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SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world - he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *“Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..” Acts 16:31a* And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *“That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” Romans 10:9,10* *“For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13* *“Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1*

Christ's Enemies

Intro:

There seems to be a misconception being perpetuated by the modern church today about the nature of the relationship that exists between God and unsaved man; it has portrayed that there is a somewhat warm and fuzzy feeling on the part of God toward unsaved mankind, but what the Scriptures show is that **unsaved man is the enemy of God and is presently under the wrath of God!**

But some will say what about John 3:16? “*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” They ask, what about this idea of God **loving** unsaved man? The idea of **love** here is an **anthropopathism** where human feelings or emotions are ascribed to God to be better able to express what God did for us, which is mentioned in the rest of the verse. He gave his Son to die on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins.

If there are any doubts as to where unsaved man stands in relationship to God, they are cleared up in the last verse of the chapter. “*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*” John 3:36 - 'ο πιστευων εις τον υιον εχει ζωην αιωνιον 'ο δε απειθων τω υιω ουκ οψεται ζωην αλλ'η οργη του θεου μενει επ'αυτον.

The one believing on the Son, their present status as brought out by the present active participle, **has, their own personal possession, which is brought out by the present indicative, life eternal, their current condition. The word **and** here uses the particle *de* to signify a contrast between the first idea; he that is **not believing** on the Son does not have eternal life, then the next clause has the word **but**, *alla*, which contrasts the whole idea from the first clause and shows that **the wrath of God still abides** on the one who does not believe on Christ, which is brought out by the use of the present tense of *meno*. What this shows is that **the wrath of God is still on all unbelievers** and that the only way out of being under the wrath of God is to believe on Christ!**

But some will say, I thought that Christ's atoning death on the cross automatically turned God's wrath toward the unsaved to one of grace? And they like to bring out the verses found in 1 John 2:2 to support that idea, “*And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*” and 1 John 4:10, “*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*”

The word **propitiation**, *hilasmos*, is also translated as **expiation**. The difference between the two is that **propitiation** is directed toward God turning his wrath to favor, while **expiation** is directed toward the act that appeased his wrath. In ancient times there was a deity and the one who had offended that deity. To appease the wrath of the deity a sacrifice had to be brought to him. The sacrifice was the *hilasmos*.

This whole matter of *hilasmos* deals with: 1) the person who has been offended, in this case God, 2) the individual who had offended him, Adam and his race, 3) the act that offended him, sin, 4) the necessity on God's part, due to his righteousness and justice, to punish the act, 5) and the thing, or sacrifice, that would appease his wrath, (satisfy his justice), resulting in him from turning from it.

Hilasmos is the act of atoning for a crime, to make satisfaction for an offense whereby the guilt is done away with, and with the guilt gone, so is the obligation of the offended person to punish the crime.

Now although this concept was acted out on earth for many years among men, the most important and overriding concept was in God's dealing with man, his sins and the sacrifice God provided for man's sins in the person of Jesus Christ. God was the one who was offended and man was the one who offended him by his rebellious acts. God's righteousness was offended by our sinfulness and his justice demanded that these acts of sin be punished. Enter now the appeasement of Jesus Christ. What could satisfy God so completely that he would turn his wrath from us?

This is where many, tragically, underestimate God and are ignorant of what is going on. Among men, if someone has been offended, often they will accept an appeasement of their anger: a box of candy, flowers, money, or a fine in the case of governments. But not so with God! Saying you're sorry won't cut it; promising him you won't do it again won't appease him; promising to be good, or trying to make up for it somehow, or bringing him a peace offering would never appease his righteous anger. In fact, they would be insulting and add to the list. In a matter of justice **the punishment must fit the crime!**

Now as to whether *hilasmos* in this passage should be translated as **propitiation**, which looks at God turning his wrath away to look at us in favor now, or **expiation**, or looking at the act, (the atoning sacrificial death of Jesus Christ), that aroused his favor, I think in this passage we have to go with expiation. If the act of the atonement, and we're talking about the act itself, Christ's death on the cross, automatically turned God from divine wrath to divine favor concerning man, then it would have to apply to all people, believers and unbelievers alike. If that was the case, then why is God's wrath still on the unsaved? *“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; **but the wrath of God abideth on him.**”* John 3:36

The wrath of God only turns to divine favor when the individual believes on Christ. So we can safely say that the atonement was an objective matter that dealt with the acts that aroused God's wrath. And for it to profit anyone, he must take hold of the *hilasmos*, which is Christ himself and have it be your offering to God. There were two choices that one had when trying to appease the wrath of someone you had offended, (which is what *hilasmos* is all about), and they were 1) personally bear the wrath of the individual you had offended, or 2) bring something or someone that would appease their wrath; and with God only his Son, Jesus Christ, will do that.

Which brings us down to the enemies of Christ and his Father. There is a time for the enemies of Christ to come to him for forgiveness where he will accept them with open arms. But there will be coming a time, when this no longer applies; a time when they will experience the **wrath** of both the Father and we note, the Son. As it says in Revelations 13:5-7, *“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the **wrath of the Lamb**: For the **great day of his wrath is come**; and who shall be able to stand?”*

We also want to note Christ's attitude toward all those who reject him, whom he calls his **enemies** in Luke 19:27, *“But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.”* The word for **enemy** is *echthros* and it refers to someone who hates you and wishes to do you harm. We want to note that we were also a part of this group that are the enemies of Christ before we were saved, but God in his grace took us out of the world, brought us to Christ for forgiveness making him our *hilasmos*; the sacrifice that satisfied his wrath. *“For if, when we were **enemies**, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”* Romans 5:10

Christ's enemies will be made a footstool for his feet. This prophetic promise made by the Father to his Son is found in the OT and the NT. Body position of one individual to another was an important matter. First of all, if one was **sitting**, he held the superior position and it said that he was the one ruling. If one bent over to **kiss his ring**, it was a sign of obeisance to the one sitting and it had the idea that he held a very high position. If one **knelt** before the one sitting, it meant that he too was in obeisance to the one sitting, but held a lower position than the first one. If one **prostrated** himself on the floor before the one ruling, it meant that he too was in obeisance, but he held a very lowly position. But if one was on **all four's** before the one on the throne, it meant that he had been conquered by the king.

Over the years conquerors have done that to those they have conquered, where a public act was involved whereby the conquered king would show that he is now subject to the conquering king. Sometimes the conquered king, or general, would surrender his sword; sometimes he would kneel before his conqueror; and sometimes the conquered king would be publicly humiliated by being a footstool for the one who conquered him. The type of act was not the issue in the matter; public humiliation was the issue in the surrendering of authority and being in subjection to the other party. But what was the legal issue is that **there had to be an act, a demonstration that this had occurred!**

*"A Psalm of David. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy **footstool**." Psalms 110:1 "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy **footstool**?" Matthew 22:44 "For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy **footstool**." Mark 12:36 "And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies thy **footstool**." Luke 20:42,43 "For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy **footstool**." Acts 2:34,35 "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies **under his feet**." 1 Corinthians 15:25 "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy **footstool**?" Hebrew 1:13 "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his **footstool**." Hebrews 10:12,13*

Hebrews 1:13 To be **under one's feet** means that the person has total dominion over what is under his feet. "And hath put all things **under his feet**, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church," Ephesians 1:22 "Thou hast put all things in subjection **under his feet**. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him." Hebrews 2:8 To **sit at the feet** of someone meant that you were a student of that person. To be **placed at the feet** of someone, that is, in their presence or before them, but at their feet, showed that they were totally in a much superior position than you. To be a **footstool** for someone means that person has conquered you, which is what the Father is going to do for his Son. "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies **thy footstool**?"

Christ is going to reign in heaven at the right hand of the Father until the Father subjugates all the enemies of Christ and place them under Christ's feet as his footstool. Then Christ is going to take them and have them thrown into the Lake of Fire. "But those mine **enemies**, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and **slay** them before me." Luke 19:27

The current sentiment of the present Church in America is one of emotional subjectivity. It has taken the figure of speech in John 3:16 and done away with the wrath of God that is still on all unsaved people, John 3:36, and will be manifested when Christ returns to earth.

This concept of facing the existing wrath of the Father and the Lamb is found in such passages as Luke 13:28, “*There shall be weeping (klauthmos – **tremendous grief and sorrow manifested in crying out loud and wailing**) and gnashing (brugmos – **uncontrollable rage manifested in the gnashing of teeth**) of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust (ekballo – **cast out**) out.*”

We also want to note the presence of the emotion of fear, or rather being terrified of having to face this day of the wrath of God and his Son. “*But a certain **fearful** looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.*” Hebrews 10:27 “*It is a **fearful** thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*” Hebrews 10:31

“*And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To **execute judgment** upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*” Jude 1:14,15

We also want to note how God is described both in the OT and the NT as being a consuming fire, a fire that consumes, totally consumes his enemies! “*For the LORD thy God is a **consuming fire**, even a jealous God.*” Deuteronomy 4:24 “*Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as a **consuming fire** he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee.*” Deuteronomy 9:3 “*For our God is a **consuming (katanaliskō - a fire that totally consumes) fire.***” Hebrews 12:29

“*I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the **fiery flame**, and his wheels as **burning fire**. A **fiery stream** issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the **burning flame.***” Daniel 7:9-11

“*Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with **fire** unquenchable.*” Luke 3:17 “*And the devil that deceived them was cast into the **lake of fire** and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the **lake of fire**. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the **lake of fire.***” Revelations 20:14,15

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