no other

ATONEMENT

way to save us from our utter stupidity and wickedness. But thank God He does not condemn us. Thank God, He still loves us; and thank you Jesus for going through all of that horror for us.

CHAPTER 25

BACK INTO THE WILDERNESS

We will now return to the story of the Advent movement and their response to the message given to Waggoner and Jones.

To set things in context, I will summarise briefly what we have discussed historically in relation to men's perception of the Cross and how the atonement has been understood.

The sacrificial system given to Adam to show him the enmity that existed in his heart towards God was perverted over time. The condemnation that men felt towards God was projected onto their belief about God. They falsely imagined that God was angry with them and demanded sacrifices to be appeased. Even the true followers of God were influenced by these ideas, though they saw a symbol of the coming Messiah in the sacrifices.

God's people were influenced by the nations around them with regard to the meaning of the sacrifices. When they were taken captive by Babylon in the 6th century B.C., they became more heavily influenced by the idea of appeasement through sacrifice.

After Christ came to the earth and gave His life for us, the Christian Church lifted up the pagan idea of appeasement. It carried away the

ATONEMENT

external pagan system and destroyed her sanctuary of worship, but she retained the principle of appeasement through the sacrifice of Christ.

We have detailed the thoughts of the Christian world in regard to the atonement and the satisfaction of God's wrath through the sacrifice of Christ. The view of the Cross presented satisfies the human understanding of atonement and opens to mankind the door of forgiveness. But it does not get to the heart of the enmity residing in men against God.

The rise of the Adventist movement in the 1840s combined the prophecies of Daniel with the Sanctuary system of the Jews to present a message of final judgment and atonement. It shifted the work of the atonement from the death of Christ to the ministry of Christ in heaven as our High Priest. It removed the fog of spiritualism to reveal a literal Sanctuary in heaven and a work of judgment for the removal of sin from those who confess the name of Jesus.

This message had the power to confront the enmity that existed in man. It was a step forward from the altar of sacrifice towards the Most Holy Place in heaven. What the message of the early Adventists did not provide was an unmasking of the appeasement system of sacrifice. It continued to present God as one who demands the punishment of death for sin.

Although the Adventist pioneers gave us the key for entry into the Most Holy Place, they did not provide the key for the atonement in it. Their message correctly causes the sin of humanity to abound in revealing our condemning, judgmental natures, but it could not provide the remedy for this problem.

God sent a most precious message to elders Waggoner and Jones. Through the new and correct understanding of the covenants, it gave to men the key to unlock the true understanding of righteousness by faith. This is why the history of this message is so important to the subject of the atonement.

The keynote of their message involves seeing the Cross as a present thing. It pulls back the curtain for us to see the sufferings of God and His Son and the true meaning of their self-denying sacrifice. Their daily bearing of the suffering of the world has such a compelling power to draw the soul into harmony with God.

With this context now established, let us now return to the sad story of the rejection of this message by the Adventist movement.

The light that Waggoner and Jones had begun to share with the Advent movement was hotly contested. The battle ground centred upon how we understand the book of Galatians, especially chapter 3.

The church leaders believed that the law mentioned in Galatians 3:19 referred to the law of Moses and was only in force until the seed should come into the world, which was Christ. Therefore after His incarnation the law of Moses is no longer effectual. Because Adventists didn't want to do away with the Ten Commandments, they made the law here refer to the ceremonial law.

What purpose then *does* the law *serve*? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. Galatians 3:19

Using his new view of the covenants, Waggoner stated that the law mentioned in this verse was the whole moral law, including the Ten Commandments and that this law would remain in force until the time that the Seed, being Christ, received the promise made to Abraham.

This promise included the land, which Paul tells us is the whole world.

For the promise that he would be the **heir of the world** *was* not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Romans 4:13

Because Abraham did not receive the promise of the earth, he would receive it when Christ came the second time to the earth at the end of the world. (Acts 7:5; Hebrews 11:10). The coming of Jesus mentioned in

Galatians 3:19 is His Second Coming, not His first, because the purpose of the law is to deal with transgression, and transgression continues until the Second Coming. The summary of Waggoner's argument was that the law always functioned to reveal the sinfulness of man and thus bring him to Christ.

Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Galatians 3:24

He presented a consistent gospel that is the same throughout the Bible and human history, a science of salvation which is constant in how it overcomes sin. The law convicts of sin and brings us to Christ. Christ gives us grace and helps us overcome our weaknesses. In real terms, we can say that the experience of Abraham with Hagar and Ishmael brought him to realise his lack of faith. He was humbled in repentance and in faith Isaac was then born. One covenant experience always leads you to the other if you do not resist God's leading.

As I indicated previously, this framework for the gospel opened up the deeper reality of the sufferings of Christ through all of Scripture. It led him to see the Cross of Christ as a present reality through all of human history. It led Waggoner to make statements such as this:

It is a grievous error to suppose that Christ intercedes to appease the wrath of God, and to induce Him to regard man with favour. God was not so angry with the world that it took the death of His Son to appease His wrath. No; "God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:10. God was man's friend; man was God's enemy. God did not need to be reconciled to man; but men needed to be reconciled to God.⁸³

The church leaders had built up a system of theology on a completely different framework. They had placed nearly everything within the

⁸³ E.J. Waggoner, *Present Truth UK*, October 6, 1892

system of the Protestant churches. They saw the Old Covenant was for the Jews and the New Covenant was for Christians.

Waggoner was showing them that the work of the Old Covenant was to fully expose their sinfulness, that in faith, where this sin abounded, grace could much more abound in the New Covenant. The heart of the issue was how righteousness by faith was achieved through these two covenants and how they worked together. The old system separated the work of the two covenants and therefore destroyed the principles of righteousness by faith. The letter was intended to kill in order that the Spirit might give life. (2 Corinthians 3:6). They could not be separated.

The heart of the issue was how righteousness by faith was achieved through these two covenants and how they worked together. The old system separated the work of the two covenants and therefore destroyed the principles of righteousness by faith.

Rather than open their hearts to listen to what Waggoner was saying, they attacked it. If they accepted Waggoner's position, they would have to relearn everything they understood in a new context. Their pride would not allow them to do this.

In 1893, A.T. Jones boldly laid out the truth of the matter in one of his presentations:

When did that message of the righteousness of Christ begin with us as a people? [One or two in the audience: "Three or four years ago."] Which was it, three? or four? [Congregation: "Four."] Yes, four. Where was it? [Congregation: "Minneapolis."] What then did the [leading] brethren reject at Minneapolis? [Some in the congregation: "The loud cry."] ... What did the brethren in that

fearful position in which they stood, reject at Minneapolis? They rejected the latter rain--the loud cry--of the third angel's message.⁸⁴

The loud cry of the Third Angel's Message refers to Revelation 18:1-3 which speaks of an angel or messenger that will lighten the whole earth with the glory of God. Many of the common people grasped the message with joy. They began to see that they did not have to work under the appeasement system to please God in face of the judgment. They could freely accept the righteousness of Christ that would grant them victory over sin. This was a large step forward on the Protestant faith that had remained at the brass altar in the Courtyard.

In the same year during the same meetings, A.T. Jones added another vital step to the message. In the Augustinian covenant system, the Sabbath was a shadow that was nailed to the Cross. It was part of the ceremonial law. Adventists had reclaimed the Sabbath when they discovered the Most Holy Place in heaven and realised the Ten Commandments were still there and the Sabbath was still valid.

But placing the Sabbath in the appeasement system made it a burden for most people. It was something they must do for salvation. When the correct covenant system was understood, the whole meaning of the Sabbath was transformed into a spiritual reality rather than a dead letter. Listen to the profound statement made by Jones.

Now another thing: Who was the real present agent in creating? [Congregation: "Christ."] Who was it that rested? [Congregation: "Christ."] Who was refreshed? [Congregation: "Christ."] Who blessed? [Congregation: "Christ."] Whose presence made it holy? [Congregation: "Christ's"] Whose presence is in the day? [Congregation: "Christ's."] Then the man whom the presence of Jesus Christ does not sanctify, and does not make holy and does not bless and to whom it does not bring rest, why, he can't keep the Sabbath. Don't you see, it is only with Christ in the man that the

⁸⁴ A.T. Jones, *General Conference Bulletin*, 1893, page 183

Sabbath can be kept; because the Sabbath brings and has in it the presence of Christ.⁸⁵

Jones presented the spirituality of the Sabbath. The presence of Christ was in greater abundance on this day than other days of the week. That is what makes it holy. We are sealed through the Holy Spirit of Christ. The Sabbath now made much more sense when understood as a gift of the Holy Spirit. The Sabbath then becomes the agency through which the characters of the faithful will be sealed.

In 1890, E.J. Waggoner had helped to put together material on the two covenants in the Sabbath School lessons for that year. This pamphlet was studied in all the churches of the denomination. Through providence, it managed to pass through the editorial process unnoticed until it was in publication. The reaction of many of the leading brethren might be summed up in the words of elder Dan. T. Jones:

I refer, especially, to our late Sabbath-school lessons, in which the covenant question has been presented. There has never anything happened in my life that has taken me down like this. I have felt so thoroughly upset by the whole affair that I have hardly known how to act or what to do. They came on us like a thunder bolt from a clear sky.⁸⁶

Through the period of the 1890s, most leaders in the church refused to listen to Waggoner and Jones or help them. The publishing houses of the church refused to print anything they wrote. Ellen White, one of the church leaders who was very familiar with the events that had occurred, wrote of her sadness:

I ask, what means the contention and strife among us? What means this harsh, iron spirit, which is seen in our churches and in our institutions, and which is so utterly unChristlike? I have deep sorrow of heart because I have seen how readily a word or action of Elder Jones or Elder Waggoner is criticized. How readily many

⁸⁵ A.T. Jones, *General Conference Bulletin*, 1893, Sermon 20

⁸⁶ Letter Dan T. Jones to George I. Butler, February 13, 1890

ATONEMENT

minds overlook all the good that has been done through them in the few years past, and see no evidence that God is working through these instrumentalities. **They hunt for something to condemn, and their attitude toward these brethren who have zealously engaged in doing a good work, shows that feelings of enmity and bitterness are in the heart.** What is needed is the converting power of God upon hearts and minds. Cease watching your brethren with suspicion.⁸⁷

The enmity manifested against Waggoner and Jones was visible evidence of their enmity against God. It was evidence that they had not surrendered themselves to be broken upon the rock Christ Jesus and like Cain, they hated their brother.

Between the years of 1893 and 1895, the Adventist movement was at its highest point; they were on the borders of Canaan through the precious light given to these two young men. If the church had embraced it, the full light of the Cross and the gospel would have flooded the church and the world. But it was not to be.

A.G. Daniells, who was the longest serving president of the Adventist movement between 1900 and 1922 had this to say about the Church's reaction to the message of Waggoner and Jones.

This message of righteousness in Christ ... met with opposition on the part of earnest, well-meaning men in the cause of God! The [1888] message has never been received, nor proclaimed, nor given free course as it should have been in order to convey to the church the measureless blessings that were wrapped within it.... The division and conflict which arose among the leaders because of the opposition to the message of righteousness in Christ, produced a very unfavorable reaction. The rank and file of the people were confused, and did not know what to do...

⁸⁷ E.G. White, *16 Manuscript Release*, page 108.3

Back of the opposition is revealed the shrewd plotting of that master mind of evil.... How terrible must be the results of any victory of his in defeating it!⁸⁸

After all the strain placed upon Waggoner and Jones, both men ultimately were separated from the Adventist church. Waggoner sought comfort in his relationship with his secretary and Jones left in bitterness towards those who had treated him so abominably. At the close of their lives both men expressed humility and thankfulness for being granted such a precious message to share. I personally hold onto the hope to see them in the New Jerusalem.

Within 20 years, the names of Waggoner and Jones were almost completely forgotten. The precious statements of the present Cross and the removal of the appeasement system were buried. The historians of the church claimed that the special message of God had been accepted, thus concealing the enmity that still existed in the hearts of its leaders.

1888 is a notable landmark in Seventh-day Adventist history. It was really like crossing a continental divide into a new country. Some smiters of the brethren calling themselves reformers have tried to make out that the session was a defeat; whereas, the truth is that it stands out as a glorious victory.... It introduced a new period in our work--a time of revival and soulsaving.... The Lord gave His people a marvelous victory. It was the beginning of a great spiritual awakening among Adventists.... the dawn of a glorious day for the Adventist church.... The after effect of the great Minneapolis revival ... beginning in 1888 ... was rich in both holiness and mission fruitage.⁸⁹

Telling the people that the church had accepted the message, when in fact it had scornfully rejected it, doomed the church to apostasy and defeat if she did not repent of this terrible mistake. Jesus has been unwittingly slapped in the face, beaten and spat upon by the church;

⁸⁸ A.G. Daniells, *Christ Our Righteousness*, 1926, pages 47, 50, 53, 54

⁸⁹ L.H. Christian, *The Fruitage of Spiritual Gifts*, pages 219, 223, 224, 237, 244, 245

evidence of the continued hidden enmity that refuses to yield control and submit to God.

God called two more men in the 1950s to bring awareness to the great mistake that had been made. Those men were elders Robert Wieland and Donald Short⁹⁰. These men managed to find and share the writings of Waggoner and Jones and reveal to the church the great tragedy that had occurred.

Like those before them, they were suppressed and opposed. Their chief antagonist was elder Leroy Froom. Since the church refused to come fully into the message of righteousness by faith in the Most Holy Place, they were left with a massive expansion of the law in the face of a condemning, judging God who demands the blood of His Son before He is appeased. This is a difficult Christian walk, especially when paired with the need to overcome sin before Christ's Second Coming, and the church needed release from the pressure. This happened in the 1950s; Adventism hadn't moved forward so it would move back.

In preparing the book *Questions on Doctrine*, Leroy Froom and those who assisted him prepared the denomination for a full-scale retreat into traditional Protestant views of the atonement and salvation.

The book *Questions on Doctrine* not only threw away the key given to the church by Waggoner and Jones, it uprooted the foundations of the church in relation to the Sanctuary message and final atonement as well as the God we worship. In a later book called *Movement of Destiny*, Froom presented the 1888 message as the victory of the Trinity over what he called early Adventist Arianism.

“Godhead” is distinctly a Trinitarian term. And Waggoner’s repeated use of this designation – “Godhead” – shows that he had broken with the persisting elements of Arianism, for the two are in irreconcilable conflict, being mutually exclusive. He obviously was the first to deny the premise of Arianism in order that he might then

⁹⁰ See the book *1888 Re-examined* by Robert Wieland and Donald Short for more details

present the larger dimensions of Righteousness by Faith in all its fullness.⁹¹

Froom repeated over and over the theme of a completed atonement on the Cross and the full deity of Christ as the second person of the Trinity. His work above all others helped to steer the church out of the Most Holy Place and into the arms of the Protestant understanding of the atonement.

Froom entered into discussions with Walter Martin and Donald Barnhouse, two Protestant leaders, concerning the faith of Adventism. Later writing to the then president of the church, Froom said:

I do not know where all this will lead but we do know we have won friends in a powerful circle – friends who believe we have been unjustly treated. Leroy Froom to R.R. Figuhr, April 26, 1955.

The work of Froom, along with efforts made to train ministers in the new theology, prepared the church for its completed apostasy in 1980 when it released its new statement of faith – the 27 Fundamentals, and was welcomed into the sisterhood of Protestant churches.

In the 1980s and 1990s elders Robert Wieland and Donald Short tried earnestly to call the church to repent of rejecting the 1888 message.⁹² The final nail was sealed on the coffin in the year 2000 when the special committee appointed to examine the claims of elder Wieland and elder Short were considered. The conclusion of the committee was that there was nothing that required repentance by the church. Here is the report given in April of 2001 by the church:

During the last several decades, Robert Wieland and Donald Short have, with others, conducted conversations with leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church leadership regarding their concerns about the church's doctrinal emphasis. During this period these men have appealed directly to various General Conference

⁹¹ Leroy Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, (Review and Herald, 1971), page 280

⁹² See the book Corporate Repentance by Robert Wieland available at maranathamedia.com

ATONEMENT

presidents. Leaders of the organization now established to promote their understandings (the 1888 Message Study Committee) met with then-church leader, Robert S. Folkenberg, in May, 1994 to share their burden. As a result, the Primacy of the Gospel Committee was established by the General Conference Administrative Committee (ADCOM) on May 17, 1994, to provide this group a formal opportunity to make its case to church leadership.

As the meetings concluded, the General Conference members recognised that while a good level of fellowship had marked the sessions, differences of position within the committee were of such a nature that a common report from the group was unattainable. Therefore they presented a report of their findings to ADCOM. **The General Conference members did not find credible the 1888 study group's view that church leaders have been and remain negligent or in error on the subjects under discussion. Especially important is the contention of the 1888 Message Study Committee that the church, or its leadership, has never accepted the message of righteousness by faith, a key point of the General Conference session of that year. The church and its leadership, however, have embraced without reservation this fundamental Bible doctrine. Similar differences remain on subjects such as corporate repentance,** the idea of universal legal justification, and other teachings. *Adventist Review*, April 19, 2001

For nearly 40 years, Wieland and Short reached out to the church to confess the mistakes that had been made and embrace the truth of the doctrine of righteousness by faith developed upon the true subject of the covenants. The church refused. The key to the revival of apostolic godliness has been thrown away, and there is no capacity to find it again until they repent.

In the same year this statement was made, a new message came to the church that would revive the work of Waggoner and Jones, Wieland and Short, and continue to advance towards the seal of God and the

glorious reality of righteousness by faith within the framework of the two covenants as taught by Waggoner and Jones.

This message began September 30, 2001. It dealt with the issue of our value as children of God and that, through the relationship Christ has to the Father as His only begotten Son, we also can receive His faith and love of His Father to enter into the same Father-child relationship with God. The message later was presented in the book called *Identity Wars* available at fatheroflove.info. The mechanics of this message are outlined in story format in the book *Escaping the Pentagon of Lies*, also available at fatheroflove.info.

Now that we have given a summary overview of the history involved in bringing us to the present day, let us bring together all the pieces for a completed atonement that produces a people who are sealed into the character of Christ and completely at-one-ment with our Father in heaven.

CHAPTER 26

BRING REBELLION TO THE FULL

In chapter 16 we looked at the two desolating powers of the daily [pagan appeasement] and the transgression of desolation. [papal appeasement]. We have considered how this principle of appeasement would dominate the world right through the 2300 years from the 5th century B.C. when Daniel wrote it until the 19th century. Obviously, this appeasement system has existed from the time of Adam, but with reference to the prophecy in Daniel, we are speaking from that time forward.

In chapter 24, we examined the deeper reality of Isaiah 53:6. We saw that the term “The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” has a more accurate translation that God caused to meet on Him, – Christ – all of our punishment that we think everyone else deserves, which is at heart a by-product of the punishment we think the Son of God deserves. The Cross is the full manifestation of the enmity that was hidden in the bosom of Adam. The Cross shows us the hatred inside of the human race for God and His Son.

Let us now examine another layer of evidence that validates this point. We now turn to Daniel 9. This passage is highly significant because

Daniel had trouble understanding all of the vision given to him in Daniel 8.

We discussed in chapter 15 the rise of the little horn power out of the war between Medo-Persia and Greece. Gabriel explained to Daniel the meaning of the ram and the male goat, but he told Daniel the purpose of all this was to explain the final part of the indignation in the time of the end.

And he said, "Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end *shall be*. The ram which you saw, having the two horns—*they are* the kings of Media and Persia. Daniel 8:19-20

The indignation represents the enmity of man against God. As we explained in chapter 15, the clash between the ram and the male goat, representing the war between Medo-Persia and Greece uses the typology of Cain and Abel and the fury of Cain against Abel.

The little horn power representing Rome took the appeasement sacrifice system and lifted it up into the papal Roman power.

"And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise, having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; he shall destroy the mighty, and *also* the holy people. Through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; and he shall exalt *himself* in his heart. He shall destroy many in *their* prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without *human* means. And the vision of the evenings and mornings which was told is true; therefore seal up the vision, for *it refers* to many days *in the future*." And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it. Daniel 8:23-27

As Daniel contemplated the work of the little horn and saw that this abomination would last for many days, he fainted at the thought of it. He was sick for a number of days. He did not comprehend the meaning of the 2300 days and how this was connected to the indignation. He saw the indignation manifested in the power of Medo-Persia and Greece. He understood that a power would come after them who would exalt himself to such an extent that he would rise against the Prince of princes meaning Christ Himself. This referred to the death of Christ on the Cross. But what did it mean “He shall be broken without human means?” And then referring to the 2300-day prophecy right after this?

Several years later Daniel was praying and confessing the sins of His people. Babylon had fallen and Medo-Persia now came to power. Daniel had safely transitioned from one kingdom to another but now he was seeking wisdom to understand what would happen next.

After a beautiful, heartfelt prayer, Gabriel comes to Daniel to give him understanding.

Yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell *you*, for you *are* greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision.” Daniel 9:21-23

Gabriel told Daniel that he had come to give him understanding about the vision. Daniel had not had a new vision in chapter 9. This must refer to the vision he had in chapter 8 because Daniel had not completely understood all the parts of the vision. Gabriel had been told by God to make Daniel understand all of the vision.

And I heard a man’s voice between *the banks of the Uhai*, who called, and said, “Gabriel, make this *man* understand the vision.” Daniel 8:16

Gabriel had now returned to explain to Daniel the remainder of the vision and to give him the key to understanding the end of the indignation in the latter times. Gabriel begins:

Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, *there shall be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. Daniel 9:24-25

The words of Gabriel are highly condensed. It is not our purpose to give a detailed explanation of this prophecy. I will provide a few key highlights but I encourage the reader to examine the work of Uriah Smith in his book *Daniel and Revelation* for greater detail.⁹³

The seventy weeks mentioned by Gabriel start at the command given to restore Jerusalem and continue until the first coming of the Messiah. When Jesus started His ministry, he gave reference to the time being fulfilled, which was the prophecy of Daniel about the Messiah.

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel. Mark 1:15

There were three decrees mentioned in the book Ezra given by the kings of Medo-Persia to rebuild Jerusalem. We provided a chart at the end of chapter 16 outlining the seventy-week prophecy in connection with the 2300-year prophecy. The seventy weeks represent seventy times seven years. The command given in 457 B.C. to rebuild the temple reached until A.D. 27 when Jesus began His ministry when the 69 weeks, or 483 years were completed.

In the final week of the prophecy, which represents 7 years, all the points mentioned by Gabriel would be completed. Even if some of the details of

⁹³ This book is freely available on the internet

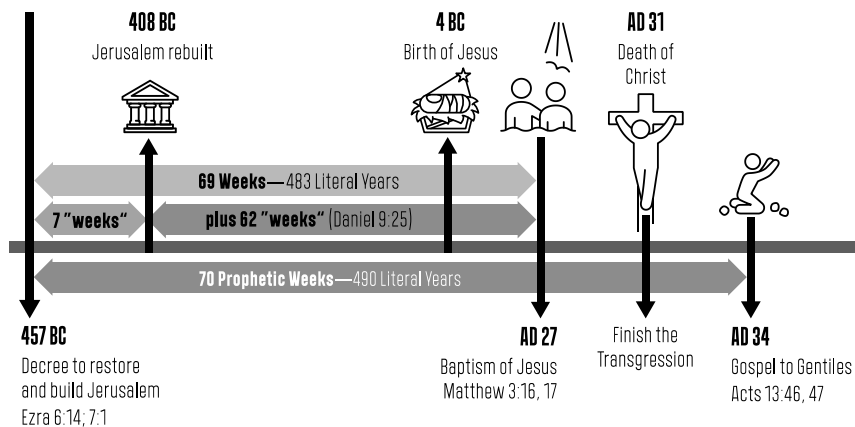
ATONEMENT

the prophecy are not clear in your mind, we know that the references in Daniel 9:24 refer to the work of Christ when He came to earth. We just wanted to give you some broader context for this prophecy and how it connects to the vision in Daniel 8.

And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate. Daniel 9:26-27

Gabriel tells Daniel that Messiah would be cut off after 69 weeks. How long after the 69 weeks is given in verse 27. He was cut off in the middle of the 70th week; in the middle of the last seven years of the prophecy. This is the point at which the “transgression is finished, making an end of sins.” (Daniel 9:24).

FINISH THE TRANSGRESSION



Daniel 9:24 reads very different when striking the rock compared to when speaking to the rock. The death of Christ in the Old Covenant context speaks to us of Jesus satisfying divine justice and therefore finishing the transgression, meaning God's law has been appeased and therefore the making an end of the sin issue of the human race.

In commenting on this verse, Adam Clarke offers the following on the first three points of Daniel 9:24:

I. To finish (לכלא lechalle, to restrain), the transgression which was effected by the preaching of the gospel, and pouring out of the Holy Ghost among men.

II. To make an end of sins; rather ולהתם חטאות ulehathem chataoth, "to make an end of sin-offerings," which our Lord did when he offered his spotless soul and body on the cross once for all.

III. To make reconciliation (ולכפר ulechapper, "to make atonement or expiation") for iniquity; which he did by the once offering up of himself. – Adam Clarke, Commentary on Daniel 9:24

The word for *finish* actually means finish in terms of complete.⁹⁴ Look at the interlinear of the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia:

H7620 week שבועים H7651 seven שבעה H2852 be determined על-
 H5921 upon עמיה H5971 people ו and על- H5921 upon ציר H5892
 town קדש H6944 holiness ל to כלא H3615 **be complete** ה **the** פשע
 H6588 **rebellion** [ו] and [ל] and [ל] to [התם] H8552 **be complete** [חטאות]
 H2403 **sin** ו and ל to כפר H3722 cover עון H5771 sin ו and ל to
 H935 come צדק H6664 justice עלמים H5769 eternity ו and ל to
 H2856 seal חזון H2377 vision ו and גביא H5030 prophet ו and ל to
 H4886 smear קדש H6944 holiness: קדשים H69

Finishing the transgression actually translates as bringing rebellion and transgression to completion. Also, the word for transgression is not a

⁹⁴ I am deeply thankful to my dear friend Ruben Olschewsky for researching this subject in Daniel 9:24

verb which would suggest the act of sinning but rather it is a noun which suggests something far greater.

We see here in Daniel the deeper meaning of Isaiah 53:6 and how God caused our punishment of His Son to be fully revealed. God brought our rebellion, the sin of the human race stemming from the treachery of Adam, to its ultimate manifestation.

This aligns perfectly with the work of the two covenants. The Old Covenant causes our sinfulness to abound; it brings it to completion. Once we see it in its fullness, then we are given grace to repent and confess this horrible crime against God and His Son.

To think, and what a sublime thought it is, that God forgives us for the murder that is hidden in our hearts against Him. The words of Jesus are full of hope and truth:

“Father forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing!”

Such divine love touches me to the very core of my being. What insight God seeks to give us; that the enmity that exists in my soul is the source

*I look into the heavens
in despair and am
tempted like Cain to
say, “God will never
forgive me for this!”*

of the hate I have had for people, and then to know I am freely forgiven of all this. Thank you, Father!

At the foot of the Cross, I am the one with the hammer; I am the one who drove in those spikes; I am the one who spat in His face, I am the one who mocked and derided Him. I look into

the heavens in despair and am tempted like Cain to say, “God will never forgive me for this!”

But then I hear the voice of Jesus “Father forgive Adrian, He didn’t realise what he was doing.” Bless you Lord Jesus! Thank you, Thank you. I take hold of your word; I believe the Father hears you; I trust I am forgiven and with you I commit my soul into the hands of the Father that I might be crucified with Christ. I become identified with the one I

have wounded and I am pierced with Him at the thought of what I have done.

I hope you can see the light in this. Standing in the Most Holy Place, the Cross is the revelation of human rebellion completed; brought to the full – and that where this sin abounded, grace is much more abounding to those who trust God’s word which says we are forgiven.

This brings us to the heart of the atonement. If someone took your son and murdered him in the most hateful, barbaric manner, could you turn to them and say, I forgive you freely? Such amazing love flows from the Father’s throne! His character is so beautiful, so lovely, so beyond anything good we can imagine. This is the atonement. This is complete reconciliation. Our wrath, our justice manifested on Christ is fully forgiven by the Father.

Bless you Father for your love for us. I confess my guilt to you. I know the enmity that has existed in my soul. I repent and I embrace your forgiveness. It needed to be brought to the full before I could grasp what resides in my heart but I believe it, I accept it, I confess it and I know that I have received the atonement. Finally, I am one with you. I am one with the God who never was angry with me, never condemned me and never threatened me with death. Instead you patiently waited for me, drawing me by Your Spirit. Thank you, Father, for this amazing atonement.

CHAPTER 27

CHRONOS NO LONGER

The angel Gabriel was instructed to make Daniel understand the vision of Daniel 8. (Daniel 8:19). Daniel was shown what would happen at the latter end of the indignation; meaning the manifestation of the hostility of man towards God as we discussed in chapter 4. As we have previously discussed, two desolating powers were shown to Daniel which would tread down the Sanctuary and the people of God. This would continue over a period of 2300 years.

At a later time, Daniel received a much more detailed description of the human history of man's indignation against the plan of God to save them. Gabriel lists a succession of kingdoms and their conflicts which he describes as the King of the North and the King of the South. He describes the time period where pagan Rome gives way to papal Rome in the following verses:

For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and **return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage**. So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the

daily *sacrifices*, and place *there* the abomination of desolation. Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out *great exploits*. Daniel 11:30-32

I recommend reading Uriah Smith's commentary on Daniel chapter 11 to get the historical details of this prophecy.

Papal Rome lifted up the principles of pagan appeasement sacrifice while taking away the pagan forms, and replacing them with Christian looking equivalents. From this time, the people of God were persecuted for a period of 1260 years.

He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.⁹⁵ Daniel 7:25

Gabriel describes events right down until the close of probation when Michael the archangel stands up. After being shown all these things, Daniel is then told to seal up the book until the time of the end. (Daniel 12:4). Then a man clothed in linen appeared above the waters of the river and raised his hand and swore by Him who lives forever and ever.

This same angel appears in Revelation chapter 10 and it is what he says there that we wish to examine closely. In this chapter, the book which had been closed was now open again. (Revelation 10:2). Notice what he says:

And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, **that there should be time no longer:** Revelation 10:5-6 (KJV)

The timing of this statement from the angel is at the time of the end. It is at this time that the angel indicates that there will be delay or time no longer. The word in Greek is *Chronos*. This statement is highly

⁹⁵ The term *Time, Times and Half a Time* is the same as 1260 prophetic years. See Revelation 12:6,14

significant, but to discover it we need to dig deeper into the Greek mythology of Chronos.

Chronos, also known as Aion,⁹⁶ is the personification of time in Greek mythology. He was self-created and was considered to have the shape of a three-headed serpent. The heads were those of a man, a bull and a lion.⁹⁷

Chronos already was confused with, or perhaps consciously identified with, the Titan Cronus in antiquity due to the similarity in names. The identification became more widespread during the Renaissance, giving rise to the iconography of Father Time wielding the harvesting scythe.

The harvesting scythe represented his all-destroying nature, because in the end time he destroys all those living on the earth. Most are familiar with the expression “the ravages of time” or even the term deadline. These are related to Chronos.

The apostle Paul would have known this mythology and therefore his words written below have deep significance.

...who [God] has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before **time began**,...
2 Timothy 1:9

The words *time began* are actually Chronos Aion. Paul is telling us that the God of heaven predates Chronos Aion. It is impossible for humanity to truly appreciate living before time. To the Greek mind it would be absurd to conceive of a God who existed before time.

For thus says the High and Lofty One **Who inhabits eternity**, whose name *is* Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him *who* has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. Isaiah 57:15

⁹⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chronos>

⁹⁷ https://www.greekmythology.com/Other_Gods/Primordial/Chronos/

God dwells in eternity. Men dwell in time. What is the difference? Death. The introduction of death into the universe changed eternity into time. Death originated with Satan, that serpent of old (Revelation 12:9), therefore it is fitting that Chronos should be understood as a three headed serpent.

When Adam conceived in his heart the treachery to kill the Son of God, he fell from eternity into time; he perceived a reality where existence would cease. When Adam falsely projected his thoughts of death onto God, thinking God would kill him, he sealed himself into time and became the slave of Chronos. He became a timeserver.

The prospect of death changes the nature of time into a relentless task master. Within the realms of eternity, time has no power to coerce the soul or create fear, it merely serves those who are eternal.

It is the unwitting desire to kill the Son of God that resides in the hearts of men; manifested in our distrust and condemnation of each other, that keeps us enslaved to time.

The meaning of the words of the angel that there should be "time no longer" tell us that a message would

When Adam falsely projected his thoughts of death onto God, thinking God would kill him, he sealed himself into time and became the slave of Chronos.

come to the earth that would teach men that God is not a God of death. It would teach us that our enmity towards God and His Son is what traps us in time and the dread that we are running out of it and therefore we live in fear of death all our lives. (Hebrews 2:15).

Once this message of "time no longer" arrives, it will be impossible to be translated from the kingdom of death in this world into the kingdom of eternity while believing that God is a God of death. Eternal life means that you now worship a being who does not take life nor threatens to take life, thus dethroning time as our master.

ATONEMENT

Jesus never refers to Himself or His Father as beings who inflict death. The logic of this is completely absurd. For God to exist before time can only mean that He lived in a realm that never entertained the notion of death or taking life. If God had threatened any of His creatures with death, He would have made Chronos their master instead of Himself. Try to grasp these principles and their implications in the following verse:

...but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, *who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*,... 2 Timothy 1:10

When Jesus died on the Cross, He abolished death. How did He do this?

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.
Hebrews 2:14

Satan held the human race under the dominion of death. This is because he convinced us that God could not forgive us unless the blood of the Son of God was shed. Satan convinced the human race that God wanted to kill us and was willing to have His Son sacrificed in our place. This was satanic genius because this would mask our treachery of actually wanting to kill the Son of God.

When Jesus died on the Cross, He opened us to the belief that we could be forgiven; He opened the door into eternity once again.

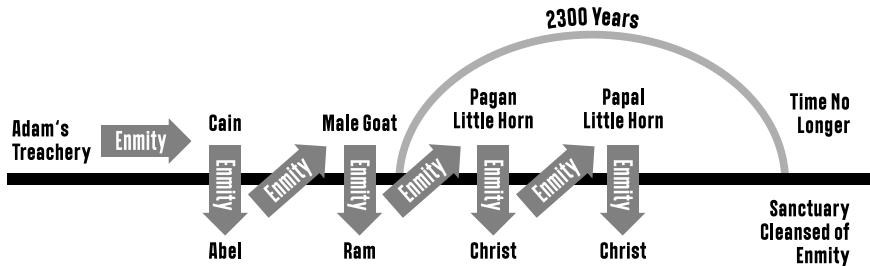
...to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me. Acts 26:18

Jesus is the resurrection and the life. He is not life and death. If Christ killed people, then He also would be a slave to Chronos because it means He operates according to those principles.

How does this relate to the atonement? Simply this: In order for us to be reconciled completely to our Father in heaven, we must see Him through the lens of Time No Longer; we must see Him as the God of life only and not the God of death. When we see God in this way, our sanctuary or body temple is cleansed of the indignation, cleansed of the enmity that has existed in the heart of man from the beginning. The anger of the male-goat against the ram, echoing back to when Cain killed Abel, will finally be cleansed from the human heart. If we don't let God perform this special end-time work in us, we will not be reconciled; we will be driven ever more into fear as the world collapses around us and finally Chronos will bring us into eternal darkness and death.

Looking forward in time, from the time of Daniel, God saw the enmity of men manifested in the pagan sacrificial system enthroned in the Christian church through the teaching of Penal Substitution. God saw it would take 2300 years from the time just after Daniel lived before the world would open their hearts fully to the idea that God never required sacrifice and offering. It would take 2000 years before the full reality of what Christ did on the Cross to awaken in human consciousness, in completely abolishing death and opening the door into eternity.

THE END OF THE INDIGNATION—Daniel 8



By beholding we are changed. (2 Corinthians 3:18). When you see no death in Christ and His Father, then you are translated into the kingdom of eternity. Death can't have dominion over you because you have ceased to worship a God of death.

ATONEMENT

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—**the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us**—that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. 1 John 1:1-3

Have you seen this eternal life which was with the Father? Has He been manifested to you? If you believe that God destroys the wicked (rather than their destruction being the result of their own refusal to be healed), then you cannot see this eternal life and must remain under the slavehood of Chronos. Dear reader, you may be tempted to dismiss what you are reading because it speaks to you from a framework with which you are not familiar. It may sound strange to you, but seek the Lord with all your heart, pray for wisdom and see that in Christ Jesus truly Chronos is defeated and eternity begins.

Let us remember that God's thoughts are not our thoughts and neither our ways His ways.

CHAPTER 28

MY BELOVED SON

Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?
Romans 7:1

The actual Greek in this verse says: “the law has dominion over a man as long as Chronos lives.” Certainly, we can translate this “as long as time lasts,” but the deeper implication is that the law concerning death has dominion over us as long as we are sons of Chronos.

As we indicated in the last chapter, we became sons of Chronos when we believed God to be a God of death. Death gives Chronos dominion over us and fuels our enmity by the thought that God one day will end our lives; He will bring us to death. Paul refers to this as the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:2).

This has led many to worship time. The worship of Olympic athletes is often based on time. The gold medal is given to the fastest time or the one who beats down the time the best.

Listen to the lyrics of the famous Enya song called *Only Time*:

Who can say where the road goes;
where the day flows, only time
And who can say if your love grows

ATONEMENT

as your heart chose, only time
Who can say why your heart sighs;
as your love flies, only time
And who can say why your heart cries
when your love lies, only time

These lyrics reflect the worship of Chronos and his omnipotence over the human race through the deception that God is a God of death.

Christ who was before Chronos, has opened for us the gates of life. In satisfying the demands of the law of sin and death, Christ has opened a door in the human mind that there is a possibility to escape death. Paul expresses it this way:

Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another — to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. Romans 7:4

Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Hebrews 2:14

When Christ satisfied serpent justice in dying in our place, He gave to us the ability to believe that God would not kill us and that we could be forgiven. This was the only way to free us from the dominion of death. The rock was struck to give us the water of life.

But as we have stated earlier, when Christ took upon Himself our nature, He broke down the middle wall of partition between us and God; He slew the enmity that was in us and came and dwelt with us.

It was in the body that was prepared for Him, that Christ reunited God and man. The evidence of this reunited reality is manifested at the baptism of Jesus. The heavens open and God speaks to His Son as one of us.

And lo there came a voice from heaven saying: "this is that my dear son, in whom is my delight." Matthew 3:17 (Tyndale)

When God spoke to Christ, in our flesh, He was speaking to us saying you are my dear child in whom I delight.

These words spoken at the baptism reveal that the atonement was completed from God's side right here at the baptism. There was nothing in the heart of God against us. It is only love that He expresses, a love full of joy.

These words expressed upon Christ reveal the truth which was hidden by man for 4000 years through our enmity and hatred towards Him. In Christ, God could finally say what He longed to say without it being twisted into a lie.

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, **according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began.** Romans 16:25

Through the body of Christ, God could speak to us the longings of His heart. This proves true the words of Paul:

Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— in the volume of the book it is written of me— to do Your will, O God.'" Hebrews 10:5-7

In the person of Christ, the love of God is manifested. Christ never killed any person, showing His Father to be a God of life only. In completing His Father's work before dying on the Cross, Jesus proves that death was not what God required.

If you can accept this truth then you can be translated from the kingdom of Chronos to the kingdom of Yehovah. The only thing you have to do is receive the Spirit of the Son of God and believe that the words spoken to Christ at the baptism are spoken to you. Accept your sonship or daughtership to God and the atonement will be complete.

ATONEMENT

Satan will not rest when you attempt to escape his kingdom. As he assailed Christ and tried to get Him to question whether He was the Son of God, so Satan will do to you.

Satan will remind you of your sins and your failures and seek to convince you that you can't simply accept your sonship to God by faith through the Sonship of Christ.

The beautiful reality is that Christ, in the wilderness, conquered Satan's temptation to doubt our sonship to God. The Spirit of Jesus is freely offered to us that we, in Christ, can also overcome the temptations of Satan to doubt our true identity.

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Galatians 4:4-7

The power to believe you can receive your identity as a son of God is directly connected to your belief that Jesus is truly the Son of God. When you embrace this truth then you can grasp the truth that God loves you just as He loves His Son. As Jesus said:

Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'" John 20:17

When you know that God is your Father just as He is the Father of Jesus then the words of the Father, "You are my beloved son" will spring up in your soul with life in abundance. It is impossible to obtain the same experience if you believe that Jesus is God without being the true begotten Son of God. One may think it makes no difference but Jesus makes it abundantly clear when He said:

MY BELOVED SON

For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and **have known surely that I came out from thee**, and they have believed that thou didst send me.
John 17:8 (KJV)

The word in Greek for came out means *to exit, to come out of*. To believe this is the secret power of our own sonship to God and gives to us the ability to receive the words of God, "You are my beloved son" and thus receive the atonement. As we read in Galatians 4:6, this is only possible when the Spirit of the begotten Son abides in us and this Spirit cannot abide in us if we do not believe in the begotten Son.

This is the New Covenant pathway to the atonement. It does not require the death of Christ to be received. But as we have stated previously, we can't come into this path except through the Old Covenant; through the smiting of the rock and the shedding of blood. Then and only then can we walk into the arms of the Father and speak to the Rock in faith and say, "I believe I am your child through the Spirit of the begotten Son."

This transfer from the kingdom of death to the kingdom of light is laid out in the book *Identity Wars* available at fatheroflove.info. It speaks of the war in our souls to believe that we are children of God through Christ. We do not have to prove anything or offer anything to come to this reality; we just need to believe it by the Spirit of Christ.

But to maintain this sonship we need to come into the reality of a God who does not take life. Only then can we become free of Chronos and truly be sons of God without fear of death.

It is the life of Jesus on earth that revealed the character of His Father and caused the atonement. It is through His Sonship to the Father that Christ reconnected those of us who are willing to be adopted into this kingdom. As Christ drew us to His Father, so we in these last days are called into a similar ministry.

CHAPTER 29

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION

Also the tenth *day* of this seventh month *shall be* the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. And you shall do no work on that same day, for it *is* the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God. For any person who is not afflicted *in soul* on that same day shall be cut off from his people. Leviticus 23:27-29

For the person who remains at the altar of brass, and considers God to be demanding death upon those who do not repent, for justice to be satisfied, there can only be the fearful looking forward to the judgment.

Those who are not considered worthy on the Day of Atonement are cut off. Still, there are many who, though still lacking in wisdom regarding God's ways, will enter into heaven through their great faith. They have received the loving forgiveness of God so greatly that, like the woman who thought Jesus had called her a dog, their faith brings them through their wrong understanding into eternal life.

But in the last days of earth's history, those who receive the seal of God must come into the true knowledge of the Father in order to endure the

final trial of the human race, when human probation closes and those living on the earth stand before God without a mediator.

And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still." "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work." Revelation 22:10-12

He saw that *there was* no man, and wondered that *there was* no intercessor; therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; and His own righteousness, it sustained Him. Isaiah 59:16

We have discussed in great detail the differences between the atonement principles of mainstream Christianity and those who have walked the path of the Advent movement into a much deeper appreciation of all that Scripture says on this subject.

We have mentioned how Adventists in walking into the Most Holy Place with Jesus on the anti-typical Day of Atonement, and seeing the importance of His law, increased their sense of fear due to their belief in a God whose justice demands death. It is vital to transition out of this darkness into the glorious light of a God who is just like Jesus when He was here on earth.

The fear of living in the sight of God without an intercessor, combined with the belief in a God who will destroy the transgressor, makes it extremely difficult to hold on in faith. Some who laboured under the false idea that God demanded death will triumph in faith like Abraham; but there is a far better path to walk and for the 144,000 who will gain the victory over the beast and his image, this path is the safest one to take.

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4:17-19

ATONEMENT

The element that gives us boldness in the day of judgment is that we have come to see the Father as Jesus sees Him. We are like Jesus in that we know the Father to be truly merciful, gracious and patient in character, and that He will yield up His life before ever thinking to take the life of another.

The reason that we can't have perfect love for God is because of our fear of Him through the imagined threat of death. John tells us that fear comes because of torment. Torment in Greek means penal infliction. If we hold the belief that God will punish us and cut us off in death, we will not be able to escape fear and therefore we cannot be made perfect in love.

As I have stated, there will be some who will, like Abraham labour under a wrong view of the character of God and still triumph, but this faith may only be satisfied in martyrdom. The 144,000 who pass through the final crisis without seeing death must give up the false notion that God — as one who kills — could potentially abandon us and leave us to die in our sins.

The reality for all of us is that, like Christ on the Cross, we will be tempted to think that God has forsaken us, when the power which forms an image to the beast will cause all to worship the beast or die.

Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth—by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was granted *power* to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. Revelation 13:11-15

The power represented here is the United States of America. It will come to the place in its career where it will enforce the worship of the first beast, which is the Papacy. All of this is detailed in the book *Daniel and Revelation* by Uriah Smith.

Before this death decree is enforced, the message of our Father's loving character will cover the whole earth.

After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and **the earth was illuminated with his glory**. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues." Revelation 18:1-4

God will be presented as completely non-violent and non-condemning in character. The power of the Holy Spirit will fill those who give this message to such an extent that they will reflect this character completely.

They will be so filled with His love that, like the fragrance in Mary's alabaster box, it can't be hidden from the world.

It is the truth of God's loving character that causes the affliction of soul, not the fear that God will kill you if you don't repent. The difference between these two positions is immense.

Those who accept the message will afflict their souls in remorse because they had believed God to be a destroyer. They will confess their unwitting enmity against God and His Son. **It is the truth of God's loving character that causes the affliction of soul, not the fear that**

God will kill you if you don't repent. The difference between these two positions is immense; it is the difference between life and death.

Those who do not accept the message of God's loving and merciful character will cut themselves off. As they have judged and condemned others, so they will now condemn themselves in their refusal to accept the bright light that is covering the earth.

Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know *Him thus* no longer. Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and **has committed to us the word of reconciliation.** 2 Corinthians 5:16-19

Christ came to this earth to reconcile us to God through the revelation of His loving character, which is in fact the character of His Father. This work of reconciliation has been committed to us, to do as He did.

The Bible tells us that we are reconciled to God by the death of Christ (Romans 5:10), but this reconciliation takes place because Christ loved us so much that He was willing for the human race to reject and kill Him while He still revealed a character of loving forgiveness. In the New Covenant framework Christ did not die to satisfy His Father's anger against us but rather He died because of our human anger against Him. He reveals our rage and hatred towards God and our fellow man and then, when we come into repentance, He reveals how we are to act under trial — to bear it with loving grace, not condemning any man. Even when we did this to Him, His amazing love still forgave us and was thinking how to reach and teach us. Such precious and amazing love.

In these last days, the events occurring in the life of Christ will be repeated in His followers:

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. **And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.**

Revelation 12:10-11

The love of God will be so overflowing in God’s people that they will be willing to lay down their lives for the sake of the lost; they will be willing to allow the wicked to kill them and they will not have any thoughts of harm towards them but only love.

The manifestation of this love in human hearts will bring the entire world to a decision. A love like this does not allow a passive response. Those who behold it will either melt under its power or they will brace themselves to resist it.

These events will close the probation of the entire world because all will have made their own decision.

It is the revelation of God’s love to the world that will complete the atonement process. When God’s love is demonstrated fully in the lives of His children, all will make their decision to either come into this love or reject it.

It is not God who closes the probation of the wicked. It is not God who cuts them off. It is the wicked themselves who do this, for God says “let him be unjust still.” God does not use force, but allows each person to make their own decision about His character.

This is why the hour of God’s judgment has now come. Finally, after the close of the 2300 years, a message came into the world that has culminated in the truth that God does not hurt nor destroy.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. Isaiah 11:9

ATONEMENT

It is the knowledge of the Lord that causes them not to hurt or destroy, simply because God does not hurt or destroy. Will you receive the truth of God's character and enter the ministry of reconciliation? Will you allow our Father to remove from you the lie that God's justice demands death? Will you acknowledge that it is your own treachery that demands punishment for transgression; your own hardheartedness that demands sacrifice and offering?

Please join with the sons and daughters of light that are losing their fear because they are giving up the lie of penal infliction that we had previously attributed to God.

CHAPTER 30

FIRST ANGEL'S MESSAGE

We are once again indebted to the Adventist pioneers, for the connections they made in Scripture, for what message would come to the earth when the 2300-year prophecy concerning the indignation was complete. We return to J.H. Waggoner:

Daniel said he heard one holy one ask another how long this vision should be, even "to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot." The answer is made to Daniel in these words: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Now it has been seen, by Lev. 16, that the cleansing of the sanctuary, and making the atonement, mean precisely the same thing; for the atonement was made by the high priest sprinkling the blood upon the mercy-seat and altar, and cleansing them from the sins of the people. Hence, this expression of Dan. 8:14 is equivalent to saying, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the atonement be made." And again, **to understand this time is to understand the fulfillment of the message of Rev. 14:6, 7, "the hour of his judgment is come," for the Judgment sits when the atonement is made.** Thus we see that

the time was appointed and announced for making the atonement.⁹⁸

We see then that the message of Revelation 14:6-7 delivers to us the message by which the atonement will take place. This message contains 5 key components.

Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, [1] having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—saying with a loud voice, [2] “Fear God and [3] give glory to Him, [4] for the hour of His judgment has come; and [5] worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.” Revelation 14:6-7

The word *angel* in Greek can refer to a message or messenger. This angel announces the judgment that would come at the end of the 2300 years, and commences the final work of atonement. This message was framed in the context of the everlasting gospel.

1. The Everlasting Gospel

The Christian gospel only extends from the time of Christ until the present time. Due to the two-covenant framework developed by Augustine and others, the gospel preached was limited to the time after the Cross of Christ. This idea ignores the fact that the same gospel that was preached to Abraham and Israel is preached to us. (Galatians 3:8; Hebrews 4:1-2).

This error was not detected until E.J. Waggoner and A.T. Jones preached the message of righteousness by faith from 1888 onwards. The message of the first angel was framed in the context of the everlasting gospel. We note with interest that the angel does not speak this message but rather

⁹⁸ J.H. Waggoner, *The atonement in Light of Nature and Revelation*, (Review and Herald, 1884), pages 212-213

he has this message with him. This suggests that the everlasting gospel would grow out of the words that the first angel spoke.

2. Fear God

The first part of the message is a call to worship the true God. How do we know which God this is? Part 5 of this message tells us this is the God who made the heavens and the earth. This gives the first clue, and the second is found in the first verse of chapter 14:

Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having **His Father's name written** on their foreheads. Revelation 14:1

This God is the Father; the Father who has an only begotten Son. The Adventist movement founded its message upon the worship of the only true God and His only begotten Son. This is the first part of the message spoken by the angel. It is the cornerstone upon which the rest of the message is built. Paul confirms this when he said:

That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and *attaining* to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, **both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.** Colossians 2:2-3

We have listed some of the reasons why the worship of the true God and His Son is vital to the atonement in chapter 28. For a deeper examination of this subject consider the books *Divine Risk*, *My Beloved*, and *Escaping the Pentagon of Lies* available at fatheroflove.info.

The worship of the true God provides the only means to enter into the relational nature of the atonement. By this we mean that the acceptance which the Son of God holds to the Father becomes our acceptance with the Father, because the Father is our God in the same way the Father is the God of Jesus. The truth of this is defined by the prayer of Jesus in John 17:3.

ATONEMENT

And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. John 17:3

Only two beings are part of the formula for eternal life. The only true God and Jesus Christ His Son.

3. Give Glory to Him

The glory of God is defined by the life of Jesus Christ. His prayer in John 17 defines exactly what the glory of God is.

I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. John 17:4

Jesus says that He glorified His Father on the earth. This means the earthly life of Jesus defines the glory of the Father. Jesus continues a little later in His prayer to define the seal which the 144,000 are sealed with as mentioned in Revelation 14:1.

I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. John 17:6

Therefore, the character that is sealed into the foreheads of God's people is the same character that Jesus manifested while He was here on earth. Jesus loved His enemies and forgave those who were killing Him. He never hurt or killed any person. He showed mercy to all men and desired the good of all, warning them of their danger and pointing out their sin in order to deliver them from darkness.

This message began to be preached by Waggoner and Jones along with George Fifiield but, since the message was rejected, it disappeared until recently. The reason why this is critical to the atonement is spelled out in chapter 27 – *Chronos No Longer*. God's character has no death in it. If we worship a God who kills people then we can't receive the character of the true God whom Jesus revealed on earth. You can't be made at one with the God of the Bible if you believe He is a killing God. You cannot receive the atonement in order to become part of the 144,000. As I

indicated earlier, there are many who have died before the giving of the present judgment hour message who did not know these things; they will still be raised to newness of life even though their understanding was not correct. But those who are sealed in the final conflict of earth's history will escape the lie that God's justice demands death, and it is through this they will gain the victory over the beast and his image. This is because the beast and its image use the threat of force to obtain compliance; and the beast's use of force is only defensible when it is in response to force. If there is absolutely no violence or condemnation of others in us due to our correct understanding of God's character, then the distinction between truth and error will be clear.

To summarise, the prayer of Jesus in John 17:3-4 covers parts 2 and 3 of the First Angel's Message.

4. The Hour of His Judgment is Come.

In order for the atonement to be completed, everyone must judge the issue for themselves. In the Old Covenant framework, this text suggests that God is judging us, but in the New Covenant, it is us who are judging God and what His character is like. We are deciding if we wish to spend eternity with God or not. The Scriptures are clear as to who is judging.

For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: **"That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged."** Romans 3:3-4

God is the one being judged. God does not judge or condemn any person.

For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son. John 5:22

You judge according to the flesh; I [Jesus] judge no one. John 8:15

ATONEMENT

Neither God nor His Son condemn any person because condemnation leads naturally to the death of the one condemned. As God is not a God of death, He does not condemn. We are the ones who judge ourselves. How do we do this? If we determine that God judges and condemns sinners, then this is the judgment we will give to ourselves when we see Him in all His glory. To realise that one has misunderstood and misjudged God, while continually refusing to listen when God tried to explain, will lead a person to call for the rocks and mountains to fall on them once they know the truth.

Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. Matthew 7:1-2

It is condemnation of others that breaks our relationship with God because He never condemns any person. You cannot be reconciled to God and receive the seal of His character as long as you believe God will kill your enemies. Condemnation originated in Adam as far as this world is concerned. For more on this see the book *As You Judge* available at fatheroflove.info.

5. Worship Him that Made Heaven and Earth.

This part of the First Angel's Message is a call to reverence all of God's commandments. This term is almost a direct quote from the fourth commandment that declares the worship of God on the seventh day.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the LORD your God.... For *in* six days the LORD **made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them**, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. Exodus 20:8-11

The Sabbath is the experience of all those who dwell in the bosom of the Father with Christ. (John 1:18). Perfect rest can only be experienced by those who know God to be perfect love. The Sabbath rest is the inevitable result of believing that God is not a God of death and does not condemn. At the same time, we can only experience this rest when we give up our condemning natures through the grace of Christ.

The presence of God is found in the Sabbath in greater abundance than any other day because Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, finds perfect rest in the arms of His Father on this day.

The Seventh day Sabbath and its offspring-Sabbaths found in the feasts bring the Holy

Spirit to God's people to seal the Father's character into our hearts. The presence of God is found in the Sabbath in greater abundance than any other day because Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath, finds perfect rest in the arms of His Father on this day. This rest Christ shares with all who believe in Him and rest with Him. The Sabbath experience comes to all who yield up any efforts to please God by their works. The Sabbath experience every seventh day is the fruit of righteousness by faith. For more on this see the book *Fountain of Blessing* and chapter 12 of the book *Comforter* available at fatheroflove.info.

In summary then these are the messages that combine together to complete the final atonement process:

1. The everlasting gospel built upon the true understanding of the two covenants.
2. The worship of the only true God and His begotten Son. This means a rejection of the Trinity or any other false god.
3. The glory of God's character as revealed in His Son on earth. God does not condemn nor kill any person.

ATONEMENT

4. We are all in the process of judgment to determine what is God's character. Is He truly loving and ever merciful, or does He condemn and destroy those who do not agree with Him?
5. The worship of God on His appointed times as revealed in Leviticus 23. This is when the Spirit of God is poured out in greater measure and provides the sealing power of the Holy Spirit to make us just like Jesus.

When we accept all of these truths by faith then the second angel which follows the first one will speak to us of our freedom from Babylon and her wine. During one of the Father's appointed times, the Spirit will manifest in the lives of the saints of God and they will cry with such great joy that Babylon is fallen away from their hearts and they are finally free.

CHAPTER 31

BABYLON IS FALLEN

And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Revelation 14:8

The second angel follows the first angel, meaning that what the second angel declares is a result of the first message. What does this reference to Babylon mean and what is her wine?

The phrase *Babylon is fallen* is taken from the book of Jeremiah.

Babylon *was* a golden cup in the LORD’s hand, that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore the nations are deranged. Babylon has suddenly fallen and been destroyed. Wail for her! Take balm for her pain; perhaps she may be healed. Jeremiah 51:7-8

Babylon had influenced the whole world through her false teachings about life, death and the afterlife. Israel, God’s people, had been seduced by the teachings of Babylon and eventually her spiritual captivity became literal.

The voice of those who flee and escape from the land of Babylon declares in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of His temple. “Call together the archers against

ATONEMENT

Babylon. All you who bend the bow, encamp against it all around; let none of them escape. Repay her according to her work; according to all she has done, do to her; for she has been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.... Thus says the LORD of hosts: "The children of Israel *were* oppressed, along with the children of Judah; all who took them captive have held them fast; they have refused to let them go. Their Redeemer *is* strong; the LORD of hosts *is* His name. He will thoroughly plead their case, that He may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon. Jeremiah 50:28-29,33-34

Babylon represents a system at war with God's people, seeking to enslave them. Babylon is proud against the Lord. In the book of Revelation this city is represented as a mysterious woman who persecutes and destroys God's people.

The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name *was* written: Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth. I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. Revelation 17:4-6

Her system of worship with her sacrifices and offerings was embraced by the nations and eventually this system of Paganism was lifted up and taken into the papal system of worship.

The God she worships is the Trinity. The character of the God she worships is one whose justice demands death. This God is a God of force and a God of condemnation, showing mercy only to those considered worthy through their merits or through the support of the church. Her day of worship is the day of the sun – Sunday – and she sits as a judge ready to decide and arbitrate all matters of life and death.

Babylon is the complete antithesis to the message of the first angel of Revelation 14. Her mysterious doctrine enslaves her adherents to the fear

of death, keeping them forever insecure and never allowing them to enter into the rest Christ promised. Her Protestant daughters who worship the same Trinity and keep Sunday in honour of her decrees, offer a more palatable gospel than Rome but the results are the same; their gospel has not the power to free the soul from Babylon and her wine.

When a person discovers that the God of Jesus Christ does not condemn anyone nor is threatening to kill them; when they understand that the Sonship of Jesus to the Father is their own without any punishment required; when they see that God is the one on trial and they are the judges, the soul can experience what Mary experienced the night she washed the feet of Jesus with precious perfume.

And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured *it* on His head as He sat *at the table*. But when His disciples saw *it*, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to *the poor*." But when Jesus was aware of *it*, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did *it* for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her." Matthew 26:6-13

Mary demonstrates the freedom that comes to those who know they are forgiven and are cherished children of God. Her heart was full of gratitude to her Saviour for reclaiming her sense of value and cleansing her mind of her past guilt.

The gratitude of her soul was wonderfully expressed by the spikenard she had purchased and poured out in love to the Saviour. Her actions did not please the other followers of Jesus. It created indignation. It is the same type of indignation that originated in the heart of Adam and was carried by the Little Horn down to the end of the 2300-year prophecy.

The indignation of the other followers of Christ was unwittingly hatred towards God and His character. Mary's gratitude unmasked them all, yet she had no desire to expose them. She had only wished to quietly express her heartfelt thanks to her beloved Master. She had witnessed His beautiful character; His tender mercy, and His considerate manner and care for all men, women and children. She reflected His beautiful character in that she gave everything she had. This was the perfect mirror of what Christ was about to do in giving everything He had for us all.

In these last days of earth's history, a group of people will discern the true beauty of God's character. They will realise that He has never condemned them nor threatened to hurt them because of their sins.

In these last days of earth's history, a group of people will discern the true beauty of God's character. They will realise that He has never condemned them nor threatened to hurt them because of their sins. The effect of these truths will cause the soul to experience true freedom from Babylon and her wine.

The fragrance of their gratitude can't go unnoticed and the other followers of Christ will have indignation against them and accuse them before

the world. At that moment Jesus will stand in their defense even as He did for Mary and the final scenes of the world will then play out.

At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, *even* to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. Daniel 12:1

Then there will be a time of trouble such as never was before. Satan and his angels will appear to take complete control of the world because the fallen churches have refused to come into the light of the first angel of Revelation 14.

Like Mary, the focus of God's faithful followers is not to condemn others for their errors, but simply to show gratitude for their salvation, knowing that, though they are completely unworthy in themselves, their heavenly Father does not condemn them. No matter what happens they cling onto this truth.

Like Christ on the Cross they will be tempted to think that God has forsaken them. Then the faith of Jesus will fully manifest in them, they will take hold of their Saviour and hold on waiting for the blessing of peace to come to them even as Jacob wrestled with the angel all night. They are enabled to wrestle with God because Satan cannot convince them that God has truly forsaken them. Their belief in His ever-merciful character sustains them through their test and the last remnants of darkness in them vanishes away with the Old Covenant.

The final atonement is complete. We are one with God in character and have the joy before us of eternal life. What a journey it has been! God has led us from the brass altar in the Courtyard. He satisfied our human perceptions of justice and allowed us to believe that the Shepherd was smitten by God so that mercy might freely flow.

But then as we continue the journey, the truth of God's character shines through for those willing to receive it. The Courtyard is left out and we discern the meaning of the words of Jesus that He had finished all His Father had given Him to do the night before He died on the Cross. What a joy to know that God never desired sacrifice or offering, but He did it for our sakes, for our need for blood to be shed.

Now we see the truth of the Father's character. We see the dark shadows removed and we kneel before Him with tears of joy realising that we had completely misunderstood Him previously. We stand amazed to realise that Christ took our very nature to slay our natural enmity against Him. He suffered for over 6000 years, day after day enduring our indignation, waiting for the time when a group of people would believe the testimony He gave while on earth.

ATONEMENT

Finally, we are one with God and give thanks to the only begotten Son for coming to rescue us from the darkness of Satan and his false justice system.

How precious is the atonement; how wonderful to be fully in harmony with God. Praise the name of the Lord.

CHAPTER 32

A THANKFUL HEART

There are no words that can truly convey the gratitude I feel towards our Father in heaven for helping me to navigate this path towards a completed atonement. In my late teens, I tearfully confessed my sins to my Saviour and thanked God in faith that I was forgiven.

This was my brass altar experience. I believed that now I would not be destroyed by God for my sins. Jesus, beloved Jesus, was always with me. I felt sad if my thoughts were distracted from Him even for a few hours. From those moments to now, 36 years have elapsed as in a moment.

As each new truth was presented to me, the yearning for a deeper knowledge beckoned me forward. How to put all the pieces together was always in my mind, combined with my sorrow that more than 80% of any of the churches I attended really did not wish to go beyond a surface level commitment to know the truth.

The door of truth opened wide for me 20 years ago when my Saviour led me to realise that the words of the Father to His Son at the baptism of Christ were words that I could claim as my very own in Christ. This experience is documented in the book *Identity Wars* available at fatheroflove.info.

ATONEMENT

From that time, through many hardships and sorrows, the truth has been hammered out through prayer, Bible study and collaboration with other truth seekers around the world.

Now I stand upon the highest of peaks of the gospel mountains. I meditate upon the grace of our God and His Son and I am satisfied. I judge my Father to be the most loving, beautiful, caring being in the universe. One who does not use any force upon His children and never condemns them. He is so patient and forbearing, His mercy lasts forever for those who believe it and I judge Him worthy of my worship forever.

To my Saviour, Lord Jesus... words fail me. You are my everything, you have carried me the whole way and opened such beautiful truth to my soul. You have shown me the Father and I feel deep peace. I believe I am forgiven of my previous dark falsehood I once staggered under. I am mournful for the enmity that I have manifested towards You in my judgment and condemnation of others. But now I am blessed and know for certain you will deliver me from the darkness.

All of this fades now and the full joy of my atonement is in my hands. Lord Jesus, I trust you will manifest yourself fully in my heart. I know you will pour forth your Spirit upon me at your appointed times. I see your beautiful character; I am completely captured by it. I will wait as patiently as I am enabled and I know that soon, we shall see each other face to face and you will present me to our Father and I will know even as I am known.

To you Lord Jesus and to you dear Father belong power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing!

And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power *be* to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!"
Revelation 5:13

What are the steps involved for coming
into complete **harmony with God?**

Does God require **blood to be shed** before
He will forgive us?

Did God cause His Son to be
killed to **pay our debt** of sin?

Why did Jesus compare Himself to being
lifted up like the serpent made of brass?

What is the significance of Moses
striking the Rock when He was
commanded to speak to it?

If the human race was taken captive by Satan,
who sets the ransom price for our release?

Is **Penal Substitution** required for Salvation?

Is the death of the Cross a
Vicarious Atonement for our sins?

Do the Christian churches teach the
complete truth of the Atonement?

