

A Deeper Look Into God's Redemptive Plan

*The Eternal God, full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger, and abundant in loyal love and truth,⁷ who maintains loyal love to thousands of people, who forgive wrongdoing, rebellion, and sin; yet does not allow sin to go unpunished. Exodus 34:6-7
The Voice Translation.*

A Deeper Look Into God's Character

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Foreword

The conditions of the world, with its strife, warfare, pestilence, famine, calamities, and sickness affecting both man and beast, have led many to wonder if this is all there is to life. The most troubling question is this: if God claims to be kind and merciful, how can He sit back and allow all these events to occur? This is a legitimate question, although not entirely accurate. Yet God invites humanity to sit with Him, discover the reasons behind these occurrences, and hear His solutions. In the Bible, He says, *“Please come, so that we can talk about this together.”* Isaiah 1:18. Easy to Read Version

Our loving Father is blamed for the ills of humanity, as seen in Isaiah 45:7; Amos 3:6. However, *Christ, the ultimate expositor of the Father’s character, clarifies these misunderstandings for us.* In John 8:12 and 44, he says, *“... I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”* He speaks here of the moral darkness of those who are outside of his orbit. Similarly, in verse 44, the moral darkness of the father of lies and murder is

mentioned. *“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.”* Knowing that darkness and evil entered the earth via the rebellion of Satan, we understand that the words of the prophets, as interpreted by Christ, refer to moral darkness and evil, for which God is not responsible.

Importantly, God provides solutions to these problems in Proverbs 3:1-2. *“My son, forget not my Law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: ² For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.”* If the Law of God were kept as He designed, the present evils in society, which are all the doings of man, would be nonexistent. The Law is a transcript of His character of love and produces only perfect peace and harmony.

“Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, ³⁶ Master, which is the great commandment in the law? ³⁷ Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” *“Those who love Your Law have great peace, and nothing will cause them to be hurt in their spirit.”* Matthew 22:35-40; Psalm 119:165 (New Life Version).

The Apostle Paul affirms this truth of the Savior.

“Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. ⁹ For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there

be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.” Romans 13:8-10.

Aback of all that Jehovah says, we shall also look at how he acts, especially in dealing with those who rebel against him and his government, and see if his words match his actions. *“For by thy words, thou shalt be justified, and by thy words, thou shalt be condemned.”* This also applies to him. *“You will be proved right in what you say, and you will win your case in court.”* Romans 3:4. New Living Translation. (Greek Translation)

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Introduction

God resides with his family in heaven. *“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place ...”* Isaiah 57:17. From there, the center of the universe, myriad unfallen planets, and Earth—the one small blot in the universe—are supervised and directed. Our Great High Priest works to solve all the problems that sin has created. The atonement provides the solution; it is the central doctrine of the gospel for all who have faith in the efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse from sin.

In the Government of God, His character is manifested in His Law, which is the foundation on which everything rests. *“The law of God was the basis of this [Abrahamic] covenant, which was simply an arrangement for bringing men again into harmony with the divine will, placing them where they could obey God’s law.”* Patriarchs and Prophets 370.4. The Bible enforces the truth that keeping the commandments, the law of God, is the whole duty of man. *“Let*

us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” Ecclesiastes 12:13. The keeping of the commandments is the object of the gospel, which is the love of God. “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3. The Law is a transcript of His character. The psalmist, understanding this, invests the Law of God with the very attributes of God, declaring, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.” Psalm 19:7-8. The law, the testimony, the statutes, and the commandments are all the words of God. “... It is written, ... man shall ... live by every word of God.” Luke 4:4

The atonement, revealing the character of God and the immutability of the Law, has faced bitter criticism from opponents of the Bible who do not believe in the Designer and the Supreme Being of the universe who walked this earth as a man. They claim that it is inconsistent with justice for one to pay the price for the wrongs of another. However, both the Law of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, when correctly interpreted, vindicate the atonement and demonstrate God’s justice and merciful character in declaring innocent anyone who accepts the conditions of the atonement.

“But now we are seeing the righteousness of God declared quite apart from the Law (though amply testified to by both Law and Prophets)—it is a righteousness imparted to and operating in all who have faith in Jesus Christ. (For there is no distinction to be made anywhere: everyone has sinned; everyone falls short of the beauty of God’s plan.) Under this divine system, a man

who has faith is now freely acquitted in the eyes of God by his generous dealing in the redemptive act of Jesus Christ. God has appointed him as the means of propitiation, a propitiation accomplished by the shedding of his blood, to be received and made effective in ourselves by faith. God has done this to demonstrate his righteousness both by wiping out the sins of the past (the time when he withheld his hand) and by showing in the present time that he is a just God and that he justifies every man who has faith in Jesus Christ.” Romans 3:21-26 J.B. Phillips.

“And now in these days also he can receive sinners in this same way because Jesus took away their sins. But isn’t this unfair for God to let criminals go free and say that they are innocent? No, for he does it on the basis of their trust in Jesus who took away their sins.” Romans 3:26 The Living Bible

The character of God was fully displayed before the universe through the removal of the sins incurred by humanity at Calvary when our Saviour cried out, “It is finished.” The sin debt incurred by humanity has been paid in full (Tetelestai) for his redemption, and God is shown to be just and the justifier of all who believe in Jesus.

The Lawgiver is just and justifies all who believe in Jesus (Romans 3:24-27). He is the one to whom individuals must give an account of why they are unjustified (2 Corinthians 5:10). “A person may persuade himself that he is not as bad as another, but rather more creditable. Wrong never appears odious to the habitual wrong-doer; therefore, no one is competent to judge in his case.” “The first one to plead his case seems right until another comes and cross-examines him.”

Proverbs 18:17 Amplified Bible. The outcome of our probation is not determined by our actions as they appear to us, but rather as they look to the Lawgiver, who is infinite and will bring everything into judgment. Our standing will not be judged or compared with our fellow men, but with the royal Law of liberty, which is the standard of judgment. “*So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of liberty.*” James 2:12.

Chapter 1

The Government of God

God's government is moral. This fact is known to all humans, including those who deny His existence, for everyone discerns between right and wrong and judges those who commit acts of inhumanity, especially against the vulnerable, as deserving of punishment. Our sense of justice recognizes the government as a system of laws designed to administer justice to the guilty and show mercy to the innocent. However, God's government, being moral, can forgive and absolve the guilty by executing the penalty upon one of its own. Here, the character of God stands in stark relief as revealed in Christ's sacrifice.

“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them

... [but] made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Isaiah 53:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:20-21.

Some deny their ability to do right and blame it on their condition, which they claim is inherited from their foreparents. They argue that man’s inability to act otherwise is due to being so programmed. This reflects the age-old idea of predestination and blaming God for their situation. Sounds familiar! It is the Adam and Eve syndrome, where people blame others and, ultimately, God for their wrongdoing. However, God has instilled in all of His intelligent creatures the moral compass of conscience (1 Timothy 4:2) to guide us toward doing right, yet He is blamed for leading us astray.

The story is told of two men working in a railway shop, conversing about not being responsible for wrongdoing. One man said, “I act out the disposition that was given me. If I make a locomotive and it does not work, you do not blame the locomotive; you blame me for my faulty workmanship. Even so, if I do not answer the end of my being, it is not my fault. The blame attaches to my Maker, who made me what I am.” His friend replied: “Your illustration is just and forcible, provided you insist that your Maker gave you no more brains than you put into a locomotive.”

On the contrary, there is an oft-repeated idea that God is so loving and kind that He will not condemn or hold us accountable for our deviancy. God’s love is exalted at the expense of the other attributes of His character. This is a perversion of the gospel, which tells us that God is infinite in every perfection. He is no less so in His love than in His justice. The Bible tells us of God’s justice as well as His love.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” “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.” 2 Corinthians 5:10; John 3:16.

If all individuals shared the same obedient mindset under a government, its laws would be easy to enforce. (1 Timothy 1:5, 8). However, such individuals and a government have not been known in our world since the fall. The only image of a government like this on earth will be when “*The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.*” Isaiah 11:6. The longing desire and cry of God’s people in this world of sorrow and misery should be that found in the model prayer, “*Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*” Such a government can only be administered by one who is intrinsically moral and can uphold its principles while dispensing justice to those who violate both the spirit and letter of His Law, and only Jehovah is competent to lead such a government.

These principles of justice and mercy, according to God’s idea, can only be found in His body on earth. Those in His body are obligated to uphold these principles, which vindicate the character of an oft-maligned and much-hated God. While His subjects cannot discern the intentions of others’ hearts, they are required to “*Keep thine [their] heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*” Proverbs 4:23. They are also advised to “*Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*” John 7:24. Standing firm on these

principles often causes the children of God much pain, and many shrink from their duty of enforcing justice, fearing repercussions. However, it must always be remembered that they are not to fear the faces of men. Jeremiah 1:8. The administration of the Law of God ensures both peace and protection from the enemy.

“Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.” Psalm 119:165.

The question arises: “How will God, who is infinite in mercy and yet just, deal with a whole family of criminals against His government? How shall justice be maintained on the scale of infinity? Remember, He marks every transgression against His authority and every invasion of the rights of His subjects.

“For though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.” Jeremiah 2:22.

“And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.” Luke 17:31.

While the whole world lies in wickedness and is under the control of the prince of the power of the air (1 John 5:19; Ephesians 2:2), the Creator of the Universe is its rightful owner, and He will judge according to His Law, the moral code of conduct (James 2:12), which brings to view the intent and not merely the act, thus demonstrating how He deals with sin and rebels.

Penalties associated with the law provide it with authority. Therefore, every violation of the law necessitates the imposition of penalties. The transgression of the Law harms the subjects of the Eternal and

constitutes a violation of their rights, revealing a disregard for His Law, His Government, and ultimately for Him. If the Government cannot uphold its authority, then no rights and privileges are secure, and the Creator and Sovereign will be insulted and mistreated. If He is not respected, then certainly His Government will not be, leading to rebellion that results in anarchy and destruction for the entire universe, an unthinkable prospect. This was the plan of the first rebel, the liar and murderer (John 8:44), who comes “*to steal and destroy.*” John 10:10.

But the most important question related to the character of God is how sin can be forgiven while justice is maintained. Sin cannot be cleared unless certain conditions are met. First, the Law cannot be trampled with impunity; this would prevent any respect for God. Secondly, abolishing the Law would play into Satan’s hands, as he claimed that it could not be kept in the first place. However, Christ proved otherwise.

“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8.

“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” John 15:10.

“Christ took upon Himself humanity for us. He clothed His divinity, and divinity and humanity were combined. He showed that the law which Satan declared could not be kept, could be kept” Faith and Works 71.1.

Thirdly, the Sovereign God pardons, and this can only be done under certain restrictions and conditions.

The third option for pardon is the only alternative through which the rebels can escape punishment for their crimes, while the law and honor of the Divine Government are upheld, and God's character is vindicated. But how can this dilemma be resolved, reconciling the Law of God, the Government of God, and the rebels? Pardon implies that there was guilt; an innocent person needs no pardon. A person who is unjustly imprisoned cannot be pardoned; rather, he must be released from unjust imprisonment. Conversely, it would be a travesty to offer a pardon to someone whom the Government had no authority to punish.

To pronounce a person guilty is to state that he has broken the law or is involved in some wrongdoing. Granting a pardon acknowledges the justice of the law, thus honoring the government. Rebels, having broken the law, ought to be punished. The question arises: how can a pardon be granted while strict justice is upheld? Here, two opposing principles emerge: sympathy and mercy for the accused, and another principle that maintains the integrity of God's law and His government, leaning towards justice and reflecting the character of God in His dealings with rebels.

If both of these principles can be satisfied, the dilemma is averted. On one side, the Law must be upheld and God's authority respected, while on the other, pardon must be granted to the rebels.

For this reconciliation to occur, one of two things must occur.

1. The strict claims of the law must be ignored, or
2. Satisfaction of the law via voluntary substitution

If the strict claims of the Law are disregarded, it would give license to crime and favor lawlessness rather than restraining it, which the Law is intended to do. If God sets aside the claims of the Law in one instance, others will be led to follow His example, resulting in anarchy and lawlessness—the very things the Law is meant to prevent.

This brings us to the consideration of the alternative, a voluntary substitution, which involves atonement. This is the only way justice and mercy, the two contending principles, can be harmonized and the Law and character of God vindicated. Once the substitution is voluntary and the Law and justice are satisfied, all conflicting interests and feelings will be reconciled. Such reconciliation can only be obtained under God's government of love and freedom.

Voluntary substitution recognizes the claims of the Law and honors the Government while maintaining its integrity. Every infringement of the law and any departure from strict justice endangers the Government. Therefore, anything that honors and vindicates the claims of the Law and justice serves to uphold the Government. Voluntary substitution dispenses mercy, which is consistent with the principles of atonement.

“The knowledge of the law would condemn the sinner, and crush hope from his breast if he did not see Jesus as his substitute and surety, ready to pardon his transgression, and to forgive his sin.” *Fundamentals of Christian Education* 135.2.

All the principles of government—justice, mercy, truth, and love—meet in the atonement (Psalm 85:10). The necessity of atonement cannot be overemphasized, as future obedience cannot justify the guilty. The Law justifies the innocent if they remain obedient to it.

Presently doing what is right does not release a man from the debt of the past. A person who stole last year cannot offer the justification that he did not steal this year as evidence that his past guilt is cleared. Neither can he be released from a past debt to pay for something he buys today. If the Law condemns a thief, does pardon release him from keeping the Law? Once a person has broken the Law, they cannot undo that breach, as it has already been committed. “Spilt milk cannot be resolved.”

Atonement will not only unite justice and mercy, but it will also reconcile the transgressor to the Law, guarantee the stability of the Government, and show the Sovereign Lord for whom He says He is: “a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.” Therefore, upholding the Law must be of primary importance in making atonement. When we violate the Law, we forfeit our rights and privileges, and if we encourage others to do the same, we become traitors and rebels following in the footsteps of Satan, the first traitor and rebel. Such actions subvert the Law, which constitutes treason and is regarded as the greatest of all crimes against a government, even worse than murder. The Law serves as the guardrail of life to protect it by preventing and punishing crime.

For rebels to be restored to favor with the Government, they must accept its terms. They have no right to dictate the terms of their pardon or how they can regain favor. Anyone who has regard for justice and the principles of law will not be willing to see traitors unconditionally restored to favor. If traitors do not accept the conditions laid out by the Government, they remain traitors. If criminals were allowed to dictate how crimes should be handled, the Government would be a farce and no better than criminal gangs. Therefore, for rebels

to be accepted, they must be willing to acknowledge their wrongs (Jeremiah 3:13), accept unqualified submission to the law they have transgressed, and fully agree to the conditions for their restoration.

If a substitute steps in and the penalty is paid, justice is served. If someone else pays the debt, the perpetrator cannot be held liable because payment cannot be made twice for the same crime. In this scenario, a crime is regarded as a debt. A person may owe a debt without guilt attaching to him, but the same is not true in the case of sin. Mercy is shown to the sinner when a substitute is accepted on his behalf, but after the substitute has paid the penalty, the sinner still deserves death. He has done nothing to free himself from crime. Acceptance of the conditions of pardon is vital, as satisfaction must be given to the Government for the past infraction of its Law and as a safeguard for the future, which a payment for the past debt cannot provide. Therefore, the substitute who paid the penalty allows pardon to be granted and justice to be satisfied. Once the criminal accepts the work of the substitute as his own and unites his efforts with the substitute in honoring the Law, there is a safeguard for the future. Apart from this, an unconditional pardon, even if a substitute has paid the penalty and suffered on his behalf, will amount to nothing. If the sinner accepts the suffering of the substitute as his own and ceases to sin, the Law is respected. In this transaction, the Government is honored, and the sinner is justified and saved through mercy. If there is any deficiency in these particulars, the system will be defective. A pardon granted on any other terms tends to iniquity and violation of the principles of right and justice, thus subverting the Government.

For a substitute to satisfy justice, he must be innocent and free from transgression and condemnation in the eyes of the law. One criminal

cannot offer his life for another, as his own life is already forfeited. In the case of the unfallen angels, although they have never sinned, their lives cannot satisfy the law because their lives are also borrowed and therefore not their own.

There are arguments that “man may and will be saved without accepting and complying with conditions, or without substitution.” This is Universalism, which denies atonement. The other claims that “the law is abolished when the Atonement is made instead of being vindicated by it.” This is Antinomianism. Though these two systems are professedly Christian, there are infidel.

In advocating for the rights of the Government, we must remember that the subjects also have rights and claims to justice. Much is owed to the Government by its subjects; likewise, something is owed to its subjects by the Government. It is expected that the Government establish its laws and that the subjects obey them. However, the Government must reveal its laws and the conditions for a pardon if they are violated. If laws are not clear to subjects, an injustice occurs. Since the law defines our duty, enabling obedience, it should be clear, unambiguous, and not left to supposition or dubious interpretation. A government does not proclaim laws and leave them to the whims and fancies of the subjects; under such conditions, confusion and anarchy will result. But God has proclaimed His Law and made it plain in unambiguous language. Exodus 20:1-17; Matthew 22:34-40.

“Through Jesus, God’s mercy was manifested to men, but mercy does not set aside justice. The law reveals the attributes of God’s character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. God did not change His law; instead, He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for

man’s redemption. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” 2 Corinthians 5:19. Desire of Ages 762.1

“Christ volunteered to maintain and vindicate the holiness of the divine law. He was not to do away with the smallest part of its claims in the work of redemption for man, but, in order to save man and maintain the sacred claims and justice of His Father’s law, He gave Himself as a sacrifice for the guilt of man. Christ’s life did not, in a single instance, detract from the claims of His Father’s law, but, through firm obedience to all its precepts and by dying for the sins of those who had transgressed it, He established its immutability.” Confrontation 20.2

Chapter 2

The Law of God

The government of God is one of the principles. Universalists view the love of God as the sole element of His Government, claiming that all men will be saved. For them, Christ's death is not a penalty paid to vindicate the justice of God and His Law, but merely a manifestation of the love of God. However, this teaching is not Biblical, as it does not require the sufferings of the Son of God to save humanity. Such a perspective is emotionalism and fails to account for the broken Law that demands the death of the transgressor. Yet, the Bible tells us that "he was wounded for our transgression and bruised for iniquities" to make satisfaction for the broken Law, satisfy the justice of the divine Government, and help us to understand the gospel.

The first principle concerning the Government of God is the paramountcy of the Law. A question for contemplation: Is there a difference between the attributes of God and the principles of His Law? Since God is just, it follows that justice will be a principle of His

Government. Likewise, if God is love, it will pervade His government and be evident in the administration of justice. All of God's attributes shine forth in His Government and are reflected in His dealings with His subjects, whether obedient or rebellious. Since the Law is the foundation of God's Government, to understand His attributes, we must comprehend the nature and character of His Law as it originates from Him, being a transcript of His character.

God is infinite in every aspect, evident in His justice, love, wisdom, holiness, truth, unchangeability, and eternity, among others. Unlike human justice, God's justice is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, mirroring the divine law. When reflecting on God's attributes and His law, which reflects His character, we must approach this with reverence and a sense of godly fear.

At Sinai, when Jehovah proclaimed His Law to Israel, He did so with His voice so that men may view the moral code, which was ordained to give life, with the reverence, respect, and godly fear it deserves. "By proclaiming the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel with His own voice, God demonstrated their importance. In awful grandeur, He made known His majesty and authority as Ruler of the world. He did this to impress the people with the sacredness of His law and the importance of obeying it. The power and glory with which the law was given reveal its importance." *Counsels on Health* 258.2.

When God brought Israel out of Egypt with "a strong and outstretched arm," He made a covenant with them, promising that if they obeyed His voice and kept His Law, they would be a peculiar people above all the peoples of the earth. This covenant was communicated to them by Moses, their mediator. However, Jehovah Himself spoke the Ten Commandments directly to the people.

If Israel obeyed the Law spoken at Sinai, they would be “*a holy nation, a peculiar people,*” as God said (Deut. 14:2). Character is formed by our actions concerning the Law, and the nature of the character is determined by the nature of the Law. Obeying a bad law will not produce good character; this would be like a corrupt tree bringing forth good fruit, as Christ says: “*A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit*” (Matthew 7:18). Therefore, a person’s character will be the product of the law obeyed. If Israel had kept the Law of God, they would be a holy people because, like God, the Law is holy: “*For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy*” (Leviticus 11:45). “*Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandments holy and just and good*” (Romans 7:12).

Law is the foundation of all government. The law reflects the mind and character of the lawgiver, and since a person’s character aligns with the law they obey, those who follow the Law of God will achieve the righteousness of the Law, which is holy, just, and good. Therefore, obedience to the Law of the Ten Commandments, which expresses God’s character, brings us into perfect harmony with God.

“The Law is an exposition of God’s idea. When we receive it in Christ, it becomes our idea. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin. “Great peace have they that love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. (Psalm 119:165) – Letter 96, 1896, par. 7

There is no peace in unrighteousness; the wicked are at war with God. But he who receives the righteousness of the Law in Christ is in harmony with heaven. “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (Psalm 85:10). – Letter 96, 1896, par. 8

No righteous characters are now formed by obedience to the Law, for none obey the Law perfectly because of the weakness of the flesh.

“*For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.*” Romans 8:3.

Before sin’s entrance, our foreparents were to develop perfect character in harmony with the Law. Moreover, consider Jesus, who rendered perfect obedience despite the weakness of the flesh and formed a character in harmony with the Law. On one occasion, He said, “*I have kept my Father’s commandments.*” He did no sin, for he never strayed from the Law of His Father, and the result was a pure and holy character akin to the Law.

“*Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.*” 1 Corinthians 15:34

Obedience or disobedience, along with their consequences—life or death—are contingent upon the Law. “*Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.*” “*And he said unto him, why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.*” Leviticus 18:5; Matthew 19:17. The moral Law of the Ten Commandments serves as the foundation of all law and has, from the beginning, established the standard of duty to God and our fellow men. Two other laws are referenced in the Bible: the civil law, which enforced the moral law, particularly in men’s relations to one another, and the ceremonial law, which atoned for violations of the moral law. Both laws are typical, anticipating the priesthood of Christ and his coming kingdom. They illustrate the relationship with

the Ten Commandments, the Moral Law, in both the present and future dispensations.

When God gave His Law, the ceremonial law of burnt offerings and sacrifices was not included. God both spoke and wrote the Ten Commandments on the tablets of stone, and they alone were placed in the ark of the covenant at first.

*“And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark, thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.”
Exodus 25:21.*

This law, Christ said, he did not come to destroy but to fulfill (Matthew 5:17-18).

In the Law are seen the principles of God’s Government, and it cannot justify the sinner who has transgressed it. Justification of the transgressor comes by faith without the Law, though witnessed by the Law and the prophets (Romans 3:21-22). The person who continues in transgression has not received the grace of God but is under the condemnation of the Law. Pardon and conversion are closely allied, for the converted are those who have accepted pardon. Only the truly converted are under grace and not under Law, as the Law is written in their hearts and manifested in their lives. No one can be converted without conviction of sin, and no one can have real conviction of sin except by the Law.

“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” Romans 7:7.

Where the claims of the Law are not recognized, there can be no real conversion. True conversion is not merely emotional; it is not only a matter of feeling; it is a radical change of life, a turning from wrong to right. This is what the words of Christ mean when he says, *“You must be born again.”*

The Christian’s life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. *Desire of Ages 172.1*

*“... when the heart yields to the influence of the Spirit of God, the conscience will be quickened, and the sinner will discern something of the depth and sacredness of God’s holy Law, the foundation of His government in heaven and on earth.”
Steps to Christ 24.2.*

The Law and the Gospel are inextricably bound together. If the Law is abolished, justice would be trodden underfoot, resulting in anarchy. But God is infinitely just, and His Law must be satisfied. The object of the gospel is to set men free from sin, which is the violation of the Law (1 John 3:4).

“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.” Matthew 1:21.

The gospel beautifully presents Christ not just as our savior, but also as our substitute and surety (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:26). This shows us that God is just, His Law is unchanging, and He lovingly justifies everyone who believes in Jesus. As it says, *“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus*

Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Galatians 2:16. While the Law cannot justify us without faith, it’s important to remember that faith does not dismiss the Law of God. As noted in Romans 3:31, faith complements the Law instead of nullifying it.

Universalists believe that all will be saved because of God’s great heart of love. Of course, God could save all, whether they believe or not, but He will not because He cannot do so and be just. Such a perversion of the Gospel seeks to trample down the Law. If the Law were abolished, Christ would not have come to redeem us from the curse of it.

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.” Galatians 3:13.

If the Law of God is abolished, it would be subversive to the Government.

Consider two reasons given by the enemies and opposers of the Law of God as to why it should be abolished. First, the argument from the inveterate enemy of God is that it cannot be kept because it is faulty. If this were so, it would reflect poorly on the wisdom of the Lawgiver. Such an argument contradicts the scriptures, which tell us that, *“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.”* Romans 7:12. Secondly, the claim is made that because the circumstances of the transgressors have changed, it is necessary to change the law to meet them in their circumstances; this is situation ethics. Would it be consistent with good government and justice to

change or abolish a law because its citizens have violated it? God has instituted a system of pardon that is sufficient to meet the needs of the transgressor and is in harmony with every principle of justice and right, but it only avails for those who, in contrition, turn from rebellion.

The entire Law is holy, just, and good in all its parts. No part of a perfect law can be improved upon; furthermore, the Law of God is not only perfect but also pure. There was one who thought he could improve upon God’s Law and created chaos and upheaval in heaven. In the last attack on the Law of God, his enemy has found a counterpart who is fully aligned with him. Daniel brings this one to view and says, *“... he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”* Paul identifies him as the antichrist, i.e., the one who set himself up not merely to oppose God but to unseat God. He sits in the temple/church of God, saying he is God. (2 Thessalonians 2:4). Under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, we have been able to identify him. He is the man of sin, the Pope, the head of the Roman Catholic Church antichrist system, sitting in the temple of God, saying he is God.

He has considered changing times and laws and has sought to eliminate the Sabbath and introduce Sunday, a pagan festival. Some persons claim *“that the fourth commandment is merely ceremonial, and therefore not proper to be associated with moral Law. To introduce a festival day, the Roman Sun-day, it has been decided that the fourth commandment is ceremonial, so far as it relates to the observance of a particular day.”*

When God was about to give the Ten Commandments law to Israel at Mount Sinai, He instructed Moses to restrain the people from touching the mount.

“And Moses said unto the Lord, the people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it.” Exodus 19:23.

God had previously commanded Moses to tell the people, “... *Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death.*” Exodus 19:12. To sanctify Mount Sinai was to set it apart for holy use; it was to communicate to the people that God wanted them to treat the mountain as sacred to Himself because of His presence. Thus, to sanctify the Lord’s rest day was to instruct Adam to treat the day as holy to the Lord. This was similar to Moses’s experience at the burning bush when he was told, “... *Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.*” Exodus 3:5. It is God’s presence that makes a person, place, or thing holy.

The declaration, ‘God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it,’ is not indeed a commandment for the observance of that day; rather, it is the record that such a precept was given to Adam. For how could the Creator ‘set apart to a holy use’ a day of his rest when those who were to use the day knew nothing of his will in the case? J.N. Andrews’ *History of the Sabbath*, pp 16-18.

In relation to the morality of the fourth commandment, it should be compared to any of the other nine. For example, if a person takes a piece of property and uses it, it must be proven that it belongs to

someone else and that he had no right to take it. This commandment is based on the right of property, and if it is not recognized, it would be rendered null. No one can demonstrate a more positive right to any property than the Lord has to the seventh day. Throughout the scriptures, He clearly indicates that He hallowed it and warns us against desecrating it or using it for our own purposes. “*And hallow my Sabbaths; they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.*” Ezekiel 20:20; 24:44; Isaiah 58:13-14. If it is immoral to take without permission what belongs to our neighbor, how much more so is it to take what God claims as His own? In consideration of the honor of God and His government, the principles of justice and good governance enshrined in His Law must be upheld, and therefore, the Sabbath must be observed. Failing to keep the Sabbath, which is the day He requires us to observe, is akin to stealing God’s tithe and offerings.

Chapter 3

Justification & Obedience

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?” James 2:20-21

There is a similarity between justification and works. Scholars, theologians, and Bible students have complicated this relationship for many years, making it difficult to understand. This difficulty stems from their opposition to the Law of God, likely instigated by the great rebel leader, Satan, whose hatred of the Law knows no bounds. As reiterated, law is the foundation of government, and God’s Government is not exempt. In considering this subject, we will examine our obligation to the Law to understand the relationship between justification by faith and obedience, as well as the character of God.

Some claim that God’s Law of the Ten Commandments is abolished. The word of God says differently: Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled

in heaven (Psalm 119:89). Psalm 119:160 states, *“Thy word is true from the beginning; and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever.”* Those who assert that the Ten Commandments Law of Jehovah is abolished are not contending with man but with God himself. Christ reiterates this in Matthew 5:17-18:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸ For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled.”

A jot is the tenth and smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet, akin to a dot (.) in the English alphabet, while a tittle is even smaller than a jot, an extension of a letter that distinguishes one word from another. Here, Christ emphasizes that the law of God is eternal and cannot be annulled or changed in the slightest degree. The New Living Translation (NLT) translates Matthew 5:18 this way: *“Until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God’s law will disappear until its purpose is achieved.”*

Paul declares in Romans 3:28, *“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law.”* Does this mean that righteous characters can be formed without reference to God’s law, which is holy, just, good, and a transcript of His character? Actions, deeds, or works form character. It is self-evident that a criminal cannot be justified by the law that he has broken. We are “justified freely by grace” but on a basis that allows God to be just while He is the justifier of the sinner. The pardon granted to the sinner must respect the broken Law, for there can be no condemnation without the Law, since “sin is not imputed where there is no law.” Likewise,

justification must be according to the Law, or justice would be disregarded. Character, whether good or bad, cannot be determined without the Law. The Law witnesses to the righteousness of God.

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.” Romans 3:21.

In 2 Corinthians 5:21, the Apostle says, *“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”* This act of being made righteous by Christ demonstrates that our characters are conformed to the revealed will of God. The righteousness of God through faith in Christ, without the works of the Law, shows God’s justice in placing us before the throne of grace, where His Law is enshrined as if we have never broken it. Furthermore, in what appears to be a contradiction, the Apostle says, *“For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.”* Romans 2:13. This is proof that inherent in the Law is all that is necessary to justify the obedient. Obedience has been accomplished through faith in Christ within the characters of the faithful, which the Law demands. Why would those who claim to be believers want the Law to be abolished? Of course, God cannot countenance such a notion, as it would be a destruction of His righteous Government.

In the gospel plan, there is a difference between justification and salvation. If man had never sinned, he would have been justified and saved by his obedience to the Law. But all have sinned; therefore, the original object of the Law cannot be accomplished in the sinner.

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” Romans 8:3.

The principles and rules of justification remain constant. “The Law, as a rule of right, will form a perfect character, but cannot reform an imperfect one.” The following illustration clarifies this point. The carpenter’s square will point out a right angle at the end of the board, and if the angle is square–right, it is justified or proved right by the square. If the angle is not right, the square will show the error. However, another tool, the saw, will be necessary to make the angle right. But does the saw become the rule determining angles and measurements? Certainly not. By the Law is the knowledge of sin, but the gospel is the remedy. Errors of character are pointed out by the Law, but the gospel brings about the reforms. The Law is the only rule of right; therefore, *“the doers of the law shall be justified.”* Romans 2:13. No one who obeyed God all his life would ever be condemned, but Paul says there are no doers of the Law, for all have sinned; hence he concludes, *“therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified.”* Romans 3:20. We are justified entirely and “freely by his grace;” works do not play a part in our justification. This justification of faith relates to *“the remissions of sins that are past.”* Romans 3:25. Future obedience has no influence or control over the sins of the past.

Since the sinner is justified by faith and not by the Law, is he obliged to keep the Law that could not justify him? If a person steals or murders, can the law justify him? Of course not; the law condemns him for his actions. The only way he can escape the just rewards of his crime is through pardon. If the Law condemns the transgressor and he is only justified by pardon, does that pardon release him from obedience to the Law? If he is pardoned and commits another crime, will he be tried by the court’s pardon or by the law he has again broken? *“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the*

law.” Romans 3:31. Why, then, do many teach that the Law of God, which is eternal and unchangeable, is no longer binding and can be broken because Jesus has legally justified all humanity?

Had man never sinned, he would have been justified by his obedience to the Law and by works of obedience. If there were no sin, he could not be condemned. This shows that justification would have been based on obedience and works, provided he continued in obedience. Faith in the blood of Christ removes our guilt, presenting us before the throne of God as righteous through his faith. However, faith without works does not build character. We are justified from past sins without works, but justification cannot be maintained without good works (Ephesians 2:10). Hence, James 2:20 says, *“Faith without works is dead,”* and Paul tells us, *“Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.”* Philippians 2:12.

“As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and co-operates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit, and there is harmony between the purpose of the heart and the practice of the life.” *The Signs of the Times*, March 20, 1893.

Justification by faith refers to the transformation in a person’s relationship and condition through belief in Jesus. He is regarded as justified concerning his past life as if he had never sinned. Furthermore, God’s Government and its subjects must be safeguarded against future threats. To achieve this, a work must occur not only for humanity but also within it. In this way, Christ credits his life to the believing sinner’s account, freeing him from the burden of his past sins, while simultaneously imparting his righteousness through the Holy Spirit into the repentant sinner’s soul, causing a change

in behavior. Anything less than this does not constitute justification. This new status can only be granted to sinners when allegiance is pledged to the new Government. God cannot accept the sinner’s service as a loyal subject unless the sinner demonstrates unwavering loyalty to His Government. Lacking an understanding of justification by faith, many believe that God must accept the service of anyone at any time when offered.

Those who are justified by faith through the blood of Christ are no longer rebels and strangers.

“For through him, we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” Ephesians 2:18-19.

They are now loyal subjects of God’s government, enjoying all the privileges it affords. As loyal subjects, their obedience is demonstrated by their works, which serve as the sole basis for determining their reward in the judgment. The judgment is not based on faith alone, highlighting the necessity of obedience to the Law of God.

“And he said unto him, why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.” Matthew 19:17.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” 2 Corinthians 5:10.

“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” Matthew 16:27.

“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:12.

If faith does not count in the judgment, what then is its benefit? It enables us to do the works of God, drawing upon the strength of Christ by which alone we can perform the works that the judgment approves, for without Him we can do nothing. John 15:5. But faith without works is dead, and dead faith can accomplish nothing.

What of the grace of God, which has opened the way of escape from eternal ruin? Does it not have a part in the judgment? Grace has made our salvation possible and guides us day by day. It opens the way but cannot ensure our salvation without our accepting the gift given to us. It is like a man who is starving and refuses the freely offered food. The power of choice is not destroyed by grace; neither does it release us from the duty and power of choosing. Grace clothes us with invincible armor but does not fight our battles for us if we sit still and do nothing. The Scriptures tell us that Noah found grace in the sight of God (Genesis 6:8), but grace led him by faith to obey and do as God directed him. He could not have been saved from the flood if he had not obeyed and built an ark.

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” (Hebrews 11:7).

God has made full provision for our salvation and will fulfill all His promises if we fulfill all their conditions.

“If you fulfill the conditions of God’s promises, the promises will be fulfilled to you.” (Messages to Young People 327.4).

Grace encourages trust but does not tolerate presumption.

“Faith claims God’s promises and brings forth fruit in obedience. Presumption also claims the promises, but uses them as Satan did, to excuse transgression.” (Gospel Workers 260.3).

We are justified by faith, yet encouraged to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, “for it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Though justified by faith, we are admonished to add to our faith virtue, etc., keeping the commandments of God and fulfilling the righteousness of the Law. This teaches us that we are not justified by keeping the Law, but rather that the Law cannot be abrogated as it is a transcript of God’s character and as enduring as He.

The Law that points out sin cannot justify a sinner; it is the rule of right and necessarily condemns the sinner. Therefore, justification of the sinner by the Law is impossible. The difference between the Law and the Gospel is as stark as night and day. The Law is a moral rule, sin is immorality, and the Gospel is the remedy. The Gospel, therefore, upholds the Law and incorporates it into the life of the believer, and there can be no blending of the two.

Regarding justification by faith, the Apostle clearly distinguishes between faith and works, excluding works entirely. However, when discussing the life of the justified, he teaches us to “*work out your salvation with fear and trembling*” (Philippians 2:12). This order cannot be given or even obeyed in relation to the justification of past offenses, as highlighted in Romans 3, because no one can work out a justification for past offenses.

God treats future sins as he does past sins, and his plan of salvation is one of prevention as well as one of cure. Jesus saves us from sin; he removes sin by the sacrifice of himself and says to the justified one, “*Go and sin no more.*” Since he is not the minister of sin (Galatians 2:17), but of righteousness, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. Both the prevention and cure of sin are included in the gospel plan. Man is under condemnation for sin; he also has a carnal mind, which is enmity against God and is not subject to the law of God (Romans 8:7). His position is that of a sinner, and his disposition is sinful. For God to forgive our past transgressions while leaving the sinful disposition would lead us to once again become involved in sin and bring us under condemnation. Conversely, it would not suffice to remove the sinful disposition and leave the past sins upon us, as they would condemn us in the judgment. Therefore, Christ becomes a Savior to us in both respects. Our past sins are freely forgiven, and we are justified; he removes the carnal mind, the mind of self-centeredness/selfishness, which is enmity against God and not subject to the Law of God, and brings us to peace with God. We are now subject to his Law; he writes it in our hearts so that we delight in it. Then, ‘the righteousness of the law’ is “*fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh,*” the carnal mind, “*but after the Spirit’s mind*’ (Romans 8:4).

A.T. Jones, *Righteousness by Faith*, Lesson 14, page 40 states,

“Now another thing upon what we have said: our sins—how many of them? All were laid upon him, and he carried the guilt and the condemnation of them all and also answered for them, paid for them, atoned for them. Then, in him, we are free from every sin that we have ever committed. That is the truth. Let us be glad of it and praise God with everlasting joy.

He took all the sins which we have committed; he answered for them and took them away from us forever; all the tendencies to sin which have not appeared in actual sins—these he put forever underfoot. Thus, he sweeps the whole board, and we are free and complete in him.

O, he is a complete Saviour. He is a Saviour from sins committed, and the Conqueror of the tendencies to commit sins. In Him, we have the victory.”

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” Romans 5:6.

Chapter 4

Vicariousness

For God hath not appointed us To wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ Who died for us ...” 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10.

According to the dictionary, vicariousness refers to the quality of experiencing something through the activities of other people rather than by doing it yourself. Whether the death of Christ has been vicarious or not has been a question in theological circles throughout the Christian era. This is a crucial question as it involves the effectiveness of the atonement. Christ, having died for our sins, means that his death is vicarious. If a person suffers for his sin, no atonement is made. The demands of the Law would be satisfied, but he would be lost eternally because he has no more life. Had our forebears been left to perish in their sins, the penalty would have been inflicted and justice satisfied, yet there would have been no atonement. This indicates that there can be no atonement without vicariousness.

Some religions and even some Christian denominations deny the vicarious death of Christ. They reason that justice would not permit a penalty to be inflicted twice for the same offense. If Christ suffered vicariously, we must be released as a matter of justice and not of pardon; for where the Law takes its course, there is justice but no pardon. This would be true if mercy were the sole objective. However, where there is justice and mercy, there are conditions by which we can avail ourselves of the benefits of his death, which was voluntary and unconditional. Christ honors the demands of the Law, whether we honor it or not, but we benefit from his death when we appropriate those benefits to ourselves. If we do not accept him, we must bear the consequences ourselves.

If a person commits a crime punishable by death and another dies in his place, though his sin is pardoned, is his guilt necessarily removed? The death of Christ makes salvation possible by vindicating the law on man's behalf, thereby opening the way for pardon without infringing on justice. Guilt is only removed if the transgressor, through faith, accepts the death of Christ as his own (Galatians 2:20). The gospel sets forth Christ as a propitiation so that through faith in his blood, we may receive the remission of past sins and that God may be just and the justifier of all who believe in Jesus (Romans 3:23-26). Christ bore our sins on the tree, and we suffer with him in his death, which is our death. 2 Corinthians 5:21 gives us this understanding: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Not that he was a sinner, for he “knew no sin,” but he was counted a sinner; our sins were imputed to him for our sake, so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

“... Christ having taken our human nature in all things in the flesh, and so having become ourselves. When we read of him and the Father’s dealings with him, we are reading of ourselves and of the Father’s dealings with us. What God did to him was done to us; what God did for him was for us. And therefore, again, it is written: “He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” 2 Cor. 5:21. A.T. Jones, 1895 GC Bulletin No. 15 page 199—quoted in Righteousness by Faith Chapter 15 page 48.

The Levitical law typified the offering of Christ. The laying of the hand on the head of the offerings was significant. *“If any man of you bring an offering to the Lord ... he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement.”* Leviticus 1:2-4; 3:2, 8, 13. If the priest sinned, he was required to bring a bullock for a sin offering. Leviticus 4:4. If the whole congregation sins, then *“the elders of the congregation shall lay the hands upon the head of the bullock.”* Chapter 4:15, 24; 8:14, 22.

This action of laying hands on the head of the offering is made clear in Leviticus 16:21, where the high priest was acting on behalf of the people. *“And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.”* The purpose of this action is to transfer the sins through the laying on of the priest’s hands.

Although the sinner was required to lay his hand on the head of the offering, it was the priest who made atonement for him. Leviticus 4:20, 26, 31, 35, etc. The atonement was made with the blood of the

offering, for the blood represented life.

“But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.” Genesis 9:4. *“... be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.”* Deuteronomy 12:23. *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood.”* *“For it is the life of all flesh; ... for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof ...”* Leviticus 14:11, 14. When God says, *“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed ...”* Genesis 9:6, it is equivalent to saying, Whoso taketh man’s life, by him, i.e. by man shall his life be taken: again He said, *“Your blood of your lives will I require.”* Genesis 9:5.

“The wages of sin is death,” and “without the shedding of blood there is no remission.” Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:22. The sinner forfeits his life, and the law, being dishonored, can only be satisfied or vindicated with the shedding of blood or the taking of life; life for life is its due. The penalty of the Law is realized through the shedding of blood or the taking of life. The penalty for the sinner does not lessen the claims of the Law; when his sin was transferred to the offering, it was accepted, and its life was taken for his.

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” Leviticus 17:11.

The sinner was forgiven, and his guilt was laid upon another, who suffered the penalty of the Law. The type confirms the antitype that Christ suffered the penalty of the Law. The wages of sin is death. He died because of our sins.

Death for another is a vicarious death. The sin offerings were never slain for themselves, always for the wrongs of others. Their blood

was shed in place of others, being truly vicarious. If substitution or vicariousness is removed from the offerings, the reason for their slaying and the possibility of atonement consistent with justice is lost.

Christ was God's lamb on whom the iniquity of us all was laid. His death was truly substitutionary. *"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Isaiah 53:6. This is a very sobering thought. *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."* 1 Peter 2:24. Numerous other texts reveal the vicarious death of Christ in the sinner's stead: Isaiah 53:5, 8, 10; Galatians 3:13-13; Romans 4:25; 5:6; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:14; 1 Peter 3:18; 4:1; Matthew 20:28; 1 Timothy 2:6; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 7:23; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 Peter 1:18, 20; Revelation 5:9; Acts 20:28.

Death is the Law's penalty and the rightful reward of the sinner. God has set forth His Son to be a propitiation, to suffer death, the penalty of the Law for us. Thus, Christ suffered for us, and any denial of this is to deny the whole gospel. His substitutionary sacrifice is a gift from God, just as Christ Himself is a gift. John 3:16. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." If Christ only satisfied the demands of the Law and justice, God could not be just in justifying the ungodly.

Why did God make such an immense sacrifice? Was it that man was so valuable to God that He gave the Son of his bosom, his only begotten, to rescue him from ruin? Although man was valuable to God, having made him in His image, this is not the sole reason He gave His Son to rescue him from ruin. Man was made free to develop character in conformity to the Law of God. Satan, God's archenemy,

succeeded in frustrating God's plan by inducing man to side with him. Man yielded to the tempter and broke the Law of God. This placed the life of man and the honor of God at risk. Shall Satan be permitted to triumph and man be blotted out of existence? Or will the Lawgiver relax the strictness of His Law and let man escape the penalty he incurred in breaking the Law? Either of these scenarios would dim the glorious character of God. More than the rescue of man was at stake. If the Law, the very foundation of God's throne and government, were adjusted to meet man's infidelity, the very existence of the universe would be in danger of collapse.

The infinite Lord, Yahweh, opened a way for man to recover from his fall and for the integrity of His Law to be maintained and its claim honored. This was through the vicarious death of his Son, whereby *"he might be just and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus."* The law is a transcript of the character of God, and whatever detracts from the honor of the Law detracts from its Author. It cannot be disparaged while the Lawgiver is honored. Christ himself said, *"... as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."* John 5:30. In this, he made the honor of God paramount in his life and magnified the Law, making it honorable. *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."* Matthew 5:17-18. The primary purpose and work for which he came was to manifest God's character as enshrined in his Law, the foundation of God's Government, and secondarily to save humanity. What a testimony of the love of God. What an accomplishment! Before dying for the sins of the world, he said, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work

which thou gavest me to do.” This text shows our Savior’s mission on earth: first, to glorify God, i.e., manifest his character in his life; then second, to do the work of saving humanity by his death.

Chapter 5

The Price for Sin

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

The penalty for transgression of God’s Law is death. Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” The death pronounced here is not merely the cessation of physical life, which was spoken to Adam because of his disobedience, but the second death, which is the rejection of Jesus resulting in annihilation.

“Lucifer in heaven had sinned in the light of God’s glory. To him, as to no other created being, was given a revelation of God’s love. Understanding the character of God, knowing His goodness, Satan chose to follow his own selfish, independent will. This choice was final. There was no more that God could do to save him. But man was deceived; his mind was darkened by Satan’s sophistry. The height and depth of the

love of God he did not know. For him, there was hope in a knowledge of God's love. By beholding His character, he might be drawn back to God." Desire of Ages 761.5

But the Law could not be set aside or its penalty relaxed, as said by God, he "will by no means clear the guilty," i.e., those who continue in their sins. The salvation of a lawbreaker could only be achieved through the provision of a willing and honorable substitute. This was found in the Son of God. God gave his Son (John 3:16), and the Son willingly gave himself (Galatians 1:4). A substitutionary sacrifice is the only way the broken Law may be vindicated, the honor of God's Government maintained, and a way opened for the pardon and salvation of the sinner.

The atonement, as shown in the Bible, presents one offering for many offenses. "No, the free gift is not like what resulted from one man's sinning; for from one sinner came judgment that brought condemnation; but the free gift came after many offences and brought acquittal." Romans 5:16, Complete Jewish Bible. Both the type and the antitype present the same argument. Many offerings were made day by day throughout the year, but on the day of atonement, one offering was made for all the people. Leviticus 16:15.

The apostle Paul in Hebrews 10:14 states, "... *it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.*" In the type on the Day of Atonement, the high priest offered the blood of a bullock and a goat before God on behalf of himself and the nation for the removal of sin. A goat is not as precious as a man, nor is it worth that of a man. How much less is the life of a whole nation? Not understanding the lesson being taught in the atonement, skeptics consider it demeaning for a goat to be accepted in the place of a man and conclude that such

an offering lowers the dignity of a man. If the broken Law could be vindicated by the sacrifice of a goat. Also, if it means that the Law is not of such great value or importance.

It would be different if the government declared that the law was so sacred and just, and the violation of it so terrible, that nothing but the death of a prince could be accepted as a substitute for the transgressor. In contemplation of such a one who is being offered in his stead, the transgressor would be forced to ask, is my sin so great that I can only be saved by such a great sacrifice? The types and prophecies of the Old Testament pointed to a greater and more honorable sacrifice, that of Christ, for the sins of man. "... *after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.*" Daniel 9:26. Isaiah tells us, "he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities ... and he was numbered with the transgressors; he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." The price the prince paid for the life of the transgressors of the law testifies to the sacredness and holy nature of the law. They can only properly appreciate the gift of Christ, who rightly estimates the holiness of the law for which he died to vindicate. "*Never had justice such an advocate as it had in the doctrine of Christ; at the same time, never had it such a victim as his sacrifice.*" Sin comes with a very high price tag indeed.

The sacrifice offered for us was the death of God's dear Son, Jesus. However, many question whether Christ, the Son of God, truly died, or if a human body died while Christ left it during the hour of suffering. If only a mere human body died, the Atonement would lose its value and dignity, God's character would be impugned, and humanity would be without hope.

Many believe that the pre-existent Son of God could not suffer and die. If this were true, it would mean that the only humiliation he endured was leaving the heavenly courts and the adoration of the angelic hosts. The amazing love of the Father in giving his Son would become a mere farce, and we would be left hopeless. But two natures were joined together in one, very God and very man, who suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried. In the Scriptures, “Christ the Son of the living God” and “the man Christ Jesus” are the same person. They are not two separate natures but a blend of the two.

“Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No, the two natures were mysteriously blended in one person—the man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. When Christ was crucified, it was His human nature that died. Deity did not sink and die; that would have been impossible.” Lift Him Up 76.2

Christ, the Son of the Most High God, died for our redemption. He was the pre-existent one who was the Word of God in the beginning, was with God, and was manifested in the flesh. “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God ... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.*” “*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh ...*” John 1:1, 14; 1 Timothy 3:16. Jesus, who was with God and was God, was manifested in the flesh; by whose blood we are made nigh unto God (Ephesians 2:13-16). He is the only one who could die for us, as His life resembled the law. Like the law, He is holy, just, good, eternal, changeless, incorruptible, etc.

In Philippians 2:5-8, the apostle speaks of Christ being in the form

of God; thought it not robbery to be equal with God; was made in the likeness of man; humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. This speaks of one person and not of two persons: one who humbled himself and then another who was obedient unto death. In Colossians 1:14-20, we are told that in Christ we have redemption through his blood; this is because he took part of the same flesh and blood as all humanity (Hebrews 2:14). Also, he is called the Son of God (Luke 1:35). That the divine Son of God was made flesh, took on him the nature of Abraham and the seed of David (Hebrews 2:16; Romans 1:3) and changed the manner and form of his existence in the incarnation should make it clear that a person, the divine Son of God, died.

That the Son of God died to make an atonement for us should allow for no argument. The value of the atonement is not just an appointment of God; its value consists of the worth of the offering made. If it were not so, “the blood of bulls and goats” might be the answer to the purpose of God. Paul says it is not possible that the blood of such animals should take away sin or purge the conscience. Neither could a person atone for himself, even if he were to suffer long enough. Likewise, another member of the human race under the condemnation of the law could not make an atonement for a fellow condemned person, as they are both condemned. Furthermore, being creatures deriving and owing their life to God, they would offer that to which they have no absolute right. The same would be true of angels, for they are fellow servants of man. Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9. Angels’ lives would be inadequate to redeem man, as they depend on God for their lives as we do and owe God the service of their lives as we do.

Man, being in rebellion, if he were able to free himself, could give no

guarantee that he would never again turn from his allegiance to God. Similarly, the angels, with sin having entered their ranks through the covering cherub who lifted himself against God, could give no guarantee against any such future attempts. Perfect sinless human nature failed, as well as perfect sinless angelic nature. However, there was one against whom such reasoning and remarks would not apply: Jesus the Son of God. He was the Father's delight (Proverbs 8:30; John 17:5) and was adored by the angels, having made them and all things (Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:3). Only the Son of God could make an offering that would meet the requirements of the case in every respect. He alone possessed the dignity to magnify and vindicate the honor of the broken Law while suffering its penalty. The Law was in his heart (Psalm 40:8); hence, he would do no violence to it but would shield it from reproach, even laying down his life in its defense. In so doing, he has united the Lawgiver to the lawbreaker; therefore, God could be "*just and the justifier of the ungodly.*" He is the connector between God and man.

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 2:5.

"Christ redeemed men from Satan, paying no less a price than His own life. He was equal with God, but He laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and came to this world in the likeness of man, that humanity might touch humanity and divinity lay hold of the throne of God." Letter 164, 1901, par. 4.

With this testimony before us, only one who is with the Father from all eternity, in whose heart is the Law of God, and who committed no sin, could become an offering for sin and satisfy the broken Law. This should cause us to appreciate and honor our Father and His Law, recognizing His love and the sacrifice He made to vindicate the Law

and make it honorable.

"The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honorable." Isaiah 42:21.

Christ is not a minister of sin but of righteousness. He does not save individuals while they are in sin, but instead saves them from sin, which is defined as the transgression of the Law (1 John 3:4). Although the carnal heart is hostile toward God and does not submit to His Law, the child of God can, like the Son of God, express, "*I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy Law is within my heart.*" (Psalm 40:8)

Chapter 6

The Atonement

A substituted sacrifice is the basis of atonement. Divine justice demands atonement, or the destruction of the human race is inevitable, confronted with the declaration, “*The wages of sin is death.*” An atonement is the vindication through an offering to the broken Law. The fact that the Son of God died is indisputable, except by those who invent theories contrary to the word of God. It is equally incontrovertible that he suffered the full penalty of the broken Law. While very similar, the death of Christ and the atonement are not the same. There can be no atonement without the death of a sacrifice, but there can be the death of a sacrifice without atonement.

What is done by substitution is vicarious; since Christ makes atonement for others and not for himself, his death is vicarious. The broken Law requires the life of the transgressor, and Christ died for us; therefore, his death was vicarious. Atonement is the work of his priesthood and is not within the scope of the sinner; it is something

beyond the limits of the sinner’s action. A sinner may die for his sins, thus meeting the demands of justice, but he forfeits eternal life, as there was no substitute, no vicariousness, and hence no atonement. This shows the distinction between the death of Christ and the Atonement.

In Leviticus 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:6, 10, 16, 18; 6:7; 16:30, 32, etc., if a priest, the whole congregation, a ruler, or an individual sins, the person or the elders of the congregation are required to lay their hands upon the head of the offering, transferring the sin to the innocent victim, which is then killed. In every case, it is the priest who makes atonement. It is noted that: 1. The sinner lays his hand upon the head of the offering. 2. He shall kill it. 3. The priest shall make atonement. The killing of the offering and the atonement are distinct and separate acts. In every instance of a sin offering, the priest took the blood and made atonement according to the word of the Lord.

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” Leviticus 17:11.

On the Day of Atonement, the prescribed order for making atonement is delineated, exemplifying the work of Christ, our sin offering, and High Priest. On the tenth day of the seventh month, the high priest performed atonement for the people, as ordained by God, “*to make atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins once a year*” (Leviticus 16:29, 24). The high priest initially makes atonement for himself and his household (Leviticus 16:6) to present himself as sinless before God on behalf of the people. The act of making atonement for himself does not exemplify Christ, our High Priest, who is sinless, separate from sinners, and requires no atonement.

In a typical service, the high priest, after making atonement for himself, selected two goats from the congregation and cast lots upon them, one designated for a sin offering and the other designated as a scapegoat. The high priest placed his hands upon the goat designated by the lot for the Lord, thereby transferring the sins of the people to it. This goat was subsequently slain, and the priest took its blood into the sanctuary, sprinkling it upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat seven times. In this manner, atonement was achieved for the children of Israel, effectively blotting out their sins and removing them from the presence of the Lord. The high priest not only made atonement for the people but also for the holy places, thereby cleansing and hallowing them from the uncleanness of the children of Israel. The people did not enter the holies; instead, their representative, the high priest, took the blood of the Lord's goat, which was symbolic of the people's sins. The priest sprinkled the blood before and upon the mercy seat as it was intended to facilitate atonement. This procedure is referred to as the cleansing of the sanctuary.

“Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: 16 And he shall make an atonement for the holy place because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions in all their sins. And so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. 17 And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out and have made an atonement for himself and for

his household and for all the congregation of Israel. 18 And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock and of the blood of the goat and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. 19 And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times and cleanse it and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.” Leviticus 16:15-19.

The sinner brought the offering for his sin and killed it. Then the priest took the blood and made atonement for him. In this context, the killing of the offering was not the atonement but rather preparatory to it.

Christ, our High Priest, now makes atonement for those who are his followers in the sanctuary pitched by God and not man (Hebrews 8:2). At Calvary, heaven's courtyard, in the antitype, Christ was the offering for sin, and atonement could not then have been made. According to the ceremonial law, none but those of the tribe of Levi could be priests, and Christ was not of the tribe of Levi but of Judah and, hence, could not be a priest on earth (Hebrews 7:13-14; 8:4). This puts to rest the idea that Christ began the work of atonement at Calvary; there, he was the sacrifice.

“The messengers of the cross must arm themselves with watchfulness and prayer, and move forward with faith and courage, working always in the name of Jesus. They must exalt Christ as man's mediator in the heavenly sanctuary, the One in whom all the sacrifices of the Old Testament dispensation centered, and through whose atoning sacrifice the transgressors of God's law may find peace and pardon. Acts of the Apostles 23.2

It is categorically stated in the Bible that Christ died for humanity.

“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: ¹⁵ And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”
2 Corinthians 5:14-15.

His death, as previously mentioned, was preparatory to the atonement. On the day of atonement, the goat of the sin offering, representing Christ, was slain for the sins of all the people and offered to meet their needs. As the priest made the atonement in the sanctuary, the people were required to humble themselves. Those who did not participate were cut off. Symbolically, those who participated had their sins blotted out, removed from the presence of the Lord, and cleansed from sin. Likewise, in this typology, the people of God on the Day of Atonement have a responsibility as their High Priest is making atonement for them.

While the investigative judgment progresses in heaven, and the sins of penitent believers are removed from the sanctuary, a special work of purification and the putting away of sin is to occur among God’s people on earth.

The apostle Peter taught this when he said, “... The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. ³¹ Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. Acts 5:30-31. Further distinguishing between the offering for sin and the atonement, he says, “Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence

of the Lord. Acts 3:19. When the priest made atonement, he took the blood and cleansed the sanctuary from the sins with which it was defiled. This corresponds to the blotting out of sins referred to by the apostle. The blood of Christ was shed for all, but the blotting out of sins availed only for those who repent and are converted. Though he died for all, he is only able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by him. Hebrews 7:25. He can only save those who come unto him and no others. “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” John 6:37.

No one’s sins can be blotted out or covered if they are in rebellion and enmity with God, but he who confesses and forsakes his sins shall find mercy and cleansing.

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” Proverbs 28:13.

The apostle John amplifies this when he says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9. Both the Old and New Testament scriptures teach and distinguish between the offering for sin and atonement for the sinner.

In the type, the work of atonement by the High Priest occurred for a short time on a specific day (the tenth day of the seventh month), and at the end of the day, it is contrasted with the continual work of intercession throughout the year. Similarly, the work of atonement or judgment by our Great High Priest in the antitype has lasted for a brief period of one hundred and eighty years to date (2025), compared to his continual daily (tamid) intercession from A.D. 31 to the present (one thousand and ninety-four years).

The types are all fulfilled in the life and work of our Saviour, the Son of God, our substitute and surety. He is our High Priest and the one mediator between God and man. 1 Timothy 2:5. He is a priest after the order of Melchisedec, Psalm 110:4, the king-priest who sits on the throne of the Majesty in the Heavens, a minister of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle, which God pitched and not man.

“There are many who try to blend these two systems, using the texts that speak of the ceremonial law to prove that the moral law has been abolished, but this is a perversion of the Scriptures. The distinction between the two systems is broad and clear. The ceremonial system was made up of symbols pointing to Christ, to His sacrifice, and His priesthood. This ritual law, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be performed by the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Then all the sacrificial offerings were to cease. It is this law that Christ “took ... out of the way, nailing it to His cross.” Colossians 2:14. Patriarchs and Prophets 365.1

“When you were dead because of the things you had done wrong and because your body wasn’t circumcised, God made you alive with Christ and forgave all the things you had done wrong.”¹⁴ He destroyed the record of the debt we owed, with its requirements that worked against us. He canceled it by nailing it to the cross.¹⁵ When he disarmed the rulers and authorities, he exposed them to public disgrace by leading them in a triumphal parade.¹⁶ So don’t let anyone judge you about eating or drinking or about a festival, a new moon observance, or sabbaths.¹⁷ These religious practices are only a shadow of what was coming—

*the body that cast the shadow is Christ.” Colossians 2: 13-17
Common English Bible.*

The truths and doctrines of the gospel make up the complete system of salvation, with their foundation being the sacrifice of Christ in shedding his blood for the world’s sins.

Chapter 7

Judgment

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission.” Hebrews 9:22.

The work of the priests in the type reached its objective on the day of atonement when the high priest went into the Most Holy Place, with the blood of the sin offering to cleanse the sanctuary from the sins of the people of God. Leviticus 16:14-19. Similarly, the gospel of remission is fully accomplished by the action of our High Priest, who appears in the presence of God for us, blotting out our sins and removing them from the sanctuary.

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; ¹² Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” Hebrews 9:11-12.

The judgment has to do with all humanity.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” 2 Corinthians 5:10.

This is unlike the atonement, which only deals with the professed people of God.

A false teaching of the judgment has spread abroad through the misconstruing of “the great white throne” judgment, which says that when Christ returns the second time, all humanity will be brought before the throne of God to be judged (Revelation 20:11-12). This refers to the dispensing of the sentence of the judgment. Judgment is after death, before the resurrection of the righteous who died in Christ, and for the wicked before their resurrection. Those who rejected Him will be judged by the righteous (1 Corinthians 6:3) during the millennium, and when Christ returns, he brings their reward with him. Revelation 22:12.

“So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him. Hebrews 9:28 English Standard Version (ESV)

In the earthly setting, a trial must first occur before judgment is given. Trials involve the presentation of facts that have been investigated and presented relative to the case. Likewise, before judgment is given in the cases before the heavenly tribunal investigation of each case must be made. This is illustrated in the parable Christ gave in

Matthew 22 of the wedding feast. In the parable, the king, likened to the judge, investigated the guests to determine if they had complied with the prior stated requirements for participation in the feast. On investigation, there was a guest who did not comply with the requirements and was excluded from the feast. He represents those who profess to be children of God, but when investigated are found clothed in their own garments. The parable illustrates that before judgment is given, an investigation must be made to determine if the guests can participate in the feast. The guests entering the hall represent those who profess faith in Christ, but when examined, some are found without the wedding garment provided and are expelled. Matthew 22:14. The lesson given is that we must be dressed in the attire that the King provides, or our names will be removed from the Book of Life.

Josiah Litch, a co-laborer with William Miller in the Advent Movement of the mid-nineteenth century, in *Prophetic Expositions* says, “The trial must precede the execution. This is so clear a proposition that it is sufficient to state ... But the resurrection is the retribution or execution of judgment, for they that have done good shall come forth to the resurrection of life ... There can be no general Judgment or trial after the resurrection. The resurrection is the separation process, and they never will be comingled again after the saints are raised, no matter how long or short the period to elapse between the two resurrections.”

The judgment of the righteous is accomplished while the High Priest is in the sanctuary in heaven, and therefore, before resurrection is shown on two counts. 1. It must be while Jesus is their advocate that he secures their acquittal. 2. They are raised immortal, demonstrating

that they have been acquitted. The judgment of the wicked is after the redemption of the righteous, who will take part in that transaction.

“Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? ² Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? ³ Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life? 1 Corinthians 6:1-3.

While Christ is the High Priest, the cases of the wicked, those who have not accepted him, are not considered, and hence they are not judged at that time.

The types outlined in the Old Testament present the teachings of the judgment seen in the antitype in the New Testament. The Old Testament types show that the work of the priest was a “daily” or “continual” intercession in the holy place, but the day of atonement occupied a short period, an appointed day of the yearly service. Hebrews 9:6-7. When the work of the day of atonement was completed, the sanctuary was cleansed, and the high priest placed the sins of all those who participated in the service on the head of the scapegoat. They were then borne away from the camp. Only then could the high priest pronounce the benediction upon the waiting people of God who had “afflicted their souls” before the sanctuary. This is a proleptic of the “day of Judgment” for the people of God.

In the type, the day of judgment was made known by the blowing of trumpets on the first day of the seventh month, ten days before. The people were to afflict their souls before the sanctuary until the tenth day. Likewise, in the antitype, the day of judgment is made known.

Daniel 8:14 introduces us to this judgment, called the cleansing of the sanctuary.

The interpretation of the cleansing of the antitypical sanctuary is given in Daniel 9:24-27. The time is stated when this sanctuary would be cleansed or judgment begins. This time was made understandable to Daniel by Gabriel. “Know therefore and understand,” then he gives Daniel the explanation, and because of this, we can know when the sanctuary would be cleansed or judgment would sit. Let us, with the answer given to Daniel, seek to comprehend this matter of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, the judgment, where our High Priest ministers.

Daniel 9:25 speaks of the going forth of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, which commenced in 457 B.C. with a decree. Three Persian kings, Cyrus the Great, Darius Hystapes, and Artaxerxes Longimanus, were instrumental in setting the decree in order. Ezra 7:11-27; 6:14. From 457 B.C. to Messiah, the Prince (Christ), was 69 weeks (seven weeks, three score, and two weeks). The first seven weeks represent 49 years in which Jerusalem was restored. As a prophecy, these are weeks of years (Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6), a day representing a year. These 69 weeks take us to the anointing of Jesus/Yeshuah as Messiah at his baptism in A.D. 27.

Vs. 26. “After three scores and two weeks Messiah be cut off.” These are 62 weeks (434 years) after the first seven weeks (49 years). This brings us to the year A.D. 31 when Jesus the Messiah was crucified.

Vs. 27. “And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.” The covenant or promise of God to give his Son

as a ransom for humanity was confirmed or ratified by the Messiah for one prophetic week (7 years). He was cut off, and crucified, in the midst or middle of the week in A.D. 31 (3 1/2 years), leaving another half of the week (3 1/2 years), which brings us to A.D. 34.

Since four hundred and ninety years (490) were determined or cut off from the 2300 days (prophetic years) to the Jews (vs. 24), and they terminated in A.D. 34, it left 1810 years of the 2300 years. When these 1810 years are added to A.D. 34, it brings us to A.D. 1844. At this time, the sanctuary was to be cleansed, or judgment was to begin.

A judgment scene is presented in Daniel 7:9-10 and 12-13 where a court is seen to be in session. The “Ancient of Days” takes his seat on one of the thrones placed in position. The defense attorney, our High Priest and Advocate, is brought before the Judge to plead for his clients. There also is the jury, “the thousand thousands,” and the witnesses, the “ten thousand times ten thousands.” The cases or charges, “the books that are opened,” are presented for review to determine the outcome of the cases in judgment.

The proclamation of the first angel message by William Miller heralding the beginning of judgment or the cleansing of the sanctuary was made approximately ten years before judgment began in 1844.

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, ⁷ Saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” Revelation 14:6-7.

This was the clarion call by Miller and his associates at that time. This message brings to view the judgment as occurring before the second coming of Christ and the resurrection, and announcing the fall of Babylon (Verse 8). In verses 9-12, it warns against false worship and calls to the keeping of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, all occurring before probation's closure and the resurrection. Associated with the close of probation is the cleansing of the sanctuary, which occurs before Christ leaves it.

On discussing this topic, people usually ask the following questions: Isn't heaven spotlessly clean? What could there be that would need cleansing where our High Priest is ministering? And what does it mean that the sanctuary is to be cleansed? The sanctuary was not cleansed from defilement in the ordinary sense of the word but rather in a symbolic sense. In the type, the high priest enters the second apartment of the sanctuary on the day of atonement (the 10th day of the 7th month), Leviticus 23:27. He sprinkled the blood of the sin offering on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat seven times. Then he went into the holy place and cleansed the altar of incense, and afterward to the altar of burnt offering and touched the horns of that altar. The cleansing of the sanctuary and the making of atonement for the people were accomplished with the blood of the sin offering. The sprinkling of the blood represented the removal of the sins of the people from the presence of God.

The sanctuary was defiled by the sin of the people, a moral violation (1 John 3:4), through their representative, the high priest, as he bore their judgment. Exodus 28:20. Christ has taken the sins of his people upon himself and carried them into the heavenly sanctuary as in the type." Hebrews 8:1-4. That the heavenly sanctuary needed

cleansing, Paul says in Hebrews 9:23, "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." As Christ entered the holy places in Heaven itself, his blood is the better sacrifice by which sin is cleansed. 1 John 1:7.

These holy places are the two apartments where the High Priestly work of Christ is conducted. Hebrews 9:2-3. These holy places are the first and second apartments identified by the furniture as seen in the type. In the type, the first apartment contained the table of showbread, the seven-branched candlestick, and the altar of incense. In the second apartment was the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant, the golden pot that had manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant.

The two apartments in Heaven contained furniture similar to the pattern built by Moses.

"And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle." Revelation 1:13

This is the first apartment in heaven wherein is the seven candlesticks. The second apartment in heaven is also identified with the furniture as seen in the type.

"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his

temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”
Revelation 4:18-19.

The texts cited above bring to view three important truths, among others, regarding the judgment.

The cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary or judgment occurs in the Christian era in the Autumn of 1844. Daniel 8 as interpreted by Daniel 9:24-27.

The giving of rewards of that judgment which is done after the investigation of the cases of the dead who professed faith in Christ. “... *the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.*”

That there are two apartments in the heavenly sanctuary, and hence the movement of our High Priest from one apartment to another. The Complete Jewish Bible states,

“As I watched, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient One took his seat. His clothing was white as snow, and the hair on his head was like pure wool. His throne was fiery flames, with wheels of burning fire ... “I kept watching the night visions, when I saw, coming with the clouds of heaven, someone like the son of man. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence.”

Chapter 8

The Scape-Goat

Pardon is conditional and not absolute during probation. It must always be remembered that God can never disregard the claims of justice that the Law demands. For the sinner to escape the penalty of the broken Law, which is death, God forgives him but does not overlook his sin or treat it lightly. Instead, he transfers it to the innocent One who bears it and suffers in the sinner’s stead, but the sin still exists. This is illustrated on the day of atonement by the priest when the work of cleansing the sanctuary was finished. Though the people were cleansed and sin was removed from the presence of God and placed on a substitute, it still existed.

The scapegoat was one of two goats presented before the Lord on the day of atonement, on which lots were cast. One was to be a sin offering, the Lord’s goat, which was slain and whose blood was taken into the sanctuary and sprinkled before and on the mercy seat to make atonement for the people’s sins. The other goat, the scapegoat, was never killed and was only used after the blood of the Lord’s goat made the atonement, reconciliation with God for us.

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven” Colossians 1:20.

It is the blood of the slain animal that makes atonement for sin.

“And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about.” Leviticus 16:18.

Some teach that the scapegoat was a type of Christ, but the scriptures do not affirm this. A distinction between the Lord’s goat and the scapegoat is readily seen. The Lord’s goat was slain as a sin offering, typical of the death of Christ at Calvary. Afterward, the priest took the blood and went into the sanctuary for the people, this would be typical of our risen Saviour going into heaven on our behalf. *“For Christ is ... entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”* Hebrews 9:24. After an end was made of reconciling the holies, i.e. after the making of the atonement in the sanctuary in type, the priest brought the live goat, placed both his hands on its head, and transferred the sins of the children of Israel putting them on the head of the goat representing Satan who encouraged them to sin. This corresponds to the completion of the work of our High Priest at the end of the antitypical day of atonement. The sins placed on the head of the scapegoat are of those only who have “afflicted their souls” and are accepted by God.

“... while the sin offering pointed to Christ as a sacrifice, and the high priest represented Christ as a mediator, the

scapegoat typified Satan, the author of sin, upon whom the sins of the truly penitent will finally be placed. When the high priest, by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, removed the sins from the sanctuary, he placed them upon the scapegoat. When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary at the close of His ministration, He will place them upon Satan, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty.” Great Controversy 422.2.

The impenitent and transgressors of the law of God must bear their sins. Having rejected the sacrifice of Christ, no atonement is made for them, they have their sins returned upon their heads and must bear their penalty.

“... the sins of those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ will, at last, be rolled back upon the originator of sin, and he must bear their punishment, while those who do not accept salvation through Jesus will suffer the penalty of their own sins.” Early Writings 178.1.

This is the second condemnation sinners will experience, having rejected the sacrifice of Christ, which paid the penalty for the first condemnation caused by Adam.

The pardoned sins were placed on the scapegoat in the type, and the goat was sent away into a land not inhabited, never to return to the camp of Israel. This is certainly not the experience of Christ for, *“... Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”* Hebrews 9:28. The pardoned sin was removed from the

penitent and transferred to another, but the sin was not yet destroyed. The antitype also shows the removal of sin from the presence of the penitent, though it has not yet been destroyed. Revelation brings this to view with the binding of Satan, the scapegoat.

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ² And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, ³ And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.” Revelation 20:1-3.

With the righteous removed from the earth, and all the wicked slain, the earth will be empty and without human inhabitants. As in the type the scape-goat was banished to “the wilderness” with the sins of Israel, in the antitype the scape-goat, Satan, will be sent away with the sins of God’s people into the “bottomless pit,” the earth, for one thousand years to behold the desolation he caused. Leviticus 16:22. This is the role of the scapegoat on whom the high priest placed the sins of Israel after the “blood atonement” was made by the Lord’s goat.

To some, Leviticus 16:10 presents a difficulty relative to the atonement, for it says, “... *the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.*” Satan does not take part in the “blood atonement” for humanity or bear the sins in the sense of suffering the penalty of transgression to redeem humanity. The

scapegoat is like a disposable refuse bin when filled to be carried to the landfill for burning, where both the bin and the refuse are burnt to ashes, never to be seen again. Malachi 4:1

As previously stated, a voluntary substitute is necessary to meet the demands of justice. Satan will never consent to die for humanity or their sins. He is never referred to as a ransom; he is never said to die for us. In the work of our atonement, “the Lord’s goat” Jesus Christ, the Son of God, stands alone; there was no one to help him. The gospel prophet Isaiah confirms this fact by saying of Christ, “*I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people, there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.*” Isaiah 63:3. To him be honor and praise and glory forever and ever. “... *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.*” Revelation 5:12.

“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” Revelation 5:9.

The fate of Satan, the scapegoat, is simply to receive the sins and guilt that he instigated, being sent away bearing an indescribable load. The sins of God’s people will be borne away by him, never to be remembered anymore forever.

When the sins of the penitent are removed, they still exist and are on someone, the scapegoat in the type; and Satan in the antitype. When he is at last destroyed along with his followers, sin becomes extinct.

“Then the end will come. God will vindicate His law and deliver His people. Satan and all who have joined him in rebellion will be cut off. Sin and sinners will perish, root and branch, (Malachi 4:1), Satan the root, and his followers the branches.” Desire of Ages 763.4.

“The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love.” Great Controversy 678.3

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