

The Atonement

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The following is my response to a dear soul seeking light on the meaning of atonement and I wanted you to share in this moment of fellowship in the gospel with her. J.G.

Hi Mary, (Not her real name) I hope you will excuse me for taking so long to answer your letter. It is not unusual for a person who is seeking to know God to begin to wrestle with the meaning of atonement ([at-one-ment](#)). The very structure of the word as you can see from above immediately ushers us into the heart of the matter.

Our need is to be at one with our Father, but in Adam we became estranged, alienated and hostile toward Him, in the darkness of our minds (**Col. 1:21-22**). That darkness consisted of being void and incapable of understanding His unconditional love. A redeeming price needed to be paid as a ransom to free us from the imprisonment of that darkness. Traditionally, in western Christianity, the theory is that the price needed to be paid to God in order to "[propitiate](#)" Him, that is satisfy His justice which demanded that the sinner be punished.

So, according to this theological hypothesis, Christ shed His blood to, as it were, give God his pound of flesh. When that theory is accepted, men read it into every verse on the atonement and twist the verse to suit the theory. Please, if you will, read again carefully and with meditation, my article entitled "[The Great Misrepresentation](#)." It will get you on the right track to an understanding of the truth of atonement, redemption and ransom.

You see, it is we who need the blood to propitiate us, rather than God, for we are the ones in a state of hostility. The blood speaks to us and says, "*Even though you go so far in your hostility as to cruelly torture and kill me (God in Christ - **II Cor. 5:19**), right there in that moment I forgive you and you will know the depths of my love for you and that price frees you from your alienation from me.*"

You see, God has never been alienated from us! He has always been conciliatory toward us even while we were yet sinners (**Rom. 5:8**). It is we who need to be conciliated or reconciled (**Eph. 2:11-12**). This reconciliation occurred in the suffering and death of Christ for He was the Son of God in whom the fulness of Deity dwelt (**Col. 2:9**), and also the Son of Man (**Matt. 18:11**) who included in Himself the totality of humanity that had been birthed and created in Him.

Therefore, in Christ, God and man met at Calvary and, as the Son of Man, there was laid on Him all of mankind's sins and iniquities (**Is. 53:6**), so that representing all of us and taking responsibility for all of us, He experienced the alienation of our darkness ("*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me*") (**Matt. 27:46**). The Father had not forsaken Him but Jesus was now engulfed (for us) by the darkness of the lie, at the heart of our alienation, and that lie being that God had withdrawn Himself from us because of our sin.

God had never withdrawn Himself from us, He only permitted us to be deceived to believe the lie. So Christ bore our condition; He entered fully into the pit of our delusion and drank its last dregs. As the Son of God He felt the hatred coming from all men toward God which He was

experiencing at the same time as the Son of Man, and His response as the Son of God was to agree with His Father and pray "*Forgive them for they know not what they do*" (**Lk. 23:34**).

In man's worst hour of darkness, in the hour when all of his hatred toward God was unleashed; **(and remember Christ, as the Son of Man was made to sum all that up in Himself at that moment)**, God did not "impute" sin to Him, but forgave all men in Him (**I Tim. 4:10**).

Theologians tend to like to use words that become peculiar to their craft and kind of keep the layman at arm's length by doing so. So it is important for you to know that the word "impute" is simply the same word translated elsewhere as "reckon," "consider," or "count."

As the Spirit of Truth increasingly frees you from all vestiges of the lie that God is angry with us, so much so that He demands blood to get over His anger, the real meaning of atonement passages will open up to you. **IT IS WE WHO DEMANDED BLOOD FROM GOD AND IN HIS GREAT LOVE FOR US HE GAVE IT TO US IN HIS SON TO FOREVER DISPEL THE LIE THAT OUR FATHER WOULD EVER ALLOW ANYTHING TO SEPARATE US FROM HIS LOVE (Rom 8:28; 35-39).**

God bless you as you meditate on this truth and look to the real source of light, the blessed Holy Spirit Himself.

Stay tuned for future serious, seminal samplings.

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