

## SOTERIOLOGY (65)

God, fully anticipating His Son's work on the cross, allowed O.T. believers to have their sins covered so they could have a relationship with Him through the symbolic act of presenting an approved animal sacrifice. But it was only God's anticipation of His Son's death that made such symbolic sacrifices possible.

**Accomplishment #10** - Christ's sufferings and death provide a basis for Israel's salvation .

In the O.T., God made several promises to Israel:

- 1) He promised her a perpetual land . Gen. 13:15
- 2) He promised her a perpetual lineage . Is. 66:22; Jer. 31:36
- 3) He promised her an eternal throne . II Sam. 7:16
- 4) He promised her a perfect king . Jer. 33:15, 17, 21
- 5) He promised her an eternal kingdom . Dan. 7:14
- 6) He promised her a great name . Gen. 12:2

Each one of these promises was given by God to Israel. Since God is perfect and true, not one of these promises can ever be forgotten or abandoned. It is clearly predicted that Israel's national salvation will occur with the coming of Christ, her Messiah—Isaiah 59:16-21; Matt. 23:37-39; Acts 15:16; Rom. 11:25-26. Christ came the first time as the humble Lamb and He will come the next time as a roaring lion.

Now the point critical to this study is that fulfilling all of these promises to Israel demands a national removal of her sin. In order for Israel to live in a perfectly righteous kingdom governed by a perfectly righteous King, she must be completely cleansed. This is exactly what is stated will happen when God has completed His program with the Gentiles, and Christ comes back to complete His program with Israel (Rom. 11:27). It is at this time when God will fulfill all of His promises to Israel. Now the obvious question is on what basis can God forgive and take away the sins of an entire nation? What makes national cleansing and forgiveness possible? The only answer is the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ. The prophet Isaiah clearly anticipated the national forgiveness that would come by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Is. 53:8).

Although it is a matter of theological speculation, since God knows all of His works from beginning to end (Acts 15:18), it is interesting to consider what would have happened had Israel recognized all of this the first time Christ came. Had she realized her Messiah had to suffer and die in order to give her national cleansing and had she accepted Christ and rallied around Him as He went to the cross, one cannot help but realize that God's kingdom could presently exist and Israel could presently be the esteemed nation of God. It is no wonder Christ wept over Jerusalem. He clearly and precisely knew what could have been (Luke 19:41-42).

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But no greater explanation of the reality of the way things were can be found than that of John's words when he writes: "He came unto His own and His own received Him not" (John 1:11).

Future blessings are guaranteed to Israel, not because of her faithfulness, but because of the faithfulness of God and the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ.

**Accomplishment #11** - Christ's sufferings and death provide eternal blessings for the Gentiles.

The O.T. clearly predicts that there will be Gentile nations in the millennial kingdom (Is. 60:3, 12; 61:9; 62:2). We learn from N.T. revelation that the kingdom will be established when Christ returns in all of His glory at the end of the Tribulation period, and that a special judgment will be given by Jesus Christ upon Gentile nations to determine who is allowed entrance into that kingdom (Matt. 25:31-46). We also learn from the Bible that after the thousand-year millennial kingdom is over (Rev. 20:7), the Great White Throne Judgment will occur, judging all unbelievers to condemnation (Rev. 20:11-15). After this time, a new heaven and a new earth and new Jerusalem will be created (Rev. 21:1-2). It is revealed that Gentile nations will be allowed to enter this new city of God (Rev. 21:24-27). Now the question that is important to this portion of theology is the question of the basis for entry. What is it that allows the Gentiles to share in a kingdom designed for Israel? The answer is the cross work of Jesus Christ. God's claim on Gentile people comes through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ (Acts 15:17; Rev. 21:24). As Dr. John Walvoord says, "Eternal mercies to Gentiles as well as to Israel stem from the sacrifice of Christ on the cross" (*Edited Theology*, Vol. 2, p. 73).

**Accomplishment #12** - Christ's sufferings and death pronounce judgment against Satan.

There can be no doubt that when Jesus Christ was approaching His death, He knew that this would be a major judgment against Satan. His own statements make that reality very clear—John 12:31; 16:11. The Apostle Paul also concluded that the death of Christ pronounced a major spoiling judgment against satanic rulers and authorities (Col. 2:14-15). It is quite clear that Christ's sufferings and death provided a major judgment against Satan and his forces.

Just exactly what the full extent of the judgment was, we will never know. Dr. Chafer says, "The combat between Christ and Satan which was waged on Calvary's hill, involves issues and powers belonging to higher realms than this earth and things beyond the boundaries of time. The finite mind cannot hope to apprehend the scope and character of this illimitable encounter" (Vol. 3, p. 110).

What we do know is that this warfare encounter and judgment between Jesus Christ and Satan was clearly predicted early in the Bible—Gen. 3:15. The Lord informed Satan that he would be allowed to bruise the heel of the seed of the woman—Jesus Christ, but that the seed would bruise his head. Thus we know that a major war was taking place between Satan and Jesus Christ while He was on the cross. The imagery of bruising the heel versus bruising the head is one that clearly demonstrates that the winner of the battle was Jesus Christ and not Satan.

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The victory secured by Jesus Christ on Calvary over Satan, certainly at this point in time, does not mean he is eliminated. We know that years after this episode, N.T. writers inform us that Satan and his forces are very powerful, crafty and active (II Cor. 11:14-15; Eph. 6:11-17; I Pet. 5:8).

The judgment that Christ secured against Satan can be safely viewed in this regard:

### 1) It secured Satan's doom .

Eternal hell is a place designed for Satan and his allies (Matt. 25:41). The work of Jesus Christ on the cross guarantees Satan will end up in hell forever (Rev. 20:10). Satan is undoubtedly aware of the fact that after the millennium, he is going to be released for a short time and then sentenced to burn in hell forever and ever.

Satan also knew that David and Isaiah both predicted that before Christ would come to reign in the millennial kingdom, He would suffer and die (Psalm 22; Isaiah 53). Satan knew if he could keep Christ off the cross, he could prevent all of this from happening. That is precisely why, in the temptation, that he tried to give Christ the kingdoms of the world without having to go to the cross (Matt. 4:1-11). When Christ went to Calvary, Satan undoubtedly realized that he lost. He is eternally doomed and will be eternally damned. Although at this point in history the out-working of this judgment has not as yet occurred, it is just a matter of time until it will be fully executed for Christ's work on Calvary guarantees it.

### 2) It secured international salvation .

Christ's work on the cross pronounced a major judgment on Satan in that the world, which has been dominated by Satan, has not become savable (Eph. 2:2, 11-13).

Prior to the work of Christ on the cross, the majority of the Gentile world was without Christ (Eph. 2:12a), not part of the citizenship of Israel (Eph. 2:12b), strangers to the covenantal promises (Eph. 2:12c), without hope (Eph. 2:12d) and without God (Eph. 2:12e). But verse 13 makes it clear that all of this changed with the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ. Christ's sacrificial work made it possible for the world to be saved. It must have caused Satan to shudder, realizing that Christ's sacrifice had worldwide saving power. Ever since that sacrifice was made, Satan has been losing more and more control of the universe that he once dominated.

### 3) It secured a bondage release .

Satan binds people, he takes them captive. This is stated in the O.T. (Isaiah 14:17) and it is stated in the N.T. (II Tim. 2:26). Jesus Christ, on the other hand, frees those who are captive. This is also stated in the O.T. (Isaiah 61:1) and in the N.T. (John 8:32, 33, 36).

There is no doubt that Jesus Christ set free those who were bound by Satan. Satan obviously binds people in sin, in the law which condemns, and in various religious systems. Prior to Christ's work on the cross, Satan had a powerful hold on this world.

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All of that changed when Christ died. He sets people free from sin, from the Law and from religious systems that are false. He gives everlasting life and He gives abundant life (John 10:10). There can be no doubt that this bondage release work was a major judgment against Satan.

4) It secured believer immunity.

When Jesus Christ shed His blood on Calvary, He secured a major victory for the believer. No believer can ever be touched or harmed by Satan. Christ's work on the cross guarantees this (I John 5:6, 18). Verse 18 is very important because it guarantees the believer everlasting life. Satan cannot touch or harm the "born of God" or "begotten of God" relationship. He cannot ever nullify what Christ's blood has justified. One who has been born of God is secure and guaranteed eternal life (Rev. 12:10-11).

Although we long for a day when all of the judgments will be given to Satan and his forces, we can rejoice now in that one of Christ's works on Calvary judged Satan to such a remarkable extent that we have been set free and we are secure forever.

**Accomplishment #13** - Christ's sufferings and death provide peace with God.

When considering the possibility of sinful man having a harmonious relationship with the Holy God because of the work of Jesus Christ, the theological implications are staggering:

- 1) Eternal peace is possible because of Christ's work between God and man. Rom. 5:1
- 2) National peace is possible because of Christ's work between Jews and Gentiles.  
Eph. 2:11-18
- 3) Personal peace is possible because of Christ's work between God and believers.  
Phil. 4:6-7
- 4) Millennial peace is possible because of Christ's work between Israel and the world.  
Isaiah 11:1-10
- 5) Everlasting peace is possible because of Christ's work between God and everyone.  
Rev. 21:1-4; Isaiah 65:17-25

Any basis for true harmony between God and man in any dispensation is the work of Jesus Christ. Without Christ's work, there is no peace.