

Heirs of Salvation

An Answer to Penal Substitution - by Andrew Hopkins 1/23/2021

A common view of atonement in Protestant doctrine is; substitutionary atonement. This belief has its roots in the writings of some early church fathers, though its proponents believe it began with the apostles. In this paper I consider one form of substitutionary atonement known as penal substitution. With this view it is believed that God sends Jesus to acquire merit as a result of enduring punishment that is due the sinner. This merit is then accepted by God as a payment which releases sinners from condemnation. The punishment of Jesus is believed to satisfy God's justice on behalf of the sinner. Here I present a few problems associated with penal substitution, along with an alternative view of atonement.

A Legal Transaction?

To consider Jesus being engaged in any kind of transaction with God there must be an understanding on God's part that the other party must have a legal standing which is independent from himself. By doing so, God would be acknowledging that through Jesus' death, he can produce value independent from himself, value which God can accept to satisfy his own sense of justice. How can Jesus approach God's justice as one who comes from the outside in order to exchange value? Jesus was never independent of God.

How could anything be legally transferred to God if he were the owner of all things? This would seem to be the equivalent of God making a payment to himself. I would think it more reasonable to believe that all value passes from God to his creation and only offerings of the spirit and from the heart pass to God. Solomon expressed this idea in 1 Chronicles 29:14: *But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* Romans 11:35 gives a similar thought: *Or who hath first given to him (God), and it shall be recompensed unto him again?* Paul's view is that no one can perform an act which will place God in a position of owing something in return. This is a basic Biblical concept; All things that come from God are a gift, by grace and not of debt.

Inheriting Salvation

Hebrews 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

There are scriptures, which I believe explain how sin is handled without a payment or transaction taking place between Jesus and God. Acts 22:27, 28 illustrates how this might work; *Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born.* The chief captain had to pay for his Roman citizenship, while Paul had obtained his freedom by reason of his birth as a Roman. Here we make a comparison to a principle expressed in Acts, to that of a believer's spiritual birth in Christ. *For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel,* 1 Corinthians 4:15. As members of the family of God, all things that pertain to life and Godliness are theirs by inheritance, and just as Paul by reason of his natural birth was due the privileges of a Roman, so also believers in Christ partake of a spiritual birth into the family of God, have been disassociated with their former life and now have access to all the benefits of natural born son of God in Christ. This is the inheritance God wills his sons to have. *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir (inheritor) of God through Christ,* Galatians 4:7. *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs (inheritors) according to the promise,* Galatians 3:29.

Several passages emphasize a family relation between Jesus, God and the church. Matthew 3:17 *And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* Galatians 4:6 *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* To think that son-ship in the family of God is based on a payment seems to contradict the idea of a family bound in love. What I believe takes place is quite natural; Jesus overcomes many obstacles and by doing so demonstrated qualities of character which obtained his father's favor. For this reason he was blessed above his fellows, this blessings included life, which he shares with those whom he is not ashamed to call brethren, Hebrews 2:11. This is not a legal transaction needed to satisfy justice, it is a reward for faithfulness.

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things . . . Hebrews 1:2. Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they, Hebrews 1:4. Jesus explains; *What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith*

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unto him, *Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free*, Matthew 17:25, 26. Sons of God are overcome not payers of tribute.

How is Original Sin Dealt With?

As I understand, prior to the foundation of the world, it was determined that Christ would reveal a new law, which replaces the Mosaic Law. The law which Moses received was a shadow and only a revelation of God's *back parts* or *train*, Exodus 33:21-23 . . . *while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.* The things which were hidden from Moses are revealed in Christ. Jesus says; *I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world*, Matthew 13:35. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began*, 2 Timothy 1:9.

Just as God wrote the Mosaic Law on tables of stone, the spotless and unblemished tables of Jesus' heart became the material upon which God wrote this new law, which was ratified as the New Covenant at Jesus' death. This is the law of love, grace and faith, this cannot be compared to Law of an eye for an eye and tooth for tooth. Jesus in the place of Adam became the pattern for a new man: *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature* . . . 2 Corinthians 5:17. This new law is also called, *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2)*, this law, as seen in Jesus, reveals qualities of God in a clarity never before seen by men. Paul describes this law in contrast to the Mosaic Law, as a *glory that excelleth*;

For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. 2 Corinthians 3:10, 11

But why was this new law not known to Adam? The first man is of the earth, and by nature had a mindset that leaned toward self-preservation. *The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven*, 1 Corinthians 15:47. In contrast to the natural man, Jesus had a mindset which followed the will of God, even at the expense of his own life. This new law is revealed in Jesus, which makes it possible to make a separation between the mind of the natural man and the new man in Christ. Because Adamic-sin is associated with the carnal mind, it becomes possible for our sin to be removed in Christ. This happens as the law of Christ is written in the believer's heart working like a two-edged sword, which cuts between the joints and the marrow and removes the old man. As the believer undergoes this process, God embeds within each believer an instinctive desire to reject sin, and a love for righteousness. Ephesians 4:22 *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts*; 2 Corinthians 4:16 . . . *though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.* Ephesians 4:24 *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

Understanding the difference between the old man of Adam, and the new man in Christ helps clarify how original sin is dealt with. The following passage in Romans explains that the old man, which is associated with Adam's sin, is cut off and not ransomed, Romans 6:7, 8 *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed* . . . In the next chapter Romans 7:1-4, Paul makes the same point with the illustration of a woman bound to the law of her husband while he is alive, but if he dies, she is free to marry another. Our old nature or old man is not considered to be redeemed but rather crucified therefor the natural law as it relates to Adamic-sin has no claim on the new man in Christ. Sin associated with the former life is not imputed to the new man in Christ. Romans 7:4 *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.* Romans 8:1 *there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* If we die to this law, why would we think God needs a payment to satisfy it?

The death of Jesus is a key feature in God's design through which all must pass. The old man is considered to have passed away in the baptism of Christ and a new man is begotten and raised with Christ to a new order. The new man is not a restoration of men to Adam's original state but is the creation of a new man in the image of Christ. Therefore we can say that original sin has no power or legal hold over those baptized into Jesus' death and their resurrection is possible because it is a participation in Christ's resurrection not their own resurrection. If we can understand that there was nothing which could hinder Christ's resurrection we

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can understand that those who are baptized into Christ also partake of his resurrection. This can be seen in the statement made in Romans that from one and her as good as dead came as many as the stars of heaven and the sands of the sea. All who attain to life will be born of Sarah's once dead womb which brings forth an uncountable number as many as the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea. How can so many come from Sarah? As it says if you are Christ then you are Abraham's seed, all things in heaven and in earth must be gathered into one even into Christ.

Subjection to Christ

Some scriptures show that Jesus' death and resurrection has two sides. The very same death and resurrection which provides salvation, also brings condemnation. In Romans 8:3 we read; *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.* There was a condemnation which came upon Adam and Eve at their fall, and there was a condemnation which could befall Israel for not keeping the Mosaic Law. However, Jesus brings a new condemnation, which supersedes all others by revealing a law which serves as a light that exposes the hearts of men and removes any standing a natural man might have before God. It is this condemnation, which makes the Day of the Lord possible and says much about the nature of this judgment. As the death of Christ is manifest in the earth it convicts mankind, making them subject to Christ;

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5.

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, 1 Corinthians 15:28.

The passage in Romans 8:3 is similar to Hebrews 11:7 where it says; *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.* The presence of Noah's Ark testified of Noah's faith, and was a witness to the pre-flood world which brought salvation to Noah's family and condemned all others.

It seems that the Day of the Lord breaks the power of Satan over the minds of mankind as men are convicted before Christ. Even those in Egypt who did not leave with Moses saw Pharaoh exposed and powerless. They understood as Pharaoh's servant's said; this is the finger of God, in a similar way, all will one day stand convicted, every mouth stopped, and brought into the captivity of Christ, based solely on the witness of Christ and not on any former law. It is as if Jesus was in the place of Nebuchadnezzar who received a dominion from God over all. Jesus' dominion grows as men are slain by the two edge sword; *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations*, Revelation 19:15. This is the work of the Day of the Lord as Christ sits at God's right hand, like the stone of Daniel chapter 2, which strikes the image, breaks it in pieces and fills the earth. This is possible because God has revealed a new law in Christ, which condemns the inner most person, bringing both the living and the dead in subjection to Christ; . . . *Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living*, Romans 14:9.

From what sins does the anti-typical Day of Atonement cleanse?

The Mosaic covenant was designed to accommodate for man's fallen state in that it offered services intended for the cleansing of sin. The most prominent was a yearly service called the Day of Atonement. To receive the benefit of this service, Israel had to make a full commitment to follow this covenant. This took place when Moses read the words of the covenant to the people, they responded "all these things we will do" shortly after Moses offered sacrifice and sprinkled blood on the book of the law and the people, saying; . . . *Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words*, Exodus 24:8.

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Once under the covenant, Israel was a consecrated nation. Subsequently, God requested that Israel make free will offerings - from which they would construct a sanctuary. Then on the proper day, the high priest would enter the sanctuary and sprinkle blood on the mercy seat and other instruments of the tabernacle, to atone for sins committed by the nation against the covenant.

The nation was also required to participate in the Day of Atonement, they would have to afflict their souls (repent) or be cut off; Leviticus 16:31. By completing these services God would impute his righteousness to the nation, the camp of Israel was then considered holy. The nation was then forbidden from intermingling with other nations lest they defile the camp.

For the LORD thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp . . . therefore shall thy camp be holy . . . Deuteronomy 23:14; . . . put out of the camp every leper . . . that they defile not their camp, in the midst whereof I dwell. Numbers 5:2, 3.

The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself . . . all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee, Deuteronomy 28:9,10.

The gospel age counterpart to the Mosaic Law is the New Covenant, which is a covenant of the spirit; *Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life*; 2 Corinthians 3:6, under this covenant sin is redefined; *whatever is not of faith is sin*, Romans 14:23. Under this covenant, atonement relates not to a cleansing of the flesh, as did the Mosaic Law, but a cleansing of the conscience. This brings a release from motives that produce dead works, and in this way the New Covenant deals with sin where it begins, in the heart. . . . *Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also*; Matthew 23:26.

These passages give a better understanding of the difference between sacrifices given under the Law of Moses, to the law which Christ established by his example. Jesus offered better sacrifices than those offered under the Mosaic Law, these better sacrifices are the true sacrifice which God desired, the offering which comes from a pure conscience and a full devotion to the will of God; this is what God saw in Jesus' shed blood. So we find that under the New Covenant the sprinkling of blood, as pictured on the Day of Atonement has two important meanings, it represented the righteousness of God which is imputed to his people by faith in Jesus, and it represents Jesus' unreserved commitment to the will of God, regardless of the cost.

The Righteousness of God

In the Old Testament, Israel as God's people were to understand their need for reliance on God, knowing this they could give God the glory for their good works and the exalted position they were to have before the nations. This can be seen in the many passages which speak of Israel manifesting God's righteousness and not their own. The following is a sample of these passages; Jeremiah 23:6 . . . *this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*. Isaiah 45:24 Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness. . . , Psalms 71:16 . . . I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only. Psalms 119:40 . . . quicken me in thy righteousness. Psalms 119:142 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness . . . , Psalms 4:1 . . . O God of my righteousness . . . , Psalms 40:10 I have not hid thy righteousness . . . , Psalms 69:27 . . . let them not come into thy righteousness, Psalms 7:17 I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness . . .

These passages, establish that Israel was not intended to be a self-righteous nation, but one that carried the righteousness of God. The following New Testament passages, speak of God's righteousness also, but in these we learn that faith in Jesus is the means by which God imparts his righteousness. Romans 3:21, 22 *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ* . . . 2 Corinthians 5:21 *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*. Philippians 3:9 *And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*: Romans 10:3 *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God*.

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Another passage, which we can include in this discussion describes the glory of God as seen in Jesus, 2 Corinthians 3:6 *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*. I believe these passages tell us that God is the source of all righteousness, Jesus understood this and said; *Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God . . .* Matthew 19:17. Jesus also said; *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*, Matthew 6:33. Many mistakenly believe Jesus established his own righteousness during his ministry, but this he renounced at his baptism; we can see from many scriptures that our faith in Jesus is God's way of imputing his own righteousness to his people.

The Law of the Spirit and the Law of the Flesh

It appeared that the carnal law had gained victory and established a place as a basic feature in the kingdom of God, even above God's love, when at Jesus' death he was hung on a tree, as the Mosaic Law said, cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree. Many believe Jesus' crucifixion was to satisfy the carnal law and establish Jesus' own righteousness under this law, however, as it was later demonstrated, this was not the last word. God overturned the indictment of the Mosaic Law when he raised Jesus from the dead. This was because the issue was not Jesus' righteousness, those who crucified Jesus did not understand that he did not come in his own name, he came in the name of God and he manifested the righteousness of God which was established in the New Covenant. This is the glory of God which Paul describes as seen in the face of Jesus. From Jesus' baptism until his death the glory of this new law was written within him which produced fruits of the spirit that manifest the righteousness of God. These are Godly qualities with a built in sensitivity to the will of God which proved superior to the Mosaic Law, allowing Jesus to correctly trace the leading of the spirit and overcome the will of the flesh.

During the creation, God rested on the seventh day and sanctified it, in this why God separated the works done on the first six days of the week from the Sabbath. Works that relate to the natural world and the carnal man are governed by the Mosaic Law and are associated with labor and the first six days of the week. Those believers who have entered God's rest have ceased from their own works. Their works now manifest the righteousness of God, and are works that can only be credited to God.

Jesus was born under the Mosaic Law, but at his baptism he put aside his own will to do the will of God, and God responded by anointing him with the Holy Spirit. At this time, Jesus entered God's Sabbath, his relation to the Mosaic Law changed, Matthew 12:6 says; *But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple*. Jesus was now a spiritual man who shined forth the glory of God. He ceased from his own works and became *Lord even of the Sabbath day*, Matthew 12:8. Jesus was then driven by the spirit into the wilderness, where God began to write within him the law of God after the inward man, Romans 7:22. The giving of this new law was foreshadowed in the giving of the Mosaic Law at Mount Sinai.

By writing this new law upon Jesus, God cultivated within him qualities of character which through suffering were crystalized, making Jesus the pattern for a new man which established him as the foundation for a sanctuary into which God will gather; *all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth*; Ephesianns 1:10, . . . *Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation . . .* Isaiah 28:16, . . . *I lay in Sion a chief corner stone . . .* 1 Peter 2:6, . . . *In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*, Ephesians 2:22, . . . *unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*, Ephesians 4:13.

What we find in our day is that there are two opposing views of Jesus' suffering and death: One as a triumph of a perfect man by keeping the natural law, which some believe had to be satisfied by Jesus' death, and others, as I understand, see Jesus' suffering and death as a triumph of God's spirit over the natural law. Through the accomplishment of salvation by Jesus from within God's Sabbath and therefore by God's spirit, God pulling the proverbial rug out from under the endeavors of the natural man under the Mosaic Law, making Jesus an example of one who walks by the spirit. The salvation he established became an exclusive work of the spirit. In this way God rewards qualities of character which are empowered by the spirit; this enables men to do the works of God. These fruits of the spirit do not come by the will of the nature man; *it is God which worketh in you*, Philippians 2:13. This eliminates the possibility of any righteousness other than that of God's being expressed. In this way, no flesh can glory in God's sight. The character and good works of men in this new order follow Jesus's example which are all the works God.

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Through Jesus' ministry, he maintained his place in God's rest and prevented any credit, which the natural law might gain over his works. For every aspect of the natural law there was a spiritual counterpart which Jesus fulfilled. Jesus passed through the eye of the needle untouched by any claim of the natural law. Prior to Jesus' baptism all men were of the earth - Jesus died that we in him might put off the carnal natural and be transformed into persons of a spiritual mind. At Jesus' resurrection, God rewarded Jesus for reasons that had nothing to do with the flesh. The flesh, devil and death were defeated by Jesus' reliance on the spirit rather than in the keeping of works to satisfy the Mosaic Law.

A Form of Christianity

After the days of the apostles a form of Christianity emerged which took aspects of the Mosaic Law and incorporated them within the Christian faith. This can be seen in how the Day of Atonement is commonly understood in Christian doctrine, where Jesus' death becomes a carnal offering to God in order to satisfy the carnal law. In this view, the animal sacrifices of the Mosaic Law are replaced by the physical punishment of Jesus. For some, Christianity went from what the gospel of John says of Jesus' body "the flesh profiteth nothing" to a belief where flesh constitutes the most important thing, that the flesh might satisfy the carnal law. This view is similar to the Mass in that both derive merit from what happens to Jesus' physical body.

Any offering of Jesus, which relates to his physical existence, would come under the domain of the carnal law and the Aaronic priesthood. However, Jesus who reveals the true nature of God was a priest after the order of Melchizedek, which is a spiritual priesthood and relates to the new law of the spirit. If God were to accept any appeasement to the Mosaic Law he would be obliging himself to that law and participating in the carnal nature. Salvation was a work of God in Christ, everything that Jesus accomplished from his baptism was a work of the spirit. In this way God did not allow his love for mankind to be subject to a natural law. It was God's design that the law in which he had no desire, would pass away, Jesus made this possible when he put away self-will and entered God's Sabbath where there is no place for the natural law. Hebrews 8:13 *In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.* 2 Corinthians 3:7,11 *But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away . . . For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.*

When all is completed, I believe it will be said that no part of the kingdom of God is based on the keeping of any natural law. Jesus ministry was a work of God's spirit and for this reason I believe it can be said of his ministry; *Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts, Zechariah 4:6.* Just as Paul expressed of himself (Romans 7:22), I believe God has a love for the law of God after the inward man, and has no love for the law of natural man. The Mosaic Law, which governs the works of the natural man is contrary to the nature of God who is a spirit, who seeks such to worship him in spirit and in truth, John 4:24.

Israel's Ransom

There are over 80 passages in the Old Testament, which speak of Israel's departure from Egypt. These passages, in the King James Bible use two words "brought" and "Egypt", using these words, and a computer search, I was able to compile a list of these passages. One example is Amos 2:10 . . . *I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and led you forty years through the wilderness.* I believe these passages place Israel's departure from Egypt, as the most notable event in the Old Testament. I found three passages, which tell Israel to remember the time of their exodus: Exodus 13:3 . . . *Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage* . . . Deuteronomy 5:15 . . . *remember that thou was a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand* . . . Deuteronomy 16:3 . . . *remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.*

There is another set of passages which speak of Israel's Exodus but use the word "redeem" or "redeemed", these passages establish that Israel's departure from Egypt was a work of God who ransoms Israel from Egypt. Israel's Exodus is the only event in the Old Testament that I believe can qualify as Israel's ransom. The following passages speak of God as redeeming Israel "out of the house of bondage", "out of the hand of Pharaoh", "out of the bondage of Egypt", and "out of the house of servants", Exodus 6:6

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(H1350), Deuteronomy 7:8, 9:26, 13:5, 15:15, 24:18, 2 Samuel 7:23, 1 Chronicles 17:21, Micah 6:4, (H6299). The two Hebrew words used in these verses from which the English words “redeem” or “redeemed” are translated, can be properly translated; ransom or ransomed.

Even though God ransoms Israel from the hand of Pharaoh, no payment is made to Pharaoh or to Egypt. This is because the word redeemed is used in a figurative manner. Fr. Patrick Reardon establishes this point in the paper: The Bible on Ransom Vs. Redemption.

Hosea 13:14 uses one of these Hebrew words (H6299), and in this example is translated “ransom”. In this passage God speaks of ransoming his people Israel from the grave; *I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death.* In this passage it is evident that no legal transaction is made between God and the power of the grave. This same ransoming work can also be seen in Psalms 49:14, 15 where we find the kind of death spoken of which is common to man, this death is placed in contrast to Jesus’ death from which God redeems or ransoms Jesus. *Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.* Psalms 31:5 also speaks of Jesus in a similar way: *Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.* In the next passage Israel is redeemed or ransomed, Isaiah 43:1 . . . *O Israel, Fear not: for I (God) have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.*

Throughout the Old Testament we find, in context, it is God who is ransoming or redeeming his people from their enemies. However, in the following New Testament passage it does not specifically say from whom “all men” are ransomed; 1 Timothy 2:6 *who (Jesus) gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.* Some understand this passage to say that Jesus is ransoming mankind from the hand of God, either his justice or his wrath, however this passage can also be understood to say, similar to many Old Testament passages, that it is God who by Jesus is ransoming men from their enemies, such as death. Also notice the writer in this passage may not necessarily be saying that a literal payment is being made to another party to accomplish this ransom.

The following passage: Act 20:28, speaks of the church as being “purchased” and similar to the passage in 1 Timothy, it does not say from whom the church is being purchased; is it from God’s justice? Or is Jesus purchasing the church from their enemies? Acts 20:28 . . . *feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.* The word “purchased” is also used in Exodus 15:16, and in this passage, God purchases Israel from their enemies. Exodus 15:16 . . . *till the people pass over (the Red Sea) which though hast purchased.*

In the two previous verses Act 20:28 and Exodus 15:16, we see the use of the word “purchased” as a figure of speech, as also seen in the 1 Timothy 3:13, *For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

The point I make is that Israel’s ransom relates to their departure from the grasp of Egypt, this we can contrast with Israel’s atonement which takes place after the covenant is made between God and Israel in the wilderness. This would mean that Israel’s ransom and their atonement, accomplish different tasks. The blood of the Passover lamb releases slaves from bondage in Egypt and the blood of the sin-offering maintains Israel’s covenant relationship with God. Also notice that the ransom, which relates to the Passover, is celebrated in the first month and is the first feast in Israel’s festival cycle, whereas the Day of Atonement is celebrated on the seventh month and is the sixth feast in Israel’s festival cycle. Israel’s ransom and their atonement seem to be two different events, each being accomplished by the sprinkling of blood, but for different reasons and that from a new testament perspective, Jesus is redeeming, ransoming, and purchasing mankind not from God but from the hand of God’s enemies, such as Satan, sin and death. No literal payment is made to these enemies, but it does come at a price - it cost the life of Jesus to pull us out of a world of sin. 2 Corinthians 5:19 *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself . . .* Titus 2:14 *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity . . .*

Concluding thoughts

Jesus established a pattern by his example, he was the first of a new kind of offering made to God which the New Testament calls “better sacrifices”, my son give me thine heart, his was a sacrifice that satisfied the law of love, also called the law of God after the inward man. When Jesus presented himself at the Jordan River he was anointed by the spirit, and God began a work in him as he

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did in the Garden of Eden, as a husbandman cultivating qualities of character that would be the foundation for a new order, one that would be tested under extreme opposition.

This new order is a work of the spirit, a work that will be seen in the world but not directed by a natural law rather it is a work that results from the guidance of hearts obedient to the spirit of God. This was possible because Jesus put off self-will at Jordan in a path he followed to his death. During Jesus' ministry God placed within Jesus the pattern for a new heavens and earth, which is a sanctuary for the spirit of God. To enter the temple of Christ, this new order, each must make an offering which follows the pattern Jesus set, by dedicating one's self to the will of God. Some enter this body and become pillars in the temple of God, and others enter as worshipers, but I believe all must be planted within this garden and cultivated by God in order that one day God might be all in all, as it says I will gather all things into one even into Christ.

By Jesus dying to self-will he removed within himself any opposition the flesh might impose on the spirit, he opened within himself a window through which God might measure mankind, not from the perspective of Moses, because Jesus died to the flesh, now God would judge the hearts of men from the perspective of the heart of Jesus, a heart upon which God inscribed the law of love. This is pictured in the Old Testament as Mount Zion where David secured from God the sure mercies promised to David. It is before this Mountain both the living and the dead will appear.

Jesus did not present his life at Jordan as a payment to God in order that believers might avoid divine justice. By acceptance of Christ mankind undergoes God's justice, it is executed upon our very being in a manner which brings the end of our old nature and establishes a new life as children of God. Jesus is God's way of executing his justice against the sin and death which dwells within us. In this way we can know that God's justice is in perfect harmony with his love. Nor can we say that God was using Satan to extract from Christ the justice due the sinner, Jesus' trial and death was an injustice accomplished by the powers of darkness which God allowed in order to fashion Jesus into what we might think of as the perfect vaccine against sin, a vaccine that builds resistance to sin, any abiding in Christ will be transformed into sons of God who by their nature are repelled by sin. For this reason we can say, by his stripes we are healed. Jesus during his ministry became the cure for our illness.

The view I have questioned is the belief is that Jesus died as a satisfaction for the Mosaic Law or any natural law. The sacrifice I believe God accepted from Jesus was an unblemished heart committed to God's will even if it meant his death. Jesus life on earth was not to satisfy a carnal desire with in God. It was to satisfy God's law of love which is spiritual. It is my understanding that there are no carnal thoughts within God. He is a spirit and he seeks those who worship him in spirit and truth. Jesus death provided the means by which the body of Christ could be formed in a manner that God might bring all things into Christ that God might be all in all.