

Scriptural Truths

E-Mail Meditations

The Lord May Come . . . Perhaps Today . . . Behold, I Come Quickly . . . Rev. 22:7

No. 43

September 2015

Propitiation

Introduction

Since the word of God is unchangeable (Psa. 119:89; 1 Pet. 1:23), it states: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (Jam. 1:17). Consequently, the words of James still stand true. How easy it is to take the blessing of a good nights rest, the ability to enjoy nourishing food and have clean water to drink to become so common that we fail to appreciate them as blessings from God. The same is true whither we consider physical, intellectual, emotional, and especially spiritual blessings. Sadly, as with any blessing from God, we never can appreciate it until we are bereft of it, and in our need we learn their necessity. In the spiritual realm, it was not until we saw our plight as hell deserving sinners, incapable of helping ourselves, that there was an appreciation of the Saviourhood of the Lord. Likewise, we can never appreciate how vital it is to have the Lord as our Propitiator until we see our need.

Among the ancient Greeks the word “propitiation” was quite a normal expression. It meant to have anger removed or justice satisfied by propitiating, or appeasing the offended one, which resulted in mercy being received by the offender. The propitiation God provides is set in contrast to man’s propitiation, for God does not wait for man to try to regain his favour. Such is an impossibility. God is the first Mover in seeking to restore fellowship between Himself and man. “Propitiation” finds its source in God and describes the justice of God being perfectly satisfied by the executed judgment of God on Christ at Calvary. Now God can bestow the righteousness of God on to the believer through Christ being the “Propitiation” (1 Jn. 2:2; 4:10).

There were two matters God made very clear. No matter what animal was offered, nor how often the sacrifices were made, (there were at least 1200 compulsory sacrifices offered each year for approximately 1451 years, from the time the law was given to the sacrifice of the Lord) they could never take sin away (Heb. 10:4) and God’s justice could never be appeased. Because of disobedience, God’s mercy was not something man could earn by ritual and sacrifices. Even though God had given Israel the laws for approaching Him, such was their sin that the following scriptures document the fact that no animal sacrifice, no religious ritual could ever secure perfect acceptance with God. He said:

- a) “I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream” (Amos 5:21-24).
- b) “When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth:

they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood” (Isa. 1:12-15).

The Exclusive Source of “Propitiation”

Because of man’s attitude and actions, God (by man) was deprived of His glory (Rom. 1:21), denied the worship that ought to have been exclusively His, His laws deliberately flaunted, and His person and position was, and still is, mocked. Nevertheless, such was His love spoken of as: “His great love wherewith He loved us” (Eph. 2:4). Divine Persons did everything they could to secure a perfect salvation and propitiation for the whosoever will (Jn. 3:16). He gave the unconditional promise: “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (Jn. 6:37). God has righteously made provision so that: “His banished be not expelled from Him” (2 Sam. 14:14). For the repentant sinner who accepts God’s offer of salvation, there is the removal of the penalty for sins committed and the maintained propitiation (1 Jn. 2:2). There is not a sinner throughout earth who will ever be able to accuse God of bias for Christ is the propitiation “for the sins of the whole world” (1 Jn. 2:2). The securing of salvation and propitiation was not just a matter of clinically forgiving the individual for their rebellion and obstinacy, it carried a stupendous cost. For God to provide propitiation for the sinner the Son of God had to suffer the penalty for crimes committed. The work of expiating our sin and satisfying divine righteous justice enabling God in righteousness to be merciful (Rom. 2:5; 4:13) was the work of the triune God.

It is a glorious propitiation which we can revel in as there is contemplated:

- a) It’s exclusiveness. “He (that is Christ) is the propitiation” (1 Jn. 2:2)
- b) It’s perpetuity. “He is the propitiation” (1 Jn. 2:2)
- c) It’s fulness universally. “And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 Jn. 2:2)

The Personal Need For Propitiation

Why do I need Christ to be my Propitiation? I am saved, I have peace with God, I am assured of being with Christ, so, “Why do I need Christ to be my propitiation?” If an individual declares that Christ has given them deliverance and victory over the principle of sin and cleansing from all sins committed, then they will see no purpose in having the propitiating work of the Lord. The fact is, we need the Lord’s propitiating which provides permanent purity before God every nanosecond of life from the moment of conversion until the moment of death or the Lord comes, for we are all constantly sinning.

My understanding is that because sin has blinded our spiritual eyes, there is a failure to fully know when we sin or its seriousness. I hear expressions such as: “The believer does not want to sin”; “Sin is an accident”; “We might sin at times”; but my submission is that these are all deceptions of the devil. Honesty makes me acknowledge there are times when I know what I am doing or about to do is a sin, and that I want to do it. We are, I believe, in a perpetual state of sinning either by commission, omission, or through ignorance. For instance, is it a sin to watch a movie where they are using foul language? What about the sin of greed, spiritual casualness, discontentedness or bias, or taking for granted the blessings of God? We all are guilty continually, for if I said there was a moment today when I did not sin and was not defiled by sin, then I am saying that for that moment I did not need Christ as my propitiation, I did not need God to be merciful to me, and I was holy as God Himself. Thankfully the Holy Spirit caused John to write: “As He is, so are we in this world” (1 Jn. 4:17), that is, we are before God in all the perfection of Christ every moment of every day and night. Because of this we can have fellowship with God every moment of the day and night because Christ is our Propitiation.

Thank God that: “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Rom. 5:20). Such is the eternal unchanging efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ, that I am continually in a non-fluctuating standing before God, and He is able to continually dwell with me.

The Qualifications of Christ To Be The Propitiator

For the Lord to be the Propitiator He had to be a man who was superlatively perfect, entirely sinless, and essentially holy. Christ was the only man who never needed the mercy of God for He never sinned. In every role He was called upon in life, child, son, man, leader, Rabbi, Evangelist; He filled it in perfection. Never was there a word spoken which needed correction or modification, no exaggeration flowed from His lips, no error of judgment was ever committed. He was the only man with whom God could dwell and be comfortably at home with. In His life no changes needed to be made for the coming of the Spirit upon Him, nor the commendation of the Father.

[The Blessedness Propitiation Brings](#)

The vicarious sufferings of the Lord at Calvary can be viewed as an open door.

- a) Through that open door the individual can enter into a standing before God which could never be otherwise obtained. Because of the work of love of the Lord:
 - i) We can “rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:2)
 - ii) God has “made us meet (fit, qualified) to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12)
 - iii) We are “heirs of, and joint-heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:17)
- b) Through that open door the abundant blessings of God flow without curtailment for we are, “blessed us with all spiritual blessings” (Eph. 1:3); “made partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4); have a conscience freed from the burden of sin’s condemnation and awareness of the penalty for sin (Heb. 10:2); we have a glorious propitiation.

This is a propitiation which is:

- a) Associated with the love of God. “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jn. 4:9-10).
- b) The authority of Christ’s ability as propitiation. “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation” (Rom. 3:25).
- c) Its sufficiency effectively “the forgiveness of sins”. “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God” (Rom. 3:25).

Thank God for the completeness of God’s foreknowledge which, foreseeing every situation which would arise in our spiritual journey, secured in the work of Christ all that was needed for each circumstance.

... Rowan Jennings

www.scripturaltruths.org

e-mail: scripturaltruths1@shaw.ca

If you don’t wish to receive future Newsletters, please send us an email and we will take your name off the Mailing List.

If you change your e-mail address, please forward your new one so that we can update our Mailing List.