




JUSTIFICATION IS ON ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST NOT EFFECTED OR SUPPLEMENTED BY WRATH

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PREFACE

The death of Christ is precious to all God's redeemed people and very much at the heart of my personal joy and peace and this study seeks to return to the simplicity of the gospel and escape the maze of *Anselm* with the long *Ariadne* line of biblical teaching stretching from prophet Isaiah through our Lord's own words to the apostle Paul and John the divine. It is my joy to reassure you that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself and to affirm that repentance and faith in Jesus Christ continue to be the efficient means of our response to His great love and the death of Christ as the Lamb of God shedding His precious blood for our reconciliation redemption and to atone for our sins is per se the sole basis of justification.

(1) INTRODUCTION-THEOLOGY AND HYMNOLOGY

The stern face of Calvinism continues to make its reappearance in applying in one form or other the divine wrath to the person of Christ on the cross and sometimes after the cross as well. The thinking goes that God should be mightily angry with Christ on our account. The idea is that justice is not vindicated unless God pours His wrath out to supplement the sufficient rigour of the death of his Son because we deserved eternal punishment for sin and less than that would be a miscarriage of justice. This trap was invented by *Anselm* who added to the satisfaction of divine justice the satisfaction of spent wrath and this has been bolted on to Pauline thought-to Isaiah's prophecy of Christ's suffering – to the idea of the mercy seat and it has taken root in the evangelical mind set though it is an addendum and did not come with gospel goods - it is not the reality we must live with. The death of Christ *per se* is the abiding means of our justification and all other theories of atonement and supplementary adjuncts are extraneous. Modern cutting edge songs have appeared bearing convictions more insistent even than the theologians espouse – and by rhyme without the full force of exegetical reasoned demonstration these tend to impress evangelicals. *Melancthon's* notion was that God spent wrath on Jesus. *Spurgeon* in an aside noted that hell has for its fiercest flame separation of the soul from God. CHS however, could not link separation from God and Christ coming apart from God because the idea is heretical. If God did not remain in the person of Christ the atonement is invalid. *Packer* adopts another manner of speaking talking of Christ's dereliction as hell on earth or “the god-forsakenness of hell”. What we do know of the cross is that through death on the cross our Lord destroyed and disabled and rendered effete the power and hold of death. Despite the want of biblical texts that may be marshalled and the diffidence of theologians to volumise the gospel with wrath we are encouraged to sing gutsily “He bore the wrath”. *Pat Sczebel* has a composition that runs “Jesus thank you, the Father's wrath was completely satisfied” which appears almost to substitute a new ground of Christian assurance whilst Keith

and **Kristyn Getty** write, “Till on that cross as Jesus died the wrath of God was satisfied”. I think there tends to be some confusion between divine justice and the wrath of God. Judgment is mentioned in Romans 5 but not as falling on Christ. He was never judged a sinner save by men - He was sent and declared to be a Saviour by God the Father. The concept of penal substitution is constrained to the death of Christ who put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Hebrews 9.26) and in that He died he died to sin once(as the agent or instrument of death) but now He lives and lives as God’s instrument of salvation (Romans 6.10). Though **Stuart Townend** with some diffidence and a trace of doubt writing in a blog said “I think it right that the Father’s wrath was poured out Jesus”- on God the Son, the Father’s beloved Son and our precious Saviour his composition is softer. He writes “How great the pain of searing loss. The Father turns his face away.”

The essential want of emphasis on eschatology and the judgment has lead to wrath being connected in error to the cross and not to the Great White Throne. The cross is the mercy seat, the white throne is the judgment seat.

(2) MISSIOLOGY-SAMUEL ZWEMER “THE GLORY OF THE CROSS”

Zwemer according to **Chirgwin** deserves to be counted among the vanguard of missionaries who ministered in Moslem lands. In those lands the atonement is counted “foolishness” and missionaries are driven daily to deeper meditation upon it and thus to a deeper passion for Christ and stronger conviction about the heart of their mission. Whilst the cross has ever been counted by many as a scandal it is ultimate truth and the grand necessity of our redemption and reconciliation to God. As Zwemer said “The cross interprets sin and shame and love”. There Christ bore the curse despised the shame and made an offering for sin Isaiah 53.19 with Hebrews 10.5, 10,12,14 and 20. That offering was His death.

(3) THE LAST OF THE PURITANS -DERELICTION AND SATISFACTION

In Matthew 27.46 and in Mark 15.34 as in Psalm 22.1 we have the words “My God my God why hast thou forsaken me?”. Spurgeon took the words one by one and pronounced:-

Why What is the great cause of such a strange fact as for God to leave His own Son at such a time and in such a plight? There was no cause in Him” Then Why?”

Hast “It is done, the Saviour is feeling its dread effect as He asks the question; it is surely true, but how mysterious!

Thou This is the worst of all (Spurgeon has considered Judas betrayal and the flight of the disciples). Hell itself has for its fiercest flame *the separation of the soul from God*. (Clearly Spurgeon before Packer considered the experience of the cross hellish)

Forsaken If Thou hadst chastened I might bear it, for Thy Face would shine, but to forsake me utterly, ah! Why is this? Me, Thine innocent obedient suffering Son. Why do you leave me to perish?

Spurgeon explains “Jesus is forsaken because our sins had separated between us and our God”. We might then ask if the cry which has been heard by Peter in his guilt and sin and sorrow in those respects was afterward connected to the words of peace in the upper room and the appeal from the self-same lips for his unrivalled love.

(4) CALVIN AND DENNY

Calvin who in his institutes 2.16.10 observes that “Jesus endured the torments of a lost man” borrowed the idiom from **Luther** who added to the creedal statement on hell Christ’s garden & Golgotha agony where he viewed Christ as seeing himself as lost, cursed and suffering the torment of the damned. Luther depicted Gethsemane as Christ’s struggle with God. The Hebrew writer says “He was heard (in Gethsemane) out of his cautious care ευλαβειας.” **Denny** writing on Luke 22.44 “Jesus did sweat great tears “ criticizes Calvin’s statement as dogmatico-religious not historical fact. In other words Jesus was not actually “spiritually lost” but Calvin was grappling with the depths of the passion when he borrowed Luther’s ideas which began to take shape as reformed dogmatic in his writings. I return to my central thesis that the forsakenness of the cross did not hinder prayer-cum-vow as between Father and Son nor did it lessen the love of each for the other (as nothing in earth or hell can separate us from Christ [Romans 8.37-9] we would surely understand this!) nor separate the persons of the Trinity as an eternally lost soul might be separated from God.

(5) THE POTION OF WRATHIFICATION IN THE CUP OF LOVE

Through the centuries believers have struggled to comprehend and expound what happened at the cross. They have asserted various theories to grapple with all the aspects. Satisfaction” theory proposed by Anselm is reflected in **Trent** and the **Protestant Symbols** of doctrine. Trent limited the application of Christ’s satisfaction to pre-baptismal sin. Reformed theologians quoted Galatians 3.13-cum-Deut.21.23 on Christ’s bearing the curse on the tree and 2 Corinthians 5.21; on His being “made “sin” or “sin-offering” for us, together with the “propitiation” or “mercy seat” texts 1Jn2.2, 4.10 and Romans 3.25 in favour of “penal substitution. In so doing some of them mixed wrath and love in the experience of Christ. Those who add wrath to the mix do have to limit the atonement because if Christ took wrath for all then were all saved. Do the logic. The death of Christ justifies the sinner who repents and believes. The death of Christ is a manifestation of the depths of humiliation to which God’s love would go. If the wrath of hell was suffered for saints only we must needs add to say that those God elected and loved from the first occasioned this wrath as our sin occasioned Christ’s death. The same theological posture demands that we acknowledge that this wrath was in no way on behalf of the multitude of the lost. In a sense we have two hells - one on the cross and or immediately afterwards and one persisting for eternity. The Reformation creeds will not affirm this because justification depends on who Christ is – the spotless lamb of God - and upon what Jesus Christ did - shedding his blood for our salvation on the cross. There is not a second category that validates justification. Still many who speak with great authority are whispering and singing it. To recognise the purpose of penal satisfaction as **Christ’s death** to bring righteousness and life to light, to bear the curse and shed atoning blood as an offering for our reconciliation to God as He died the just for the unjust does not entail God pouring wrath on His Son but rather simply “giving His Son” without reserve. Wrath is reserved for and associated with existential and eschatological judgment. The bitterness of the cup of suffering was in Jesus’ death and the wrench of love in the heart of Father and Son not in divine hell

sent punitive measures visited on our Lord in the direct will of God and borne simultaneously

(6) THE ABSOLUTE OF “GRIEF” ASSOCIATED WITH “SIN” AND THE “SIN OFFERING” AND THE ACME OF JOY IN THE CHURCH

It was *Ludolf the Carthusian* monk that first suggested that our Lord on the Cross repeated with meditation the words of Psalms 22-31 where the words “My God My God why have you forsaken me” and “Into thy hands I commend my Spirit” with many others voiced by the Lord at Calvary are first found. Ludolf’s conclusion finds a pertinent affirmation in the words voiced and events that developed at the cross. “When they had sung an hymn” etc. A well annotated Jewish tradition is the singing of Psalms 115-118 at Passover - j sp hdgh after the filling of the fourth cup of wine and opening the door for Elijah. The fourth cup accompanies the prayer "Rebuild Jerusalem speedily in our days. Lead us there. We will bless You for this in holiness and purity." Today before that prayer & drinking of **Cup four** the following occurs:-

- (1) A prayer for wrath against the wicked of the nations
 - (2) Closure of the door
 - (3) Sing Psalm 115 1-11 & 115 12-18
 - (4) Sing 116.1-11 & 116.12-19
 - (5) Sing 117 1-2 a very short psalm of praise for all nations
 - (6) Psalm 118 1-7, 8-24 within modern Passover v.25 is repeated.
- The monastic and Judaic apprehensions each emphasise praise to God.

(7) ISAIAH’S PASSION PROPHECY – SHARED ANGUISH

Now the passion of Christ is what you would expect – it is positively traumatic. Deep sadness hangs over the last events of Christ’s life. *Jeremiah prophesied “Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow?”*. Isaiah prophesied “*He has put Him to grief*”.

In the upper room Jesus said “I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” In Gethsemane Jesus said “*My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death*”[Mk. 14.34] and Matthew records “He began to be sorrowful and troubled{Matthew 26.37]

Coming at this from another angle the writer to the Hebrews tells us that the Lord “For *the joy that was set before Him* endured the cross”[Hebrews12.2].

Luke reports that “Being in an anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling on the ground.(literally like congealing blood]. This sorrow of heart was before our Lord was handed over and after the strengthening visit of an angel. The Lord prayed most earnestly “Bear this cup along and away from me **if it is your inclination** (Βουλη)- nevertheless your fundamental will purpose and choice not mine must be done. Christ puts the matter very plainly. He does not naturally want to die on a cross and He is well aware that the Father ever inclines to His Son’s petitions in deep affection but he cedes that there is no other way and the **purpose of God**(Θελημα) is right and good and this hour and the time is that of God’s Passover - God’s “fullness of time”. Isaiah presented the Messiah as the “man of sorrows” introducing Him as **Despised for who He was and declined or forsaken of men He was a heroic man of pain of body and sorrow of soul**(*Hebrew bak*)and acquainted in body and mind with exhaustion /calamity /grief

(Hebrew *hl h*) and it was as if we veiled our faces from Him. Despised for whom He was and we did not value Him or reckon to Him what belongs to Him

*The Lord is said to be special in being able to bear suffering. Servants often have heavy roles and suffer exhaustion. In this Jesus was outstanding. In Samaria, in Gethsemane and at Calvary to quote but a few cases as *απνιον* He lived to the edge of physical endurance*

4. Surely He lifted the burden of our exhaustion calamity or grief, He bore for those last months (as a mother a child in the womb) in His heart our sorrow of soul and pain of body and we imputed or reckoned to Him "meddling" or "being smitten by calamity"; "having been smitten of God by a plague" and brought low. *This is precisely predictive of what the Jews thought of Jesus. He was meddling in matters where He had supposedly no right. Nemesis overtook Him. He was brought low. Indeed He was *απνιον* but for our sakes*

5. He was pierced through (Hebrew *l j*) for our falling away or breaking the covenant (Hebrew *[vp]*; He was broken in spirit (Hebrew *akd*) for our iniquity (Hebrew *nm* [taking what is not mine in a depraved or barefaced way-as Joseph's cup – Genesis 44.16 or cohabiting Exodus 21.10 – as in Ezekiel 21.30 "The crime of the end" or one without recovery – due final judgment). The Lord as servant interposed His precious blood in our utter extremity. The chastening or discipline of our peace was on Him and by His striped blows (Hebrew *rbj*) we find healing for ourselves. *The uncanny precision of the Hebrew prophecy details the Roman flogging before its very invention. Rome was founded 752 BC Isaiah wrote 790-740. The "stripes" may be taken not alone as marks deep in the skin like joining rivers but may be taken as "joining that which is thrown down" in resurrection league and fellowship. So the WOUNDS are ghastly rivers of blood on the body but they build the body of Christ into a mighty movement of the Spirit. This is eternal health, through His stripes it is ours.*

10. And the Lord is willing or inclines (xpj) to continually smite Him with stripes crushing His spirit He makes Himself sick (cf. Micah 6.13 where God makes Himself sick by striking others – clearly He turned to making Himself sick for them! Hebrew *yl j h* Hiphil with the reflexive meaning) because You will place His soul or physical life as an offering -that by which one contracts guilt (Numbers 5.7-8) (Hebrew *mva*)

(8) GETHSEMANE CONFIRMATION OF DIVINE WILL AND DECREE & SUPPORT FOR CHRIST'S OBEDIENCE

No-one can pronounce on the mission of the angel of Gethsemane-for no words of his are recorded. The word "strengthen" means to "confirm in an opinion" so that *instantly the Lord gave his mind on absolute obedience* the angel messenger signaled God's absolute consent readiness and approbation - the Father would be present in the entirety of the intensity of the passion trauma which lay right ahead ensuring this vow of obedience was followed by a most glorious outpouring of blessing earth had yet known and the acme of joy in the birth of the church age. So Paul could write to the Corinthians that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself " (2Cor 5.19).

The deep trauma of ELOI ELOI LAMA SABACHTHANI on the cross followed but heaven's consent to the outworking of Isaiah 53 meant that the Lord would see of the travail of his soul and justify many in 'his death and sorrow would turn to joy. The Hebrew writer says that our Lord did "bide the onset of the cross and undertook it boldly and sustained it to the end for the joy that was before settled and fixed in accordance with Isaiah 53.11-12 and God's eternal plan and covenant.

**(9) HE WAS "MADE SIN" FOR US WITHOUT WRATHIFICATION
"God made Him who did not to be sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2Corinthians 5.21)**

First notice the use of "Not knowing sin". It is not the absolute οὐ in Greek but the speculative or cognitive μὴ for our Lord knew the heart of man and was in one sense absolutely aware of sin and its consequence. He himself said that He came "Not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" Mt9.13, Mk2.17, Lk5.32. This means several things:-

- (a) Our Lord did not observe sin insofar as he did not look up observe and ever feast his eyes on sin.
- (b) He did not think judgmentally about sin so as to be continually passing sentence like the Pharisees though His awareness was greater. He had compassion on those who sinned and were out of the way.
- (c) He did not once have carnal knowledge of or actual involvement in sinning in His person during His whole life.

Our Lord was perfect in devotion to the Father and purity, open accepting (receiving sinners) and sincere in attitude and perfectly sinless.

Yet He became sin

There is no issue if the next word αμαρτια is taken to mean sin offering" But if it is demanded that the next word is actually **sin** there is a theological issue.

The verb is active and aorist and the expression in plain Greek reads "He created sin". There obviously has to be a legal or special sense if the word sin is "sin" as generally understood though Calvinists are not infrequently accused of arguing that God is the author of sin. What then is the meaning? Let us study the words!

- (a) **He made** It could mean (i) "Create" "Bring into existence" "inspire"(and in particular "to represent" as poetry does life so **He represented all sin" in His person** coming under the judgment of death) "invent" "cause" or (ii) in the abstract "to make a sacrifice...when connected to the next word understood in a special sense it would read perfectly well a sin offering.

- (b) **Sin** (1) Various of the meanings as "missing the mark", "failure", deprivation" make no sense in English without interpretation; but (2) according to Buttman who took the meaning further back than any it is linked to the cognates

αμειρω αμερδω αμβροτος (αμβροσια) with the significance "to take away the share" to "amerce" or to "lose" (sometimes of life). This meaning enables Paul's expression to read **"He was amerced of the elixir or food" of His relationship with the Father-converse-God's word - there was silence.** It appears to mean also "death" itself. This was utterly outside of God's previous experience - extraneous to the very nature of the living God. This sense balances with the apodosis for he was amerced and we were endowed.

(c) **for us** In place of our becoming without the food and word of God and dying that death where there is no life word He died. The mystery inspires awe and worship. The spirit of Christ went to the Father and He visited Hell and many bodies arose subsequently and when He arose their spirits returned. But note that bodies were given through his death and before his resurrection (Matthew 27.53). The cross amerced him of his share as the righteous one and made him sins' representative in dying that we might have a share in divine righteousness.(**δικαιοσύνη**). Notice the use of **"become"** – it means "to have life" and to have standing. As to the much simpler interpretation "sin offering" if we render the Greek word **ἁμαρτία** into Hebrew and read the text of 2 Corinthians 5.21 in Hebrew when we read it in its best sense it renders **"He offered Him as a sin offering for us who knew no sin"**. Universally in the Mosaic ceremonials where offering is referred to it is this word **atafj** that is used as in Leviticus 6.25.

(10) WRATHIFICATION RE-EMERGES IN PHILIP MELANCTHON & DUTCH THEOLOGY

Melancthon explained the cry in terms of the experience of divine wrath against sin. **Meyer** says that Christ's agony over human rejection for a moment overshadowed his conscious union with the Father. **Philip Schaff** speaks of this as the culmination of vicarious sufferings in this experience of our Lord as death the wages of sin and the culmination of all the misery of man, of which the Saviour was free, but which He voluntarily assumed from infinite love in behalf of the race." The **Dutch** go further in their **Reformed Church** statement to aver "He humbled Himself unto the deepest reproach and pains of hell, both in body and soul, on the tree of the cross when he cried out "My God My God why has thou forsaken me" that we might be accepted and never forsaken". **Mrs Browning** calls it "the orphan cry" which went up "that of the lost no son should use those words of desolation". **Robert Keable** tells us our Lord was voicing the experience of His life-that of the "Man of Sorrows" ever previously borne in silence within his own heart. The atoning thing amid all this is not the amount of suffering or the acuteness of suffering but the obedience and holiness which marked that suffering in the perfect one. There is no ultimate and perfect analysis of the cry of the cross. When all is said its intrinsic significance remains a mystery. In what intelligible sense could the infinite and loving Father forsake His only begotten Son, leaving him alone in darkness and dire need? There are some too ready to speak of Christ as the object of Divine wrath; and yet without careful qualifications this remains a thought painful beyond expression. Surely never for a moment can this Divine sufferer have been the object of the Father's displeasure – He that came from heaven to do His will, to execute the purpose of infinite love in the redemption of a ruined world at whatever personal cost. Never, on the contrary, was the thought of the Father fixed on the Son with more unqualified approbation and intense affection: "Therefore my Father loveth me, because I lay down my life in order that I might take it again". Never can He have been more thoroughly conscious that He was doing the Father's will and must be approved and could never be wholly forsaken.

(11) GOD DOES NOT HATE THE SINNER - WRATHIFICATION IS NOT THE ANSWER TO DERELICTION IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

Evangelical preachers wax hot and scream aloud that God is angry with the sinner every day. Now who can doubt that Christians are sinners –and is this God’s daily relationship to us? Where is the evidence in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ? The call to evangelicalism is to ceaselessly read Romans. Every preacher should rehearse Romans 5.8-9 “**God demonstrates his love for us in this:** While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by His blood how much **more shall we** be saved from God’s wrath through him!” What scripture says is that “God judgeth the righteous *and* is angry with **the wicked** every day” Psalm 7.11. The anger that is seen as “foaming” or “deeply indignant” or “provoked” is expressed toward or vented upon the wicked. The judgment indicated involves defending the righteous and delivering them or litigating on their behalf. Thus though the righteous fall under the category of sinners it cannot be said that God is foaming with anger daily at them. The generalisation should be taken out of commission.

(12) JUSTIFICATION DOES NOT REQUIRE WRATHIFICATION IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST TO BRING ABOUT SALVATION

Justification by faith is the doctrine under assault in the trend toward wrathification. The shorter Catechism definition of justification is short but vital. It reads “Justification is an act of God’s free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone.” Catholic dogma for long ages accentuated the physical sufferings of Jesus and appealed to the pity of Mary whose bleeding heart felt so deeply for her Son. But it was not the physical suffering of the cross that wrought our peace - it was the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of Christ who as the lamb of God was “betrayed” and given into the hands of men *nihil obstat* suffering death upon the cross for us. Now a Protestant dogma of wrath is being generated which demands that the spiritual sufferings of our Lord Jesus in the form of Hell suffered on the cross or afterwards is the cause of our justification. Wrath is not being presented as *accidens* but as the principle behind the atonement. In face of this Christian doctrine must maintain that the sole basis of our justification and its efficient cause is unchanged - it is the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of the lamb of God. Counterveiled within the suffering of Christ is the love of God which is the origin and source of our justification because God is not to be thought of as the cold face of eternal jurisprudence but as a loving creator and redeemer of His elect. It is as to offering the shedding of his precious blood on the cross in death - the blood of a perfect sacrifice-the blood of the unique innocent Son of God voluntarily poured out for us. At the divine level Love not wrath was operative for *God was in (the intimate circle of Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2Corinthians 5.19).*

(13) WRATHIFICATION OF THE ATONEMENT IS NOT THE INTENT OF PAULINE TEACHING

To stay with Paul’s second letter to Corinth for a while is to clarify the matter of how God the Father relates to God the Son in our justification. Paul begins with a statement about a better body for the spirit when it is dismissed from this one-a matter which in itself is not well understood. He passes to firmly

anchor us to immediate passing to glory or transformation. The apostle then tells us we shall appear before the Bema of Christ though he does not associate this with the judgment of the Great White Throne or any sort of cursory hearing and immediate dismissal. The apostle does indicate that whilst we have reverence for God who is to be feared not all have such understanding and need to be persuaded of the gospel. For our part we are known to Him and will not hear those terror laden words “Depart from me ye cursed”. Paul expresses the hope that the word he heralds and the attitude that commends it is well understood at Corinth.

Paul then states the kernel of the gospel he proclaims. He says “The AGAPE of Christ holds us together or embraces us (*συνεχω*) that interpret this ‘If one died on behalf of all, surely all were dead and He died on behalf of all that those who live **should** not still continue living for themselves but for Him who died and rose again for them.’” The actual and intended result (*ωστε*) of the cross and resurrection is then that we from now on perceive, investigate or look at nothing superficially on the level of the flesh. Everything involves the mighty acts of God in Christ. But even if we have known or learned about Christ after the flesh we do not now still have that awareness. “The actual result intended is that if anyone is in Christ he is an utterly new creation. Old things are passed away, behold all things have become new.” Paul is trying to induce the concept that we are in an utterly new world since the cross and resurrection of Christ. This new world is all from God who has changed the currency of our lives from enmity to friendship with Himself through Jesus Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation according as for instance because “**God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself not accounting or reckoning their transgressions to them**” and on His own behalf and by His action placing in our circle (as Christians) the word of reconciliation. Therefore we are empowered ambassadors on behalf of and on the part of Christ, according as and as if God in Christ is appealing or moving by his Spirit to appeal through us we beg a favour on Christ’s behalf “Be reconciled to God”. So the gospel presents divine favour and seeks the favour of men for what it offers. In the ministry of the gospel we are willing to be reduced to “beggars”. The specific reason that enforces this craving for the ear and heart of men is that “He who (still) does not have any experience of sin or sinning for our sake created a sin offering.

1. We need to understand that when the AV says “*God made Him to be sin*” where the verb “made” is active this does not mean that Christ was made “a sinner”.
2. It is widely agreed to mean “He made Him to be a sin offering” under the Hebrew understanding as set out below. For the Corinthians who knew Aristotle and his ethics the Gentile understanding would be that there was “sin” between that which was “unrighteous” and that which was “unfortunate”.
3. Paul may well have been explaining the cross as much more than a simple misfortune and also denying that the death of Christ was simple injustice. It was “sin bearing” or an act involving *satisfaction for sin*.
4. Read or understood as a Hebrew statement it would mean “He made an offering (ASHAH) of Himself (ATHO) for *the* sin (LEHATTEATH) on our

behalf in order that we might become and stay alive in His house belonging to or related to the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God.”

5. Returning to “He (God) has made Him(Christ) to be sin for us” we must eschew the tendency to adopt a “whipping boy” approach. There are three significations to the verb *ποιεω* which clarify this statement alongside the root definition of “sin”.

(14) ROOT DEFINITION OF SIN & WHAT IS ENTAILED IN BEING MADE SIN

Buttmann in his lexicon follows the meaning of “sin” further upstream than anyone. He makes the link between *αμαρτια* and *αμβροσια* between “missing” or being without the “elixir of God”. Sin is not about shooting arrows and missing a target although that is the meaning of the old English word. It is about a deprivation of what pagans called the “nectar of the Gods” or the “elixir of immortality”. In the case of our Lord who was put in exactly this position being deprived during the throes of His passion of any word to annul from heaven amidst that agony – this deepest humiliation and highest obedience is described well by Paul in Philippians 2. This ultimate in self-emptying had never before touched the life of God. Only Jesus knew that experience – it has no equivalent in the universe of self abnegation. It was most as Isaiah describes it “most grievous”.

As to the root meanings of “*being made* (*ποιεω*) *sin*” there are three

- 1.The external effect
2. the successful effect
- 3.The continuous effect.

Thus God who was a Spirit sent His Son in the flesh and our Lord the **PROPER MAN** on the cross went through an experience absolutely **external** to Himself in being stripped of heavenly things that had nourished Him eternally and since the incarnation. This is an experience both external or strange grievous and private to our Lord and not susceptible of explanation in the absolute sense. Second he was “made sin” in that as the “**MEDIATOR**” between God and man in this deepest obedience and most radical identification with Man – though still possessing deity He dealt with sin and destroyed sin’s power This is the successful effect of that unique obedience. The third effect takes us to the continuous nature of the benefits which flow in the form of the “elixir” of God and of immortality out of the Lord’s great work of love. Every day in every nation through every age the benefits of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ flow backwards and forwards as (AMBROSIAL) **MEDICINE** for all our souls diseases (the benefits of God’s grace) into a myriad lives who look in faith and repentance to the Saviour. It is everywhere plain from the writings of the Apostles that through Jesus’ death there is released life and power which brings the very life of God into the soul of man. Christ’s death is not only the basis of justification – it is also the source of our life. Jesus said “Unless a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone but if it die it brings forth much fruit”. The travail of His soul was to justify many and as Isaiah said He brought forth “a posterity”. This new life is produced by the moving of the Spirit of God and the Word of Christ’s power and promise and it is the gift of God. To those who believe in Jesus as Lord. Sin existed before the commandment as *rebellious disobedience*

against a holy God in Eden where it first entered and its descriptor was the deprivation of spiritual life which was remedied at the cross by the *signal obedience* of our Lord Jesus Christ as the God given lamb and mercy seat –the one who satisfied divine justice and brought us to God by the shedding of His precious blood - thus saving us from the wrath to come.

(15) THOUGH WRATH ABIDES ON MAN ETERNAL JUDGMENT IS TO BE PREACHED IN THE ENVELOPE OF MERCY THAT PROPITIATES

Before the law in one sense sin was not known as Paul says. Under the law the people spent much time in consideration of sins of ignorance and prior to Passover and in that feast sin was symbolically transferred to the offering. The concept we have of dividing up classifying and multiplying sin hails from medieval times. Anciently sin or disobedience annulled union with God. Each Jew in bringing a sin offering was required to lay his hand and thereby his sin upon the animal he presented. Thus separation by disobedience is “the” sin and Christ through the gospel of the cross can end it as He creates union with God by His death. “Every sin deserves God’s wrath and curse because as disobedience it separates us from the person and will of God”. None is too small to do just this. Jesus classified all sin and blasphemy under one head and said “All sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men save the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit” which denotes rejection of the offices of the forgiver. To construct a sin mountain and cause God to pour wrath on that account upon Jesus is beside the point. Because God covenanted in Himself to forgive all sin and give life on account of Christ’s atoning blood and death to all who repent and believe in faithfulness exactly what the eternal covenant demanded was the death of the testator. God can “pass over” sin however heinous through covenant mercy and it needs not even a word of judgment once we are in Christ. Paul says that God winked at, neglected or overlooked the ignorance of the past (Acts 17.30) as in His love and justice He alone as “judge of all the earth” could search the hearts of the ancients who called out to Him as their creator and ultimate remedy for wrong and hope in death.

(16). WRATHIFICATION DOES NOT COMMAND THE SUPPORT OF ISAIAH

Next I would like to set at rest the idea that God the Father within the glorious prophecy of Isaiah can be represented as heaping all His harshest punitive measures on His Son and so ending up pacified. This extreme form of penal satisfaction has slender support from the wide spectrum of theology and little if any support in scripture. It leads to a divided view of God and serves to separate Christians because it adopts an absolutely errant theology and has left its anchorage in the reconciling love of God.

- (1) In company with **F C Jennings** who over a lifetime studied the book we must recognise that the Father put His Son to grief and that the Son of God understood **the command** of John 10.18 without which divine justice could not reconcile or redeem man. That grief was in the “cup” and the cup was the “death of Christ”, “His blood shed” and the experience of the “separating effect” of sin. Under the command of John 10.18 Christ **had**

absolute authority to stand at the head of a resurrection people. However, God the Father loved the Son (John 10.17) and at the execution of God's will in the cross to understand His mind in the words of Isaiah He Himself (the Father) felt sick. **Jurgen Moltmann** refers to the "anguish" in the heart of God and in Christ's passion under Kierkegaard's concept of "Fear and trembling". The vital qualification is that Jesus endured for promised joy and died assured of resurrection. He said "The son of man shall be crucified and rise again the third day". At the centre of atonement the command of the father and the authority of the Son and the entire enterprise of redemption answers to a deep overwhelming love which planned that from Israel and all nations there would be a great multitude of redeemed throughout eternity for the love of whom and their very life God undertook the work of redemption and key to that was the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. To take hold of "He feared" in Hebrews 2.9 and to read it as anxiety "that cannot lead to hope" in the sense of Kierkegaard is misleading. Nevertheless there was deep suffering (sickness unto death) and isolation in the experience of our Saviour and tender empathy and silent concert of commitment in the Father's heart which sent the angel to Gethsemane, sent the worldwide darkness, sent the angel to the Garden tomb, raised up Jesus to the central height and sent the Spirit to endorse and expand His redemptive work all over the world.

- (2) I wish to observe that it is in no way necessary to interpret the "bruising" of v5 "**He was bruised** for our iniquities" differently from the bruising of v10 "where we read "And" or "But" "**it pleased the Lord to bruise Him**, he has caused Him to be wearied or become sick (even to the point of supplication)" **Brad Jersak** takes the second reference to be an additional "bruising" but the additional words in v.10 read in Hebrew "Therefore it pleased the Lord to bruise Him...when You will make His soul and offering for sin, He will see a seed and prolong His days and *the pleasure of the Lord* will go on with success or grow well by His hand". The first "pleasure" is that of the Father to "bruise" in declaring His Son just and for His sake justifying men and thus bring forth everlasting righteousness shared with man by imputation (cf. akd with xpj in Job 13.3 "I desire to put a legal defense", 33.32 "I desire to justify you" as here in Isa.53.10". ***The Lord was pleased to have an answer in the sacrifice His beloved Son made for our justification***) The second pleasure is that of the Son who immediately rejoiced in that He "succeeded" in atoning or completed the work the Father gave Him to do. This propitiation atonement and reconciliation was measured by His resurrection and its first fruits and by those born again of the Spirit - first the thief and shortly thereafter the 120 and after his ascension the 5000 and a never ending stream... The "bruising" was no surfeit of mysterious tribulation but the cross with the glorious just one never stooping to revile but becoming God's perfect sin offering and satisfying divine justice. The atonement is for ever a glorious manifestation of the length and depth to which **divine sorrowing love** will go.

- (3) In Isaiah 53.6 the Father is said to have caused all our Iniquities to meet upon His Son. In a sense [gp speaks of “striking” or “killing” besides “lighting upon” or reaching Jesus on the cross. Better still we are to consider that “all the iniquities” of Israel and the world fall upon Christ at the cross. The meeting in Jesus of all our sin is more than fortuitous - because of who He was that meeting is the last stand of sin as an enemy and the opening of victory because meeting is also supplication since sin cannot meet Christ without the sinner and at the cross sinners meet with supplication together with a Mediator who says “Father forgive”.
- (4) The adversative “yet” in Isaiah 53.4 has no equivalent in the Hebrew. The text simply states “We reckoned or invented the notion that He was “stricken **smitten of God** and afflicted”(as a sort of leprous punishment for his supposed blasphemy). Then comes the adversative “**But he was pierced or wounded for our transgressions and bruised or sorely hurt in spirit for our iniquity**”(53.4). It was all about man’s sin and human malice - not divine wrath upon Him. There is then 53.10 where *Tregelles* renders “It pleased the Lord to sicken His wound”. What is this. Is this God adding grief to grief? What can “bruising sickness” or “trampling sorrow” mean? It means that his sickness to death was refined yet further. The image comes from “threshing” and brokenness so that in the deepest refined obedience the life of Christ was put under extreme pressure and strain of knowing the sickness of death amid the instant totally irreversible and unprecedented circumstances of this death. We are facing what *Kierkegaard* speaks of as “sickness unto death” the final throes. The Hiphil verb “to make sick” must speak of the final breaking of the heart. *This cup was to be drunk to the dregs*. Both Gethsemane and Calvary declare what Paul calls the humility or humiliation of the cross. At Gethsemane there was an angel and here there was “darkness” **yet was Christ to endure the non-interference of the Father until his heart was broken in death**. The Father chased the heckling chiding reviling crowds away in the darkness and through the quaking but yet Christ in his spirit had to endure to the bitter end - but as Peter stated He showed himself “perfect” with unprecedented obedience of a refined sort not found in men below and as the perfect lamb amid most awful torture suffering of mind and body. When He was reviled He reviled not again (1Peter2.23).
- (5) Verse 10. And the Lord is willing or inclines *to continually smite Him with stripes* crushing His spirit He makes Himself sick (cf. *the same usage in Micah 6.13 where God makes Himself sick by striking others – clearly He turned to making Himself sick for them!* Hebrew *yljh* Hiphil with the reflexive meaning) because You will place His soul or physical life as an offering - that *by which one contracts guilt* (Numbers 5.7-8) (Hebrew *mva*)

The placing of the life of Messiah is described by the Hebrew verb *מנח* which means "to constitute" "lay as a foundation" and "name Him" – also "to pledge" "to treasure for the future" and "to prepare" This is the counsel of the divine will in eternity past. Thus Christ understood His place as guilty as distinct from feeling personal guilt-as an adopted child knows he is a son).The “offering” was a reparation offering for the

broken covenant and it would introduce a new covenant basis in Christ that gave joy to the Lord.

(17) “THE CRISIS” IS YET TO COME

There are as many references to “judgment” or crisis in the teaching of Christ as to the “lamb” in the Apocalypse. Of these two may not be eschatological viz. “My judgment is just” and “my judgment is true”(John5.30 & 8.16). A third speaks of the annulment of the reign of Satan in deceit and power and his ancient indictment of Yahweh in the world (John12.31, 16.11, Heb.2.14,1 John3.8).

Paul also speaks of the “crisis” of judgment in 2 places-2Thess1.5 & 1Tim5.24 and both are eschatological. The Hebrew writer equally has two notices (9.27 & 10.27) and both are eschatological. James has an acutely interesting reference to “crisis” when he refers to eschatological crisis in the wake of failure to show mercy in this life. He appends a principle which is the very principle of the cross “Mercy rejoices against judgment”.(James 2.13) –it exults over in victory and has no fear at all of judgment.” Thus at the cross Christ was reverent but he did not fear any judgment for in absolute solidarity with the Father he was showing mercy that would reconcile the sinner. Peter has three references and all are eschatological. Jude has two references and both are eschatological. There are four references in the Apocalypse and one in 1John4.17 and again these are exclusively apocalyptic. Were we to approach the subject on a wider canvass and examine the verb “to judge” the thesis would be undisturbed in all NT references where the context is not localised to a legal wrangle dispute or issue on law or custom or criticism. Paul does not call the “death of Christ” the judgment of God” but the “Gift” of grace that brings justification (Romans5.15, 16a, 16b, 17 [provision], “act of righteousness” or conveying of righteousness 18, and “obedience”[unto death]19. So the King of righteousness said “It is finished” and returned victorious in spirit to God and brought eternal life to believers. Thus all who neglect or reject mercy face the judgment to come. We need to preach the judgment to come as a crisis to be avoided.

(18) CHRIST MADE HIMSELF A SIN OFFERING FREELY SHEDDING HIS BLOOD. WRATHIFICATION IS TO DO WITH PUNISHING THE WICKED NOT CLEARING THE GUILTY WHICH IS THE BUSINESS OF MERCY

To establish the doctrine of the cross with absolute clarity we need to look at Christ as a “sin offering” in terms that Paul would have fully understood when he used the term in 2 Corinthians 5.21 **τον μη γινοντα αμαρτιαν υπερ ημων αμαρτιαν εποιησεν ινα ημεις γενωμεθα δικαιοσυνη θεου εν αυτω.** The one not knowing sin (“to his cost” *Homer Theocritus* and *Sophocles* reflecting the Hebrew [dy “to experience in himself” as guilt] **He made the sin bearer** (as our sin was placed on Christ who like the scapegoat became the “sin bearer”- the suffering servant being prominent [**F. F. Bruce**] [God placed our sin on the sinless Jesus and as our substitute in our place God punished Him with death - **Leitzmann**] **that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.** This we call “the Great exchange”.

Now let us look at the elements of teaching that arise from our understanding of Christ as our “sin bearer”. The best monograph on the subject is no longer available – it was Harry Ironside’s 4th lecture on “The sin offering” given away back in 1929 and

printed in New York. by **Loizeaux** who regarded him a the foremost biblical teacher of the era.

There are vital truths to encompass and I will set these out in short compass and preserve something I hope of the sharp focus of **Jrongside** in the doing. The simple re-connectives for the sinner are shown in “the placing of the hand” in union with the scapegoat or offering and the carrying away and shedding of blood and death of the offering.

- (1) Christ is only enjoyed as our peace when our soul has experienced Him as the one who took the sinner’s place and bore our judgment as the “sin offering” and “trespass offering” of Leviticus 4-5. The sin offering speaks of sin as an unclean defilement and the “trespass offering” emphasises a debt that man can never pay - because it goes to the source of sin (often unrecognised but very heinous) Hebrews 9-10 expound the subject further and the words of Hebrews 10.12 encapsulate it “This man after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever sat down on the right hand of God”.
- (2) Note that Leviticus 4 only covers sins of ignorance. There was utterly no cover for wilful sin! Since Calvary God in infinite grace counts only one sin as willful - the rejection of His only Son”. That is why Jesus pleaded on this very ground from the cross “Father forgive them for they know not what they do”- i.e. they were in dread danger of Christ rejection cf. 1Corinthians 2.8 and Mark 3.29 and Hebrews 6.4-5.
- (3) Men and women stand before God with various degrees of light and some are more heavily responsible as the priests and the kings and the poor under the Leviticus 4 rules. The first brought a bullock the second a lamb or kid and the third a pigeon or turtle. The greater light we have received the more responsibility we have and dare not stumble others.
- (4) The sinner identified himself by laying his hands on the scapegoat or sin offering. The blood of the sin offering in accordance with Leviticus 17.11 was typically accepted but it had no power lie the blood of Christ to cleanse 1John1.7-9.
- (5) The blood was sprinkled 7 times within the veil where the mercy seat represented what Christ the Messiah would later accomplish. The Bob Jones US university has it that Christ’s blood is sprinkled in heaven but this is to minimise the once offering of Christ and to confuse the Brazen altar and the prayer altar of gold. ***In heaven there is no bloody altar*** but there is a mediator and Intercessor who applies the benefits he obtained by his all atoning death.
- (6) The skin and carcass of the bullock or sin offering were cast out beyond the walls of the city (Leviticus 4.12) Notice it was taken to a clean place because though the sin offering bore sin it had to be a perfect specimen. This Christ was pure though our sin was placed upon Him. The carrying outside and the death upon a cross at the extra-mural Calvary as His wearing a crown of thorns is all typical of Christ ***being made a curse*** for us.
- (7) The scourging and the suffering during the “Game of King” in Pilate’s hall did not expiate guilt. In Isaiah 53 as I have shown under the previous head on God’s pleasure it was ***the inward absolute*** of Christ’s obedience (in his

inner broken heart and soul that never resisted God's perfect will and ***the inward absolute of the Father's love*** whereby He would justify many by the just one's death that expiated our sin and guilt.

- (8) Neither does the sin offering execute its function without confession of sin or repentance. This is shown in Leviticus 5.4 where the soul that swears or promises but does not fulfill what is promised he must confess his sin. (1John1.9)
- (9) Again in Leviticus 6 24-30 we read of the sin offering as "Most holy" so Christ the true sin offering was holy harmless and undefiled - the perfect "Lamb of God". In v.30 we learn that priests could only partake of some of the sin offering - the rest was burned - and this is a convincing mirror of our inability as a kingdom of priests of the New Covenant that we cannot fully apprehend the nature of the brokenness of the heart of Christ when He experienced six hours of agony, unprecedented and unrepeatable aloneness and direst weakness running on towards death. (Psalm 69.20). His passion and death are described by Paul as our Passover. *All our Iniquities on Him were laid, He bore them all to the tree. Jesus the debt of our sin fully paid. He paid the ransom for me.*
- (10) The final factor in expiation as to experiencing its benefits is faith. "He that believes on Him is not condemned. He that believes not is condemned already because He has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God". To turn from the gospel message and trample under foot the love of Christ, to count His atoning blood an unholy common thing is to crucify to oneself the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame. To do so is to throw back in the face of the Father his loving plan and to revile the Christ and reject His offices. This if persisted in is to call down the righteous wrath of God – to invite the outrage of God Almighty and to await a fearful judgment at the Great White Throne- where the wrath of God and of the Lamb awaits the unrepentant whose works are evil and whose names are not in the book of life.

(19) THE SEVEN WORDS FROM THE CROSS GIVE NO WARRANT TO WRATHIFICATION

The first set of three words is unquestionably directed toward those around the cross. The final set of three words appears to be Music to the ears of God the Father. Christ longed to see of the travail of His soul –even as the golden bowl began to break He recognised that the Father asked no more The ransom was paid. With His final words He spelled out an unbroken love for and allegiance to the Father.

1 ***"Today in Paradise"*** – these are good words indeed for the thief to hear in the course of a long lingering death. Jesus brought him consolation from the heart of God.

2 ***"Father forgive them"*** –good words for men who certainly did not know the enormity of their act in crucifying Christ. They might recall them later and find the benefits that the crucified could bestow. In these words there is absolute unity of Father and Son.

3 ***"Mother behold your son, son behold your mother"***- more consolation from the unlikelyst of places-from the accursed tree.

4 Then the central question “***My God my God why hast thou forsaken me?***” serves to bring out the consequence of the “cup” of Gethsemane. Like the cup in Benjamin’s sack it was placed by a sovereign’s hand. That sovereign in great compassion sent an angel to strengthen His Son where the comprehension of the disciples was wanting. The Son was the “suffering servant - the man of sorrows - or more precisely “the man capable of sorrows”. The Father was the God of all compassion whose love for mankind was deeply shared with His Son and whose heart is pictured by Isaiah as heavy and sick as this great love took the only loving right and just course for man’s salvation. This was the most sin laden cup ever offered to a man on earth - the cup of Israel’s Messiah and the world’s Saviour. Jesus was to drink it all. It *satisfies the divine demands of justice*, guaranteed the provisions of redemption and was the basis of reconciliation between God and man.

God will not justice twice demand

First at my bleeding surety's hand and then again at mine

The 69th Psalm speaks of Christ prophetically and with an utterly broken heart from love unrequited our Lord looks for someone to lament (Psalm 69.20) but there was none. Yet the Father had drawn a gracious curtain over the scene of suffering and although ***Christ knew His Isaiah and the absolute empathy of the Father*** never did the humiliation of obedience of which Paul speaks in Philippians 2 touch the spirit of our Lord so severely as when He emptied Himself of all help and faced the utter loneliness of death – yet did He retain His unadulterated love for us and for the Father and the Father’s love for His Son though never more surely believed was never less an anodyne against suffering or guarantee against death but rather an irrevocable commitment to both.

Then in quick succession Christ uttered more words.

5 He cried out “***I thirst***” –Our Lord quoted Psalm 69.21 with full knowledge that He was soon to pass to be with the Father and to enter Sheol and Paradise. His solemn atoning work accorded with all scripture and even on the cross our Lord was consciously obedient to a detail.

6 He continued with powerful voice “***It is finished***” or “it is paid”- the penalty of sin was paid in His all atoning death. Why need we look elsewhere? This is our discharge from the thrall of sin and our ground of forgiveness. There was nothing left to do. The will of God was complete - the rocks rent - the dead were raised - the veil was torn in two. The silence of heaven was broken as the golden bowl was broken and the pitcher at the fountain.” Resurrection was now possible. Victory over sin was achievable. Satan was defeated. The Church was redeemed. A new creation was established. The love of the cross was utterly victorious.

7 Finally as the moment when he would lower His sovereign thorn crowned brow was almost upon Him the Word spoke again to Eloi, Avi in the assured words a faithful and well beloved Son to the unfailing Father “***Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit***”. The secret of the atonement; of reconciliation and satisfaction and redemption is Jesus Christ - the Father’s only Son whose blood and mercy seat God set forth for our salvation. We are saved from the crisis of judgment through Him who spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all that He (Christ) might be the firstborn among many brethren. Without this vicarious ransom there

simply could not have been any redeemed companions of the throne through all eternity.

(20) THE CENTRAL MYSTERY - THE ALLIANCE OF COVENANT LOVE

Let us linger briefly with the central mystery “My God my God why hast thou forsaken me?” Did Jesus not know why? Of course He knew why! “The Son of man came not to be ministered to but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many.” Did Jesus feel the loss of the Father’s presence? To answer that I will turn you to John 8.28 “He has not left me alone (αφηκεν με μονον)for I *at all times* do what pleases Him” and 2 Corinthians 5.19 “God was in the circle of Christ’s life reconciling the world to Himself”. “My meat is that I should do the will(θελημα) of my Father and finish(τελειωσω) **His work.**” John 4.34. The triune God acted in unison in providing reconciliation and in covenant mercy. ***It has to be that in the grief of the Son the Father was grieved.*** This is the profound but unavoidable implication of Isaiah’s great prophecy and ***as the Father judges no-one*** only the Son at His throne the cross has to represent unqualified mercy which is exactly the kerugma of the apostles and John’s express and profound understanding of the solidarity of Father and Son.

(21) CHRIST’S OBEDIENCE ON THE CROSS IS PREDICATED UPON THE FATHER’S LOVE, MERCY AND JUSTICE (JUDGMENT UNTO DEATH) EVEN ABSORBING THE WRATH OF MAN THE SINNER AT THE CROSS

There are at least nine prophetic references in the gospels confirming the parallel of event and prophecy during the six hour long passion of Christ on the cross. It would appear that the Lord consciously dwelt on the word of scripture in his suffering. Three sizeable tracts of Messianic scripture in Psalm 22 (from which we have three separate allusions [v1, vv7-8 and v18], Psalm 69 and Isaiah 53 along with such passages as Psalm 31.5, Lamentations 2.15 and Amos 8.9 would have sprung to mind and who knows how many more. Thus our Lord was even amid His agonies consciously fulfilling scripture and doubtless strengthening Himself in God the Father as through the Spirit He offered an acceptable sacrifice to God.

We dare not transgress beyond what the apostle teaches us that “Christ became obedient to death - even of a cross. The even (μεχρι) puts an end to the obedience required for our sin. Now Christ enjoys the full glory of His redemptive office and the suffering attached to obedience ended on the cross. The word MECHRI means “until” and when Jesus died it was “finished”. To the victory of the cross no further suffering in hell-or any such suffering - is to be imputed. He was victorious over hell and Sheol and has the keys of death and hell. It is finished was His cry.

(22) HISTORIC BIBLICAL SILENCES MARKING UNIQUE JUDGMENTS FOUR SILENCES

- (1) After man sinned and Satan made himself scarce God walked in the garden calling Adam. Evening was coming on and nightfall. God called out and listened. There was silence. The Lord knew well that Adam had walked

away from him. Adam and Eve had hidden in rueful silence. Then God called out “Adam where art thou”

- (2) When Noah was in the ark as the 40 days of mighty rain and fountains of the depths ceased amid the darkness there was no more voice of bride and bridegroom and there was not a child on earth. God repented that He had made man upon the earth. “Then God smelled a sweet savour”
- (3) When Jesus died a three hour darkness ended. According to Isaiah the heart of God the Father was deeply empathetic and our Lord Jesus appeared to all as one smitten of God. Heaven itself had fallen silent and Jesus cried out “My God my God why have you forsaken me?” *εγκαταλείπω* is used by **Hesiod** of “leaving a child in the lurch” The verb is not in the passive so it cannot mean “Why have You fallen short?” - in other words it is not critical of the Father’s conduct during the passion. In the forsaking of Christ in a sense there is the central issue of the atonement. Such abandonment **Homer** uses of persons left “dying on the battlefield” and both **Aristotle** and **Xenophon** mean by it “leaving absolutely alone” or not becoming involved - because the verb is strengthened by the prefix *κατα* but quite remarkably it is further qualified by a second prefixed *εν* which *in composition* means “near”. The full sense then is that Jesus recognises that **the Father has been present but is not interposing**. The expression cannot mean “Why have you gone on elsewhere?” as one running away from a situation nor can it mean “Why have you failed?” in the way **Hippocrates** the Greek medic using the expression speaks of a patient whose treatment failed. Peter and John who were both privy to the prayer and angel visit in Gethsemane spoke of Herod and Pilate as fulfilling what the hand and **counsel or will (inclination)** of God who is absolute above human rulers as DESPOTA. The Hebrew writer in Hebrews 13.5 quotes Deuteronomy 31.8 where the young captain Joshua is assured that the Lord would not forsake him in any battle. The parallel is striking. This victory just had to be won - this atonement had to be complete – this covenant had to be affirmed. The 6th word from the cross “It is finished” is the finest comment on the 4th word.
- (4) In the Apocalypse “There was silence in heaven” about the space of half an hour which marked the passing of some devastating judgments on earth on which beyond predicting their occurrence God makes no comment.

God is never capricious and it gives him no added interest of joy when He exercises His judgment and this is because He remains forever a God of Love who demonstrates his patience over long ages and withholds His wrath which “**endures but a moment** - whilst in his favour is life” (Psalm 30.5). Indeed God is angry with “the wicked” every day but new every morning is His steadfast love.

In other words exulting in the wrath of God is a sign of being out of tune with God whose love is over all his works. God is glorified when we glorify His mercies and sing praise concerning His steadfast love but He desires His Justice and judgment to be proclaimed as well. Many Christian tombstones carry the words “Prepare to meet thy God” in recognition of the need to receive Christ the atoning lamb in face of eternity and our meeting with God.

(23) CHRIST'S DEATH AS RANSOM ATONEMENT IS HERALDED WITH REPENTANCE AND JUDGMENT TO COME IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The apostolic kerugma heralded the death of Christ as the provision of forgiveness new life peace and righteousness for sinners in God's great mercy and love. They enforced the gospel with reminders of divine historic dealings in temporal judgment with the fathers and prophetic warnings of the judgment to come. In the light of the penalty of sin death hell and judgment the apostles called for repentance and Christ like obedience. This adjoining of the message of reconciliation and the apocalyptic and sometimes existential message of judgment is important to the continuance of prophetic kingdom preaching .

Every gospeller cries out with **Wesley** "Behold the Lamb!" and the Apostle follows John with his 29 references to the "beloved lamb" with his own message of the "rejected, risen, redeeming and returning Lord.. Taken individually here is their story: here is the One they all call "worthy" in a paean of worship:-

.(1) This Servant is Matthew's **King-Messiah**: Nazarene or Branch, Bearer of infirmity, Son of God, Son of Man, Silent lamb, Betrayed one, Re-builder of the temple,

(2) This servant is Peter's rejected **ox-like suffering** Son of Man, Son of the Blessed and Coming King-Messiah, King of the Jews. In the Epistle here is Peter's Suffering One and Glorious Lord, Wounded Healer, Shepherd and Overseer, non-retaliatory Example, Sin-bearer.

(3) In the gospel this Servant is Luke's Messiah foretold by all the prophets, Suffering Christ , Source of the message of forgiveness, **the Man** identified with transgressors, Crucified intercessor, One who constituted Himself in the place of transgressors; in Acts Object of messianic prophecy(Peter) and Saviour to whom the Redeemed are glad emissaries to give witness (Stephen)

.(4) In the gospel John's **Divine hand** of miracle, Lamb of God; in the epistle his Sinless sin-bearer; in the apocalypse the beloved risen Lamb $\alpha\rho\nu\iota\omicron\nu$ slain but yesterday soon returning to Mt. Zion, (5) In Romans Paul's **Rejected** Christ crucified, Atoning and **Risen** Saviour, Alone **Redeemer** by means of justification, and in Corinthians Christ our Passover and finally in Hebrews 9.28 the once for all atoning sin bearer **Returning** to bring salvation.

The Lamb who is victor is the sole Mediator 1Timothy 2.5. Thus as all men must come to God through Christ and each man in particular must lay his hand on the atoning Lamb we are bound to pray for all and to intercede for others. Christ gave Himself as a ransom (**$\alpha\nu\tau\iota\lambda\upsilon\tau\rho\nu$**) paying by His death the price of redemption for us. Thus the ancient fiat "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" is overturned and counter-mandated by the redemption of Christ who at the cross ($\iota\lambda\alpha\sigma\tau\eta\rho\iota\omicron\nu$) brought divine mercy in the gospel of grace.

(24) THE WRATH OF GOD AND THE LAMB PROPERLY UNDERSTOOD FALLS ON SATAN AND NATIONS AND MANKIND IN TRIBULATION RESERVED FOR THE LAST TIMES WHICH PRELUDES ETERNAL JUDGMENT TO WHICH THE APOCALYPSE TESTIFIES.

God reserves His wrath in great longsuffering. This was marked by His patience before the flood and his patience with Abraham in respect of Sodom. It is even so again prior to the 7 year period of the tribulation attested in Apocalypse 4-19. Jeremiah observed that God “reserves” wrath but not for ever (Jeremiah 3.5 & 50.20). Peter also makes this point in 2 Peter 2.9 where he indicates that God holds the unrighteous dead within His sovereign power and as Peter adds has apprised them of His victory in the light of the expected judgment to come. Aside from the picture granted us of Dives and Lazarus it is not within our purview to create mock up virtual reality shows of hell. This is what Peter leaves to the divine omniscience. Now let us look at apocalyptic wrath (wrath to be revealed) that will come to bear on the human race in the latter days on account of following the beast and false prophet and through being deceived by Satan and then at the ultimate wrath God and of the lamb at the Great White Throne.

1. THE WRATH TO COME IS BOUND UP WITH PROPHETIC PREACHING AND IS SAMPLED IN THE TRIBULATION OF WHICH THE LORD SPOKE - APOCALYPSE 6.16

And the kings or rulers of the earth and those who became great by possessions and power, and the wealthy, and the military bosses of thousands of soldiers, and the powerful, and every servant and free man **hid themselves** in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains. They keep saying to the rocks and to the mountains, **“Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him who is seated on the throne and from the wrath of the lamb - for the great day of His wrath has come** and who is able to hold his ground”.

The experience was clearly sickening as everything was moving – and darkness was all about and gross changes were afoot – whilst all well understood that what Christ predicted was now afoot.

This chapter is compulsory reading and it has been a clarion call in every generation to prepare to meet the Lord and for those who remain on earth in the last days it has special moment

2. APOCALYPSE 14 SODOM LIKE WRATH PREDICTED 9ff

A third angel followed – saying with a great voice, **if anyone worships the beast** and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or his hand – **he will drink the wine of the passion of God poured out – unadulterated in the cup of His wrath,** and he will have been tested in fire and brimstone (fire burns what corrupts and sulphur fumigates-so the process ends idolatry) before the holy angels and the lamb. That this form of “trial” [**Βασανος** “a stone to test gold by touch”], hence testing the genuine by is by response to the first and second coming of Christ the living Stone,. The parallel is Sodom [Genesis 19.5, 16, 24] where it was either “hand of angels” or “fire and brimstone” – so here where angels have no brief to save from the judgment that follows). The smoke of their **touchstone trial** will ascend era on era. Those who receive the mark of his name – worshippers of the beast & his image have no rest day or night. Here is the patience of the saints. Here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. So 13.10 & 14.12 state “Here is the patience of saints”. The first picture is of poor imprisoned and executed martyrs – the

second of the end of antichrist. The death of martyrs and their cry to God has parallels with the “cry of dereliction - its answer was delayed but the ensuing intervention is as terrible here as it was glorious there.

Yet another angel – the fifth to appear- came from the incense altar and had power over fire shouted [**κραυγάζω** – a word generally linked to “dogs baying” for judgment].

1 Send your sharp sickle and harvest when ripe the grape cluster of the vine of the earth

2 For her heavy bunches of grapes are being chewed up or are fermenting strongly And the angel sent his sickle into the earth (Israel) and harvested the cluster of the earth and cast it into the great winepress of the passion & principle of God – and the press was trodden outside the city (Jerusalem) and the blood of the winepress came to as far as the bits of the horses mouths (the phrase may mean when the **horse is feeding** – which represents a very terrible slaughter) and to a distance of over 180 miles (1,600 stadia) – that is as far as the borders of **Iraq Syria and Egypt in the great battle of Armageddon.**

3. MARTYRS ATTEST ATONEMENT DIVINE JUSTICE & AFFIRM GOD’S WRATH UPON THE WICKED - APOCALYPSE 15.1

This “sea” is quite unlike that on earth. If it were simply crystal the victors would find it hard not to look at themselves – but that it is mingled with fire – it is a great reflector of Christ’s sacrificial work – and to those who crossed to eternity through His blood here is a vivid reminder that **their transparent holiness, standing and eternal security came through His sacrificial work-the atonement** – hence the “harps of God” for the praise of Christ. The tabernacle had a “molten sea” – and Solomon’s temple added a sphinx emblazoned on it – suitable sign of “risen life”. And I saw as if a sea of crystal mingled with fire. Those who conquered the beast, his image, his mark, and the number of his name, stood on the crystal sea, holding God’s harps. This connection links the harp with prophecy. David sang and his song was prophetic. This possibly explains why the earlier song of 14.3 was mysterious. Here the conquerors sang the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. The song here is a victory song relating to the Lord’s defeat of the beast much in the way the Song of Moses rejoiced in the Lord’s defeat of Pharaoh. “Great and wonderful are your works, O Lord God the **Almighty Victor**”[παντοκράτωρ] **PANTOCRATOR** “Righteous and genuine are your paths, O king of saints”.

“Who should not fear you, O Lord, and glorify your name, for **YOU ALONE** are HOLY, v.4a

“All the nations will come and worship before you for you have made plain your judgments to amend wrong” v.4b

This great statement acknowledges the victory of the death and resurrection of Christ and indeed His judgment.

This statement commends God’s methods and systems which He has ordained.

This statement reminds us of His alone holiness.

This statement prophesies that the whole world will recognise God’s righting of wrong.

4. SCRIPTURE AFFIRMS IDOLATRY AND WORSHIP OF THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST ATTRACTS WRATH- VIAL ONE APOCALYPSE 16

(A) With this plague sores were inflicted on those who worshipped the beast. It resembled the 5th plague of Moses. The outpouring resulted in damaging and painful suppurating or weeping sores deepening in the bodies of those men who had the stamp or imprint [**Χαραγμα**] of the beast. The Greek word often relates to money in the secular context. The second reason why these people suffered is because they worshipped the image of the beast. In Deuteronomy 28 the infliction of a sore that developed from the feet over the whole body was on account of disobedience of enlightened people. The stark alternative of the period was death or receiving the mark and false worship – Apocalypse 13.15. So the Lord directs His wrath first at the beast's authority and idolatry.

Though this judgment will be terrible it may hold out time to recant to those who were pressed in conscience. When in modern times we strive for grace and political correctness of attitude to other religious groups we have to balance this with the Lord's deep disapproval of false worship. Tacit approval of worship of strange gods or syncretism or acceptance of other faiths within the ecumenical context cannot honour Yahweh. His stamp absolute disapproval is vital to notice. David is adamant. While others run after other gods, "I will not take their names on my lips" he says **Psalm 16.4**. "Open thou my lips and my mouth will declare your praise" **Psalm 51.15** "Because your love is better than life my lips will praise you as long as I live" **Psalm 63.3-4**. "I will fulfil the vows my lips promised because when I was in trouble you heard my prayer" **Psalm 66.12, 14, 19** "My lips will shout for joy when I praise you on harp and lyre – I whom you have redeemed" **Psalm 71.22** "May my lips overflow with praise for you teach me your decrees" "May my prayer be like incense – keep watch over the door of my lips" **Psalm 141.2**.

These are the reasons for exclusiveness in giving Glory to God in Christ alone.

(B) THREE URBAN JUDGMENTS

(a) The **Great city – Jerusalem** is three lots or three heritage parcels – today it is Jewish Arab and Christian.

(b) The **Gentile cities will fall** – never to rise in the same manner – levelled by act of God.

(c) **Babylon** was remembered before God to receive the cup of His own soul and spirit as He remembered His Gethsemane and the cup of His swollen anger. God's wrath is delayed so because Christ the judge knows what it is like to face the sinner's death. From this we can begin to understand the wrath of the lamb. This earthquake ended the islands of the world – they were no more. Thousands of destinations are gone in one swoop – "islands" are "floating land" in the Greek language. Like ships they were sunk. **Thousands of islands are written off – Majorca, the Canaries, Malta, Caribbean islands – the Bahamas, Ceylon, the Hebrides, the Orkneys, the Dodecanese – the Celebes – and many larger ones – "every island"**. Mountains afterward were not discovered. Chains of hills were not found – many folds in the earth's crust were gone. Landscape was altered for good. The quake was followed by hail which fell in lumps just short of 1 hundred weight.

Massive atmospheric icing accompanied this bowl and men blasphemed God for following their sin by judgment.

The dream of **Mardocheus** in the 1st verse of Esther in the *Septuagint* records a quake following voices where two serpents prepare every nation for war against the nation of the just. In this vision light came – Esther in her time – Christ in His – so after darkness light and a great river came from a little fountain. The Christ at the throne alone like Esther would change the world.

This earthquake is described as “old” in that it has been forecast for thousands of years and is no doubt related to setting the earth in a state more akin to its primal order. It is also possible to render it “so young” in that it is so modern. It was not assumed that in one act of God all could change so entirely. The end of the division of mankind is in view as the geography of the world is here reshaped for the millennium.

The Hail of Egypt constituted the 7th plague and is a “full force” judgment – but one that stops short of wiping man out. Hail of even a more severe sort is the final discipline of Babylon before the ultimate burning of Babylon which we have in Revelation 18.18 with its massive smoke.

5. SCRIPTURE’S SIGNAL WARNING ANENT THE SECOND ADVENT IN RESPECT OF THE MARK OF THE BEAST WITH THE CALL TO PERSEVERE FOR CHRIST IS VICTOR - APOCALYPSE 19

(a) **He settled Himself** on the horse – symbol of victory – not to be unseated & is swift as any Parthian monarchy 11 He calls himself faithful and true. He keeps covenant – He will return. v.11

(b) **He clothes Himself with Glory** v12 and has been willing Himself to interrupt history to judge v13 cf. 'dipped' Finally lets look at His names.

1. He is "**Almighty**" vv6 & 15 He who called Abraham to look at the stars has redeemed the church.

2. **He calls himself faithful & true** or the ethical and moral ruler of the ages

3. He has a name none can know – yet it is written – Jehovah – unending eternal one. The mystery that transcends an angel’s grasp v12.

4. He is the "**word of God**" – **this He calls himself** – the one who speaks to man over

all ages & calls today. Here is the power of his sword – the word **πατασσω** mean "decisive-strike" His word is decisive.

5. He has name on his mantle and his thigh v.16 – "**King of kings and Lord of Lords**"

ARMAGEDDON ENDS

The name of this war is found in Apocalypse 16.16 – but there is no doubting that it is the very same conflict – the final war of modern history with the most devastating results.

Leaders fall in great numbers. Men of all ages and ranks die together. The beast who had established his “mark” (19.20 & 20.4) and the false prophet and their followers were thrust into the “lake of fire”. This war is won by the command of Jesus Christ. It is a real war and it is the ultimate answer to the cries of heavenly martyrs and

establishment of ultimate justice and the setting right of the earth according to the word of prophecy and the hopes of earthly saints of all time for the coming of Shiloh to whom all people may gather.

6. “DEPART FROM ME” - THE FINAL ASSIZE AND JUDGMENT OF GOD AT THE GREAT WHITE THRONE - APOCALYPSE 20

The “great white throne” where the Lord sat at the centre of the constituted court of final judgment presents an awesome prospect. All judgment is given to the Son who once hung on the cross of Calvary. Heaven and earth fled from the face of Christ – (cf. 21.1 & 2Peter3.10) this is the moment when there is only the throne – God’s heaven and city of God – the physical heavens and old earth remove. They “flee”. There is no “place” found for them.

John was given to see the dead – such little ones too – and such mighty ones among them. There they stood before God. The books had been opened. Another – the book of life – was laid open. The dead were judged from the accounts in the first books. With the end of the physical earth and the end of the Hades economy – and indeed the end of “dying” as such – all the creatures who had perished by drowning and awaited their trial in Hades or who had just died with the end of the earth’s pilgrimage – appeared before Christ. Their works [εργα] done in the body and the energising factor behind them were examined. Those spiritually dead – those within the orbit of Hades of the dead were cast into the lake of fire. **This is THE SECOND DEATH.** The **book of life** was checked and anyone not found written there was cast into the lake of fire. The second death is that finality which pronounces separation from the life of God in the soul. Our LORD warned us that God can destroy both body and soul in the circle of Hell. (Matthew 10.38 & Luke 12.5)

Judgment is “thorough”. The beast and false prophet are dealt with. Satan is dealt with. Finally the last iniquitous hordes that after a thousand years of Christ’s grace and truth are willing to rebel are dealt with.

7. SCRIPTURE AFFIRMS WRATH IS THE SORTEE OF THE FAITHLESS AND THE WICKED

Wrath will be visited on faithless abominators, murderers, fornicators, drug merchants and idolaters - APOCALYPSE 21. The Lord “says” [ειπον] classic historic warning No.2 “I am Alpha & Omega – I give to him who thirsts “snow water”-water of life with spring like character and freely – this life is the reward of Victors & confessors who have kept the faith . **Cowards** who will not exercise faith in Christ but remain bound by fears born of an evil heart and of the devil’s deceit don’t get there (it is exclusively a **confessors’** scene). Neither those **without faith** – nor **abominators murderers fornicators nor drug dealers (PHARMAKEUSI)** nor those who continue as **idolaters** nor the **deceitful** are found there – their lot is a second death – and their isolation is mirrored by the waters of the dead sea as it was at formation –mingled with fire – perpetual looking to the days of Sodom’s judgment. The terrible societies of earth are judged. The loss of a soul as Jonathan Edwards pointedly stressed is an irremediable loss and it only takes cowardice to lead us to hell!

8. SCRIPTURE AFFIRMS THAT THOSE WHO LIVE TO THE FLESH AND DEAL IN SPIRITISM AND THOSE WHO LIVE A LIE WILL FALL UNDER WRATH

APOCALYPSE 22 Christ is the Alpha and Omega. He is the sovereign and centre of life's purpose. His will is supreme and by that will we are saved by His atoning death and resurrection and through the sending of His Spirit into our hearts. However **six congregations** of men will live outside His will and have no part in the joy of heaven – they are described as “mangy scavengers of flesh” (dogs), sorcerers or addicts, the sexually immoral, murderers, idolaters, creatures of lies and pseudo or hidden life.” All these must come under judgment and the ultimate chapter of scripture warns such as live godless that they shall suffer wrath and exclusion from the presence of the Lord.

IN SUMMARY

Man is a sinner and whilst the just know God's daily favour there are many who in their wickedness daily provoke God's anger. Divine love acting to reconcile was shown through the cross where as Paul insists in 1 Corinthians 5 Christ died on behalf of all. There the triune Godhead elected that the irrevocable central act of salvation history would be effected and the whole rigour of judgment under the law averted for repentant sinners in the death of Christ. At that time the Father was deeply moved in irrevocable silence, the Son of God suffered in extremis and the Spirit of God remained throughout upon the Messiah even bringing conviction to the thief and convincing the soldiers of the deity of Jesus. Christ became a “sin-offering” in His death and for those who meet Him as the Lamb of Calvary symbolically placing their hand and sin upon Him He becomes Saviour. Jesus death demonstrates the reconciling love of God. Jesus obedience and death through the shedding of his atoning blood in and of itself is the single efficient cause of our justification - not his suffering - not divine wrath - not the deep sensibilities of His soul- simply His glorious obedience even to the point of death on the cross where He bore the curse. This much is sound doctrine - to inveigh other ramifications of theology and create mysterious issues that lessen the impact of the covenant unity of the Godhead in redemption or obscure the simplicity of the cross is just plain theological confusion. When Paul wrote to Timothy towards the end of his life and ministry he referred to Jesus as coming into the world to save sinners and commended preaching after the manner of 1 Timothy 3.16 where he says:- ***And it is to be confessed admittedly the mystery of the sacred acts of piety, holy things or religion is great. God has been manifest real and visible in the realm of flesh, established the claim of right in the realm of the Spirit; He has been seen by messengers or appeared with angels, He has been heralded among the nations, he has been accredited and relied upon in the circle of the whole wide world and received up into the circle of divine glory.*** As to teaching this mystery is to be used like medicine – administered with care and to the life-giving and strengthening of souls. “Without controversy” might best mean “by common agreement or surrender” to Christ the conqueror of all – the secret of piety or worship is very great. Behind our confession and worship in other words lie mighty truths.

1. **GOD APPEARED IN THE FLESH** He came as the sun of the universe – bringing a new day – the incarnation. This is His birth of which it is written “Behold O Virgin, whilst conceiving or bearing a Son you will call his name ‘God with us’.”
2. **JUSTIFIED IN THE SPIRIT** The Holy Spirit demonstrated that Jesus is Lord of the spiritual realm. His trials in *the wilderness* and *under Pilate* stand to attest that he is both God and Christ. There is what purports to be *a letter of Pilate in the Vatican library* in which we have a supposed extract of Pilate’s wife’s dream. Here are some excerpts:” Last night I saw Him walking on waters flying on the wings of the wind, He spoke to the tempest” – “Ah Pilate evil awaits you” – “the whole place was lighted up” – “all seemed to be shouting and filled with ecstasy and there seemed to be crowds of the dead in their grave clothes.” At His baptism heaven opened the Father spoke and the Spirit descended in power and *was at home* with the Son of God till His final cry “Into thy hands I commend my Spirit”. If the Holy Spirit left the Saviour and Jesus had declared “My God *why have you left* me?” one might have reason to argue that the Father had separated from His Son and the Trinity had self harmed and the Son of God was as a lost orphan. If he could neither realistically cry “Father forgive them” or say “Into thy hands” or the “in” of “involvement” was not in the our Lord’s cry anent “forsaking” or **non-interference** we might urge a “lost-ness” or a “separation” of two persons of the trinity but such a reading of the central obedience of the atonement is absolutely unwarranted.
3. **SEEN OF ANGELS** Theirs a look of expectation. They kept Him in their view. They ministered in desert – and at the glorious resurrection. They are not registered as at the crucifixion – yet scripture says He was seen of angels and they were most intimately in touch-one of them as an emissary had confirmed the divine approbation of the Saviour’s vow of unswerving obedience to the Father.
4. **PREACHED AMONG NATIONS** –The term for preacher is “herald” [**kerux**]. The Greek herald was an announcer at the Greek games while the Roman herald was in charge of Roman sacrifice. Preaching was to carry the message of the substitutionary atonement of Christ from land to land - to call for repentance on the basis of the finished work of Christ through whose death God had provided a way of peace and reconciliation for the sinner. *Charles Wesley* described the task of the Christian herald profoundly in his hymn *O for a thousand tongues to sing*” as the task of crying out ‘Behold the lamb’” “We are not **orphaned**”, says the apostle – we have access to Christ – His help is near and may be found in the niche of time as Hebrews 4 promises.
5. **HE WAS BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD** – men and women felt confident of Him – trusted their destiny to Him. They still do – leaving home and toil and kindred for His dear sake – they believed his promise and laughed at impossibilities
6. **HE WAS RECEIVED INTO GLORY** – “Recovered” in the circle of glory – it means He went home to a victor’s welcome. In His parousia He will visit our skies to receive his victorious church after which he will visit wrath on Antichrist and return in the victory of his Advent to put down the united Armageddon challenge to His name His ancient chosen people and Jerusalem as the foundation where He made peace by the blood of His cross and He will reign from Jerusalem. The day of Grace will cede to the millennium of Glory which in turn will give way to the Day of Eternity when in the New heaven and earth God (in Christ) will be all in all.

**Man of sorrows what a name for the Son of God who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim! Hallelujah what a Saviour!**

**A debtor to mercy alone, of covenant mercy I sing;
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on, my person and off'ring to bring.
The terrors of law and of God with me can have nothing to do;
My Saviour's obedience and blood hide all my transgressions from view**

**The work which His goodness began, the arm of His strength will complete;
His promise is Yea and Amen, and never was forfeited yet.
Things future, nor things that are now, nor all things below or above,
Can make Him His purpose forgo, or sever my soul from His love.**

**My name from the palms of His hands eternity will not erase;
Impressed on His heart it remains, in marks of indelible grace.
Yes, I to the end shall endure, as sure as the earnest is giv'n;
More happy, but not more secure, the glorified spirits in Heav'n.**

**GOD HAS NOT APPOINTED US TO WRATH BUT
TO OBTAIN SALVATION BY OUR
LORD JESUS CHRIST (1THESS. 5.9)**

FINIS

*Bob the Scribbler
ABC Ministry
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