**Christ Our Substitute**

 A Brief Commentary

 by

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*Hebrews 9:28 “So 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”*

Why sins of many, not sins of all? Because **all** will not be saved, and because Christ **did not** **die in vain.** If he bore the sins of **all**, and **all** were not saved, then He died in vain for some. Who then are the many? Those who **look for His coming,** those whoare trusting Christ for salvation,His elect.

*Luke 18:7 And shall not God avenge* ***his own elect****, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?*

*Romans 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of* ***God's elect****? It is God that justifieth.*

There are two specific references in the New Testament to Christ “bearing” our sins as He died on the cross. In addition to the above text in Hebrews chapter nine. The other is**:**

*I Peter 2:24: “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree.”*

In this verse the tense of the verb in the Greek, makes it plain that He bore the sins of **specific individuals**, not everybody.“Sins of many,” not all.

Also, the same Greek word ( *anaphero*) used here as (bare our sins) is also used in a similar way, in Hebrews 7:27, where it is translated “offer up”:

*Hebrews 7:27 “****Who needeth not daily****, as those high priests,* ***to offer up*** *sacrifice,* ***first for his own sins****, and then for the people’s: for this* ***He did once****, when He offered up Himself.”*

When Christ died, He died as a **substitutionary sacrifice**.

(That is He was taking the place of another,) “offering up” **His body** for **judgment and punishment** by Holy God, for the sins of a pre-determined people (whose names were already written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.) Therefore, He **“offered up” Himself** as the one who would **submit to that judgment and bear that punishment.** He was **able** to do this because He was **both Holy God and the one sinless Man,** who needed not to offer a sacrifice for His own sins. He was **willing** to do this because **He loved us, and wanted to save us.**

Substitutionary sacrifice is the whole basics of the gospel of salvation, and therefore, **very precious** to the saved. But likewise it is extremely **offensive to** the unsaved or natural man, who does not believe it. As a result many try to make mockery of the truth. Many of them claim He was a great martyr or a great teacher, but deny either His deity or His humanity. They are therefore, denying, and in real sense refusing His substitutionary sacrifice for their sins.

Nevertheless, He did bear the sins of “many.” Those whom He died for, He completely, once for all, settled their account with God.

*Hebrews 7:27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's:* ***for this he did once****, when he offered up himself.*

*Hebrews 9:28 So 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*.

The word “once” here means, literally, “**once for all time**.” He did have to die once, but only once, as our substitute. Therefore, when He comes again, it will be “**without sin** unto salvation.” **(**Without **our sin,** because that sin is paid for.)

Now although many are saved, many also reject Him. They just do not want to admit they are helpless in themselves. This is nothing new, even the Pharisees, (religious leaders) of old rejected Him.

Psalm 118:22“*The stone* ***which the builders refused*** *is become the* ***head stone of the corner.****”* This verse is really prophetic of Christ. We see this from His own words in the following verse**:**

*Matthew 21:42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures,* ***The stone which the builders rejected****, the same is become* ***the head of the corner:*** *this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?*

The Jewish leaders had refused Him as their Messiah, (as chief cornerstone) but the day shall come when they will have to confess their sad mistake.

Later, Peter, addressing them in *Acts 4:11,12 This is the stone which was* ***set at nought of you builders****, which is become the* ***head of the corner****. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*.

This evidently refers back to the building of Solomon’s temple. At that time, each of the great stones for the walls of that great temple was hewed and preparedin the rock quarry **before** being brought to the building site. (It has been said that the stones fit so well, a thin knife blade could not be slipped between them.)

*1Kings 6:7 And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone* ***made ready******before*** *it was brought thither: so that there was* ***neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.***

Evidently there was one stone which didn’t fit with the others, so the builders moved it out of the way. At last, when the temple tower was almost complete, they found they were missing **the pinnacle stone** which would cap all the rest. Historians say “finally they realized that the stone they had rejected had been shaped to be **the head stone at the topmost corner of the tower.”**

This stone is mentioned in 1 Peter**:**

*1 Peter 2:6-8 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and* ***he that believeth on him*** *shall not be confounded*. *Unto you therefore which believe he is precious:* ***but*** *unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed,* ***the same is made the head of the corner,***  *And* ***a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence****, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient:* ***whereunto also they were appointed****.*

What does it mean *“whereunto also they were appointed?”*

*Jude 1:1-4 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should* ***earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*** ***For there are certain men crept in unawares****, who were* ***before of old ordained******to this condemnation****, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

God determined who would be saved and who would be condemned long before we were even awakened to the fact that we were lost sinners. In fact He wrote the names of the saved in the Lamb’s book of life before the foundation of the world.

*Ephesians 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love*:

We might ask the question, does God have the right to choose who shall be saved? Or should man (the creature) have the right to choose as he will? God is creator of all. Yet **ALL** have fallen under sin. ALL deserve the punishment of hell for our sin. I once heard a preacher say “if God doesn’t give everybody the same opportunity, then God isn’t fair.”

Unsaved man cannot, will not choose Christ. They are so enslaved by Satan that they are helpless, until and unless the Holy Spirit convicts them of their sinful condition. Left to themselves, unsaved man is so blinded by Satan that he cannot find anything wrong with his sinful condition. He is dead sin.

*Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened,* (made alive) *who were dead in trespasses and sins;*

Who are we to judge God?

*Romans 9:20,21 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*

God could have **justly** destroyed us all, but if for reasons known only to Himself, He chose to save some. Do the rest have reason for complaint? All deserved to be sent to hell. We must remember, God does not choose anyone because of who they are or for any good thing they have done, for there was no good in any of us until Christ saved us and imputed His righteousness to us.

Concerning the nation of Israel we read**:**

*Deuteronomy 7:7,8 The LORD did not* ***set his love upon you****, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

The grace and mercy of God are for God and God alone to determine on whom He chooses to dispense them. God shall place His love on whomever He chooses, and for whatever reason He so chooses.

*Romans 9:11-15 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses,* ***I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.***

What then, becomes of man’s responsibility?

We are all responsible for our own sin. We can only admit to that sin to God, and ask for forgiveness and repentance, for the ability to repent is also God given.

*2 Timothy 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure* ***will give them repentance*** *to the acknowledging of the truth;*

The problem with man arises because man is so **enslaved by his sin** that he is in love with his sin. He does not want to leave it. Therefore, he will not, nor cannot seek or even desire salvation. It takes an act of God to bring sinful man to his knees.

*John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

Only those called, (drawn) of the Father will come to Christ. In the following verse he refers to us as His sheep. He says “**my sheep** hear my voice and I know them...”

*John 10:27-29 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

*My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

The blessed thing about all this is that God has called **many** to salvation, and has promised to make of us a new creation, fit for our heavenly home.

*2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

*Philippians 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*

The scripture the Apostle Peter refers to below, is scripture concerning the nation of Israel. However, here he applies it to all those who are believers**:**

*1 Peter 2:6,7 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious:* ***and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.******Unto you therefore which believe he is precious:*** *but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,*

Not only does He become precious to us as believers when we come to know Him, but we see that we also are precious to Him.

*1 Peter 2:8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.* ***But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood,*** *an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy,* ***but now have obtained mercy.***

We obtain this mercy when we repent, and ask Him for it. However, we soon discover that it is all of God. He convicts us of our sin, brings us to repentance, and by His marvelous grace grants to us new life, and prepares us for our future with Him. The amazing part of all this is that He also does it joyfully**:**

*Jude 1:24 Now unto* ***him*** *that is able to keep you from falling, and* ***to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.***

**What a wonderful God, who rightfully could have destroyed us, but instead forgives us and prepares us for an eternity with Him.**