III. CONSIDERING ΙΛΑΣΜΟΣ WITHIN SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

III.A. The Terminology of Sacrifice in the Old Testament

The English word "atonement" is an Anglo-Saxon term that essentially means, a "making at one," hence "at-one-ment." The term signifies the means by which harmony and peace is achieved between those who are enemies, hence reconciliation (which is the preferred translation for καταλλαγή, as opposed to atonement). The word "atonement" is a comprehensive term that refers to the work of Christ by which sinners are reconciled to God.[1] The reconciliation, however, is not merely a common reconciliation for it occurs within a specific background of Old Testament doctrine and practice. Nevertheless, the word "atonement" is appropriate for translating the Hebrew verb כִּפֶּר. Trench noted,

> When our Authorized Version was made, atonement referred to reconciliation or the making up of a previous enmity. All of its uses in our early literature justify the etymology (which now is sometimes called into question) that "atonement" is "at-one-meet" and therefore equivalent to "reconciliation." Consequently "atonement" was then (though not now) the correct translation of *katallagē*.[2]

---

[1] Norman H. Snaith, "The Sprinkling of the Blood," *Expository Times* 82 (1970): 23-24. In the New Testament, atonement and redemption are equivalent terms salvifically. However, in the Old Testament, atonement was not made to enter a relationship with God; rather, an atoning sacrifice was offered to strengthen the relationship with God that already existed. The existing relationship between God and the Old Testament believer was reinforced and renewed through atonement, in the same manner as the New Testament teaching with regard to progressive sanctification (which is reason why ἅγιος and related words are used with regard to regeneration, and both progressive and ultimate sanctification, since all these terms are characterized by making someone holy). The burnt offering did have a typological significance in truly foreshadowing the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose work was the final sanctifying sacrifice (cf. James L. Mays, *The Book of Leviticus, The Book of Numbers* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1963) 32-33).

[2] R. C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000) 307. Trench noted Walter W. Skeat's work, which noted that atonement was a compound word: "made up from the words *at* and *one*, and due to the frequent use of the phrase *at oon*, at one (i.e. reconciled) in Middle English . . . we actually find the word *onement*, reconciliation, in old authors" (*A Concise Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed. [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1896] 315).

Under the Mosaic constitution, a sacrificial victim died to achieve atonement for sin. According to Leviticus 17:11, the shedding of blood by the sacrificial victim was evidence of its death. Biblical atonement is a specific reconciliation that was effected by the death of Jesus Christ. Therefore, this definite atonement must be understood with terminology that communicates its specific background and reality, as opposed to thinking of the atonement of Christ with terminology of a general conception. In the ancient Near East, for instance, an offering of atonement enabled two enemies to be "at one," that is, reconciled. Not only were the people of Israel cognizant of their need for atonement with God, but also other peoples of the ancient Near East affirmed the common notion to placate a deity. However, it is only the Old Testament that the need for an offering of atonement is identifiable within the context of an authentic, covenant relationship between God and humanity.

III.A.1. Pagan Appeasement of Deities

Biblical atonement cannot be defined in terms of the general concept of the ancient Near East. Biblical atonement is not only unique with regard to the covenantal relationship, but also with regard to the initiative. In the Old Testament, atonement is indeed intricately related to sacrifice. However, the offering of atonement is not dependent upon human initiative, as when natives trundle up a volcano and toss a virgin into the mountain to appease the volcano god, and to prevent the angry deity from destroying them and their fellow islanders. In the Old Testament, God reveals His character and will, and instructs fallen sinners as to how they may approach Him. God, therefore, takes the initiative in making provision for reconciliation.[3]

By contrast, the pagan deities are often capricious and murderous. According to the *Enuma Elish*, the Babylonian creation epic, Marduk created humanity from the

[3] Mark Dever, *The Message of the Old Testament: Promises Made* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006) 30.

blood of the murdered god, Kingu, to be a slave to the gods.[4] The pagan deities are themselves continually warring and tyrannical even toward each other. For instance, Kingu contrived the uprising that made Tiamet rebel. Subsequent to his defeat of the chaos-monster, Tiamat, the god-hero Marduk decided to create the world from her corpse, and then also to create humanity.

> "Blood will I mass and cause bones to be.
> I will establish a savage, 'man' shall be his name.
> Verily, savage-man I will create.
> He shall be charged with the service of the gods
> That they might be at ease![5]

When humanity became clamorous, they disturbed the gods by their uproar. Therefore, Enlil said to the other gods: "'Oppressive has become the clamor of mankind. By their uproar they prevent sleep."[6] Enlil first decided to persuade the gods to send a plague in response, and then eventually compelled the other deities to send a great flood to destroy humanity. The gods themselves were not immune from such capricious and murderous actions. Apsu (the god of fresh water) decided to kill his own children (the younger gods) because they were bothersome to him.

> Their way has become painful to me,
> By day I cannot rest, by night I cannot sleep;
> I will destroy (them) and put an end to their way,
> That silence be established, and then let us sleep![7]

In the Egyptian text "Deliverance of Mankind from Destruction," the god Re was old. Therefore, mankind plotted against him. Re's response is to destroy humanity by sending his Eye (an independent part of himself), which is not

---

[4] Alexander Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of the Creation*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951) 80; Walter Wink, *The Human Being: Jesus and the Enigma of the Son of the Man* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001) 28.

[5] James B. Pritchard, ed., *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958) 36.

[6] James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd. ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969) 104.

[7] Heidel, *Babylonian Genesis*, 15.

adequate enough for the work of destruction, so the Eye assumes its form as the goddess Hat-Hor. When the goddess prevailed over mankind, it was pleasant in her heart. Re eventually desired the destruction to cease, whereas Hat-Hor was unwilling to cease from her lustful annihilation. Re had red ochre brought to him to make beer that appeared as human blood, which was then outpoured into the fields to a depth of approximately nine inches. When the goddess awoke at dawn, she found the place flooded where she was going to continue the slaying of mankind. She then became drunk with the blood-red beer (the "sleep-maker"), "without having perceived mankind."[8]

The Hittites were greatly concerned for their deities and their temples. They regarded the ceremonies with much importance, and made every effort to have them at the appropriate time. If the Hittites failed in this regard, they believed the gods would bring disasters upon mankind in the same manner as a vexed master might punish his servants.

> If, he (i.e., the servant) is continuously being cared for, he does not blame his servant. (Is also) the spirit of the deity different (in any way)? And if ever a servant vexes his master, either they kill him or they injure his nose, his eyes, (or) his ears. Or [they are arr]ested: he (himself), his wife, his sons, his brother, his sister, (his) relatives by marriage, (and) his family, whether it (be) a male servant or a female servant. Then they, the aforementioned, are called to the other side (to trial?), and do they do nothing to him? And if ever he dies, he does not die alone, but his family is included with him. If then [anyon]e vexes the spirit of a deity does the deity p[unis]h him alone for it? Does he not [p]unish his wife, his [children], his [de]scendants, his family, his male slaves, his female slaves, his cattle, his sheep, together with (his) harvest, and ruin him in all ways?[9]

Similarly, in Herodotus' *Histories* (III.40), "the exceeding good fortune of Polycrates did not escape the notice of Amasis [his Egpytian friend], who was much disturbed thereat." When the successes of Polycrates continued to increase, Amasis wrote him as follows: "It is a pleasure to hear of a friend an ally prospering, but they

[8] Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 10-11.

[9] Cem Karasu, "Why Did the Hittites Have a Thousand Deities?," in *Hittite Studies in Honor of Harry A. Hoffner Jr.*, eds. Gary Beekman, Richard Beal, and Gregory McMahon (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003) 222-23; cf. O. R. Gurney, *The Hittites*, rev. ed. (London: Penguin, 1990) 68-69.

exceeding prosperity does not cause me joy, for as much as I know that the gods are envious." Amasis' recommendation was for Polycrates to part with something that he valued.[10] After much careful consideration of Amasis' advice, Polycrates decided to part with his signet-ring, which later returned to him. Rejecting his daughter's warnings and all the advise given to him, Polycrates set sail to Orœtes. The notion of divine envy is prominent in the plot, and despite conjectures as to whether Polycrates' demise was punishment for his crimes,[11] Amasis' view of the gods and the narrative of Herodotus confirms the former. "Polycrates, on his arrival at Magnesia, perished miserably, in a way unworthy of his rank and of his lofty schemes" (*Histories* III.125).[12]

Athenian commander and politician, Nicias, led the Sicilian expedition during the Peloponnesian War. He attributed the disaster of that expedition to the jealousy of the gods. Addressing a dejected army, Nicias spoke, "Others before us have attacked their neighbours and have done what men will do without suffering more than they could bear; and we may now justly expect to find the gods more kind, for we have become fitter objects for their pity than their jealousy" (VII.78).[13]

Certainly, there were occasions when the gods were favorable to certain individuals, yet they could become capricious just as easily. One story in Homer's *Iliad* tells how Achilles chased Hector around the walls of Troy. Zeus remembered the many sacrifices that Hector offered to him, and he called upon the gods to decide whether to save Hector from death. "Athene of the Flashing Eyes" objected because Hector is "a mortal man, whose doom has long been settled."[14] Even though Zeus

---

[10] George Rawlinson, *The History of Herodotus*, 4 vols. (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1889) 2:365.

[11] J. E. van der Veen, *The Significant and the Insignificant: Five Studies in Herodotus' View of History* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1996) 6-22.

[12] Rawlinson, *History*, 2:423.

[13] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Richard Crawley (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1914) 532.

[14] Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. E. V. Rieu (New York: Penguin, 1950) 401.

would like to save Hector, "doom" (i.e. fate) has decreed that he died at the hand of Achilles.[15]

Hippolytus, the son of Theseus, was said to be a chaste devotee of Artemis. The goddess Aphrodite desires intercourse with him, and yet he refuses. In response, Aphrodite retaliates by causing Hippolytus' stepmother Phaedra (Theseus' third wife) to become infatuated with him. Hippolytus is falsely accused of raping his stepmother, and Theseus curses his son, which climaxes in his death. As he is dying, Hippolytus pleads to Artemis, "Do you see me, my Lady, how wretched I am?" Artemis can only reply, "I see your misery but it is not right for my eyes to shed a tear."[16]

The capricious attitudes of the pagan deities toward humanity were nothing like the sentiment of the Psalmist. One of the songs of the assents expressed "hope in the LORD" because He is lovingkind "and with Him is abundant redemption. And He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities" (130:7-8).[17] By contrast, the Babylonian "Prayer to Every God" was not addressed to any particular god; rather, the purpose of the prayer was to seek relief from some god that had become angry for some unknown offense.

> May the fury of my lord's heart be quieted toward me.
> May the god who is not known be quieted toward me;
> May the goddess who is not known be quieted toward me.

---

[15] Whereas fate is more powerful than Zeus, the God of Scripture is not bound by fate and is able to change His mind. Scripture teaches that God is immutable, but this does not imply that He is static (Ps 102:25–27; Mal 3:6; Heb 1:11–13; Jas 1:17). For example, when Scripture describes God as "repenting," it does not affect God's unchanging moral character. God does not change His mind in the same manner as humanity does. Anthropomorphisms are simply expressions to describe God in a manner that is comprehendible to humanity (e.g. possessing ears [Ps 31:2], eyes [Isa 1:15], hands [41:10], heart [Gen 6:6], and mouth [Ps 33:6; cf. Ezek 44:7]. Scripture teaches that the knowledge of God holds no bounds (Job 11:7; 15:8; Ps 92:5; Isa 40:13; Jer 23:18; Rom 11:33-34; 1 Tim 1:17); cf. Bruce A. Ware, *God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000); and, idem, *God's Greater Glory: The Exalted God of Scripture and the Christian Faith* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004).

[16] Mark P. O. Morford and Robert J. Lenardon, *Classical Mythology*, 6th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) 160.

[17] Perhaps even here the Psalmist anticipated forgiveness beyond the provisions of the Mosaic (Old) covenant.

> May the god whom I know or do not know be quieted toward me;
> May the goddess whom I know or do not know be quieted toward me. . . .
> May the god [who has become angry with me] be quieted toward me;
> May the goddess [who has become angry with me] be quieted toward me. . . .
> In ignorance I have eaten that forbidden of my god;
> In ignorance I have set foot on that prohibited by my goddess.
> O Lord, (my) transgressions are many, great are my sins. . . .
> The transgression which I have committed, indeed I do not know;
> The sin which I have done, indeed I do not know. . . .
> Although I am constantly looking for help, no one takes me by the hand;
> When I weep they do not come to my side.
> I utter laments, but no one hears me;
> I am troubled; I am overwhelmed; I can not see.
> O my god, merciful one, I address to thee the prayer, "Ever incline to me";
> I kiss the feet of my goddess; I crawl before thee. . . .
> O my lord, do not cast thy servant down;
> He is plunged into the waters of a swamp; take him by the hand. . . .
> May the heart, like the heart of a real mother, be quieted toward me;
> Like a real mother (and) a real father may it be quieted toward me.[18]

As is almost always true with regard to polytheistic religions, the gods were distant and their relationship with the common people did not evoke confidence. For example, the Egyptians enclosed the temples that were dedicated to their gods, which prevented the commoner from approaching the deity. Even during the religious festivals, the statues of the gods would be taken from the temples and would be veiled in enclosures (from the glance of the commoner) on sacred barks that the priests would carry.[19] The reason for such actions is evident in "The Instruction of Ani," which is a proverbial warning against becoming too bold when making an offering to a pagan deity. " . . . Make offering to thy god, and beware of sins against him. Thou shouldst not inquire about his *affairs*. Be not (too) free with him during his procession. Do not approach him (too closely) to carry him. Thou shouldst not *disturb the veil*; beware of *exposing what it shelters*. Let thy eye have regard to the nature of his anger, and prostrate thyself in his name."[20]

The relationship of the pagan deities with humanity is one wherein they are aloof, capricious, indirect, and murderous. Scripture does reveal God as personal, as

[18] Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 391-92.

[19] The practice of the Egyptians is quite a contrast with the Book of Hebrews (cf. 4:16; 6:19-20).

[20] Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 420.

evident in emotions such as anger (Numb 12:9), jealousy (Exod 20:5), mercy (Jer 3:12), and longsuffering (2 Pet 3:9). However, a distinction must be made between the manner in which God experiences emotions and the manner in which man experiences emotions.[21] The fact that man can experience theomorphic emotions is a gift of God; however, when God repents, it cannot be said that He regrets the prior decisions that He made; rather, it is best to understand divine repentance as a genuine emotion. When the act occurs that God has foreknown, He genuinely grieves with regard to the sinfulness of humanity (cf. 1 Sam 15:29). "In general terms it may be said to mean that God changed his mind, not because of fickleness in himself, but because of failure in men or because of man's repentance."[22]

Furthermore, the jealousy of God is not the consequence of being envious of human's prosperity; rather, His emotions are an expression of the tremendous love that He has for His creatures. "Since God is represented as the bestower of blessing, and as rejoicing to give life to all His creatures, His jealousy is meant to express that He is not an unconscious natural force, which pours out its fullness in utter indifference, but that human love exercises an influence over Him."[23] Moreover, the wrath of God—as when He demands atonement for sin—is not the consequence of capricious anger; rather, God's wrath is the expression of righteous indignation for His holiness and honor (e.g. Gen 6:6; Exod 20:5; 32:10-23; 34:14; Numb 12:9; 25:11;

---

[21] One example is the experience of Job wherein God challenged him to search the extent of His wisdom, convinced Job of his ignorance and finitude, and then enumerated His perfections (Job 38—39). Job was guilty of making hasty judgments based upon bad information from "friends" and his ignorance of all the details of his particular situation, but God is never lacking in such knowledge. The change of action or mind that occurs on a human level cannot be understood as representing God in the same manner. Such similarities of emotions between God and humanity are simply the result of humans who are created in the image of God. The emotions of human beings are derived from the Creator and cannot be equated with the same emotions that God possesses (see Graham A. Cole, "The Living God: Anthropomorphic or Anthropopathic?" *The Reformed Theological Journal* 59 [April 2000]: 24).

[22] H. H. Rowley, *The Faith of Israel: Aspects of Old Testament Thought* (London: SCM Press, 1956) 67.

[23] Hermann Schultz, *Old Testament Theology: The Religion of Revelation in Its Pre-Christian Stage of Development*, 4th ed., 2 vols., trans. J. A. Paterson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1892) 2:110.

35:33-34; Deut 4:24; 6:15; Josh 7:26; 24:19).[24] God is longsuffering, yet He hates sin (cf. Lev 26:14-20; Deut 12:31; Ps 5:5; 11:5; Hab 1:13). God's desire is for His people to be holy as He is holy (Lev 11:44; 19:2; 20:7, 26), and therefore, to repent and to forsake sin, and to pursue His grace and mercy. As opposed to being capricious as the pagan deities, God is lavish in His affection toward His people even when they are unfaithful to Him. For example, when His people were wayward, God "led them with cords of a man, with bonds of love" (Hos 11:4).

God is described in anthropomorphic terms—as were the pagan deities—yet God is entirely distinct from those false gods.[25] Albright noted the particular aspects of biblical monotheism that are often assumed. God's self-revelation, however, was an incomparable exceptionalness in complete contrast to the character of the pagan deities and their sacrifices. The contemporaries of ancient Israel would have felt scandalized by the following doctrines: "belief in the existence of only one God, who is the Creator of the world and the giver of all life; the belief that God is holy and just, without sexuality or mythology; the belief that God is invisible to man except under special conditions and that no graphic nor plastic representation of Him is permissible; the belief that God is not restricted to any part of His creation, but is equally at home in heaven, in the desert, or in Palestine; the belief that God is so far

[24] Ibid. 2:174.

[25] Isaiah 40—48 details the supremacy and greatness of God in contrast to the impotence of the false gods of Babylon. For example, Isaiah 40 describes the power and wisdom of God, who is omnipotent (40:12), omniscient (40:13-14), infinite (40:15-17), perfect (40:18, 25), and immovable (40:19-20). In contrast to the true God, the false gods required craftsman to stabilize the idols so as not to be moved in the ongoing course of life; they are contrasted with the Almighty God, who "will not totter" (40:20). God chided the people for comparing Him to any other (40:26). The reason why He is incomparable is that He is "the Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator" (40:27-31). God cannot be compared to any human or any idols. Indeed, the Lord God challenged the idols to demonstrate that they are false based on their limited knowledge (41:21-24). Conversely, God declared that His foreknowledge is coupled with His glory (42:5-9). Reminiscent of Ephesians 1, God declared that He created a people unto Himself for His glory and to demonstrate His praise (43:7, 21). The statement of God's intent does not indicate probability, but the certainty of the fulfillment of God's will. In contrast to the false gods—the idols—who cannot speak with any degree of certainty, God commanded, "Shout for joy, O heavens, for the LORD has done it" (44:9-20, 23). God's decrees are certain; they are outside both time and history.

superior to all created beings, whether heavenly bodies, angelic messengers, demons, or false gods, that He remains absolutely unique. . . ."[26]

The contrast between the God of Israel and the pagan deities could not be any more apparent than in the biblical text, which reads, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to our likeness" (Gen 1:26). As opposed to be a slave, humanity will serve as God's representative. Prior to their fall, Adam and Eve enjoyed fellowship with God, walking in the garden with Him, and having the Lord care for their wellbeing.[27] Whereas the pagan deities made humans to be their slaves, God made humans to fellowship with Him. The creation of the world and humanity even culminates in a Sabbath, which will be a special day for communion with God. Moreover, when God's saints die (in contrast to Artemis, for example), He genuinely weeps (John 11:35).

III.A.2. The Biblical Sacrificial Rite

There is some correspondence between the biblical sacrificial rite and those of the ancient world. Several of the categories of offerings in Leviticus 1—5 are attested

---

[26] William Foxwell Albright, *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, 5th ed. (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1968; reprint, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006) 116.

[27] To understand Adam and Eve as true historical figures, see Eugene H. Merrill, "Genesis 1—11 as Literal History," in *The Genesis Factor: Myths and Realities*, comp. ed. Ron J. Bigalke Jr. (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2008) 75-92. For examples of critical scholarship against the genuineness of Genesis 1—11 as history, see Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, 3rd ed., trans. Mark E. Biddle (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910; reprint, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997) vii-xix; and, Niels Peter Lemche, *Prelude to Israel's Past*, trans. E. F. Maniscalco (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988) 12-26. The names "Adam" and "Eve" do have symbolic significance. "Adam" is both a proper name and also a generic term for "humankind," and "Eve" is a wordplay of the verb חַוָּה ("life"), which explains the man's comment that she "was the mother of all *the* living." The symbolism of the names has led to assumptions that the people and events in Genesis 1—11 are not historical; therefore, the narrative would be a metaphorical account with regard to the origins of humanity and the effects of sin upon human life. Related to this notion is the more progressively stated assertion that genetics disproves a historical Adam and Eve, and thus humanity emerged gradually from several separately originating organisms sharing a common genetic pool (e.g. Jimmy H. Davis, "Science, Theology, and the Search for the Historical Adam," in *Faith and Learning*, ed. David S. Dockery [Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2012] 369-82; Dennis Venema, "Genesis and the Genome," *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 62 [September 2010]: 166-78).

beyond the Israelite cult.[28] Cognates of זֶבַח ("offering," "sacrifice") are attested in Akkadian, Aramaic, Phoenician, Punic, and Ugaritic literature. Cognates of עוֹלָה (the burnt offering) in Leviticus 1 are attested in Hittite, Neo-Punic, Punic, Ugaritic literature, and perhaps in the Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions. The term used for the meal offering in Leviticus 2 is מִנְחָה, and cognates of it find attestation in Ugaritic, Phoenician, Punic, and Official Aramaic. The term used for the peace offering in Leviticus 3 is שְׁלָמִים, and cognates of it find attestation in Akkadian, Hittite, Punic, and Ugaritic literature. The sacrificial ritual was common in the ancient world, which means that sacrifice is not a merely primitive motivation; rather, the offerings could include complex religious ideas, such as those sacrifices that can be identified in the cult of ancient Israel. The biblical legislation with regard to the sacrificial ritual was indeed based upon descriptions and structures that were common in the ancient world, yet the offerings that God legislated for Israel had the most complete and superlative meaning of any sacrifices.[29]

---

[28] G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 15 vols., trans. John T. Willis, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and David E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974-2006); Jacob Hoftijzer and K. Jongeling, eds., *Dictionary of North-West Semitic Inscriptions*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1995); Willem A. VanGemeren, gen. ed., *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 5 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997); Wolfram von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965-81); Moshe Weinfeld, "Social and Cultic Institutions in the Priestly Source Against Their Ancient Near Eastern Background," in *Proceedings of the Eighth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1983) 95-129.

[29] Certainly, it would be impossible to say that the biblical writers never referenced contemporary mythology. However, when the sacred writers used pagan myths it was not the result of an influence of the pagan culture; rather, the references would likely seize the attention of the people since they were based upon familiar stories of their day (cf. Gen 27; Isa 51; Ps 74; Rev 12 as examples). Therefore, it is not to say that the Israelites copied pagan thoughts and beliefs into their writings; rather, the allusions to familiar myths would likely arouse the attention of their contemporaries. If the biblical writers borrowed from pagan belief and practice, it would seem quite apparent that one would expect to find other prevalent myths in the earliest Scriptures. The mythical accounts are found in Scripture at fairly late dates when the beliefs of the Israelites were firmly based upon the belief of the one true God who was incomparable and lacked any equal to challenge His sovereignty. For example, in the *Manners and Customs of the Bible*, the contributors provided the following conclusions: "We know that the Hebrews lived next to the Canaanites and were familiar with their lifestyle, world view, religion, and literature. Many times the Hebrews adopted the Canaanite religion. . . . Much of the prophets' stern warning was a reaction against the

Sacrifice, of course, is not the only terminology employed in the Old Testament to describe the doctrine of atonement (as evident by three examples). The prophet Isaiah had a vision of "a burning coal" placed to the lips that removed "iniquity" and provided forgiveness of sin (Isa 6:6-7). God called the prophet Hosea to exemplify restorative love through purchase of "an adulteress" (Hos 3:1-3). Zechariah's prophecy contains the imagery of "filthy garments" being removed (Zech 3:4). Nevertheless, the primary concept of sacrifice is evident from the beginning of the Old Testament.

Genesis 3:15 constitutes the *protoeuangelion* proclamation with explicit prophecy of the sacrifice of Christ (which, of course, is confirmed by progressive revelation): "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel." Genesis 3:15 is an unambiguous statement with regard to the death of Jesus Christ, and indeed remarkable that it was given in the book of beginnings with recognition of the Lord's work upon the cross and the glorious triumph of His death. Immediately subsequent the Fall of Adam and Eve, there is the record that both Cain and Abel offered sacrifices (Gen 4:3-4).

Prior to the redemption of the Israelites from Egypt, the nation was commanded to slaughter a Passover lamb with blemish, and to apply the shed blood to the exterior of the house (Exod 12). The lamb's blood would cause the Lord to "pass over" that house whereby the occupants of the house would be protected from the judgment of the firstborn. Throughout the Passover event, God is evidently the most prominent figure of the sacrificial event, that is, the sacrifice of the lamb is made to satisfy Him, and His just requirements and punishment of sin. God, therefore, said to Moses, "'*I* will go through the land of Egypt on that night . . . *I* will

---

Canaanites. At times the Hebrews borrowed freely from the Canaanites. From which areas of Canaanite life did they borrow? Certainly from their architecture and their literary techniques. . . . But these borrowings were rarely religious. To be faithful to its God, Israel had to stand apart from its pagan neighbors. It dared not tamper with what God called loathsome and unacceptable to Him" [J. I. Packer and M. C. Tenney, eds., *Illustrated Manners and Customs of the Bible* [Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1980] 147).

execute judgments . . . when *I* see the blood I will pass over you . . . when *I* strike the land of Egypt" (Exod 12:12-13, emphasis added).[30]

The doctrine of ἱλασμός is not directly mentioned in the Passover account; however, the doctrine of substitution is certainly prominent. Moreover, the Old Testament sacrifices typified the ἱλασμός that was yet to be manifested in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. While it is beyond the scope of this research to expound upon all the Old Testament sacrifices with their corresponding types, it will be beneficial to discuss five of the primary offerings that specifically anticipated antitypical fulfillment in the death of Jesus Christ.[31]

III.A.2.a. The Passover Lamb

Israel secured her particular redemption (in the preservation of the firstborn of each family), in addition to her national redemption through the sacrifice of the Passover lamb. The redemption was to be a perpetual memorial to all generations (Exod 12:5-8). There are two aspects to consider with regard to the Passover lamb: (1) the means of peace; and, (2) the means of unity. With regard to the first aspect of the Passover, the blood "on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses" secured peace for Israel because when God saw the blood, He would "pass over" the house (12:7, 13). Nothing additional was required to experience the reality of this peace—with regard to the destructive plague that God would initiate—than the application of the blood. Consistent with Hebrews 9:27—"and inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment"—death accomplished its work in every Egyptian house that did not have the blood applied to the doorposts and lintel. In accordance with His grace and mercy, however, God provided an unblemished substitute for Israel—both nationally and particularly—

[30] Dever, *Message of the Old Testament*, 30.

[31] The antitype is the event or person foreshadowed or prefigured by the type, which is the predictor of something future. God prefigured His sacrificial work in the Old Testament, which is fulfilled in the New Testament. The Old Testament contains the shadow (type) whereas the New Testament contains the reality (antitype). See Henry A. Virkler, *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981) 184.

which would be the recipient of His "execute[d] judgment" against sin (Exod 12:12). The just requirements of God and the needs of Israel were both satisfied by the same object: the blood of the Passover lamb. The blood outside the house was "a sign" that God's judgment against sin was both divinely and perfected settled, and therefore, perfect peace was experienced within the house. Any doubt in the affections or mind of an Israelite would have been dishonorable to the divine means for securing peace, that is, the blood of the atonement.[32] The blood was "a sign" for the people (12:13), which was meaningful only to God: "when I see the blood I will pass over you." There was not any magical component to the blood, which would avert the peril of death; rather, the blood was a sign interpreted by God.

With regard to the second aspect of the Passover, the blood secured unity for Israel because the assembly of Israelites was gathered together within their houses in peace. Israel was truly saved by the blood, and the nation also feasted on the roasted lamb, which was the occasion for their gathering together (12:8-11). The distinction between the means of peace and the means of unity is noteworthy. The blood of the lamb is truly the foundation both for peace with God, and for peace with other believers. Without the atonement of the Lord Jesus, there could not be any fellowship either with God or His assembly of believers. Nevertheless, it is important to be mindful that all believers will be gathered in heaven to a living Christ. First Peter 2:4-5 teaches that the believer's relationship with Christ is "to a living stone." Having experienced peace with God through His blood, all those who belong to the Lord have Him as the means of unity. Mackintosh concluded,

> This must stamp a peculiar character on God's assembly. Men may associate on any ground, round any centre, or for any object they please; but when the Holy Ghost associates, it is on the ground of accomplish redemption, around the Person of Christ, in order to form a holy dwelling-place for God.(1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19; Eph. ii. 21, 22; 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.)[33]

[32] C. H. Mackintosh, *Notes on the Book of Exodus*, 3rd ed. (New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1880) 137-38.

[33] Ibid. 149-50.

The Passover lamb is a most remarkable type of the work of Christ. The sacrificial lamb was to be without blemish (cf. 1 Pet 1:19); the lamb was to be tested (cf. Matt 4:1); the lamb was slain (cf. Rev 13:8); the blood of the lamb was of no avail without it being applied (Heb 10:19-22); and relevant to this research for the historical and social context, it was an ἱλασμός against the judgment of God (1 John 2:2; 4:10).

III.A.2.b. The Levitical Sacrifices

The Book of Leviticus was primary in teaching the Israelite people that their relationship with God needed to be restored by means of sacrifice. The sweet savor offerings were voluntary acts of worship, whereas the non-sweet savor offerings were mandatory atonement for sin. All the sacrifices were costly, accompanied by repentance and confession of sin, and in accordance with God's precise legislation. Blood symbolized the life of an animal victim (Lev 17:11), and was given in substitution for the life of the fallen, finite human worshipper. The animal victim was always to be unblemished because atonement would be accomplished through its blood (e.g. Lev 1:3, 10; 3:1, 6; 4:3, 23, 28). The Levitical offerings communicated—in a vivid and perpetual manner—the necessity for an innocent life to be given in exchange for the life of the guilty. The shed blood revealed unambiguously that sin results in death. God used the Levitical offerings to demonstrate His holiness and His wrath against sin. The Levitical offerings must be contrasted with ancient, pagan sacrifices because biblical sacrifices were not given necessarily by the grateful as by the guilty, and the offerings were not made by the ignorant as by the instructed.[34]

The Book of Leviticus is a handbook that reveals how to worship God in holiness. Indeed, the word "holy" (or a derivative) can be found approximately eighty-seven times throughout Leviticus. The Book forms a logical, spiritual progression from the two books preceding it. The Book of Genesis records how the first human couple was created in innocence, and then fell into sin. The Book of

[34] Dever, *Message of the Old Testament*, 30-31.

Exodus records the redemption of fallen humanity, and the Book of Leviticus is essentially a continuation of this record.

The beginning chapters of Genesis describe humanity's fall from innocence into the bondage of sin. Exodus, therefore, begins with humanity in bondage and chronicles the divine deliverance. The Book describes how redemption is accomplished, and then reveals how God will interact with the redeemed nation through the revelation of His will to them at Mount Sinai. Having brought Israel from bondage in Egypt to freedom as a nation, it was imperative for God to provide a detailed code by which the Israelites could govern their lives. God supplied this code to them through the Mosaic covenant. The ceremony for the receiving of the covenant is described in Exodus 19—24, which were then followed by God's design of the Tabernacle[35] as the gathering place of Israel for worship in the wilderness (Exod 25—40).

The order of chapters 25—40 is especially significant because the narrative is interrupted in Exodus 32 and 34 to describe the sin of Israel. The significance of this narrative is to demonstrate the need for the Tabernacle. Israel had just received the Mosaic covenant and pledged to obey it (Exod 24:3, 7). However, as soon as the opportunity arose, Israel disobeyed the first two of the Ten Commandments. Israel's actions demonstrated that fallen, finite humanity is unable to obey God's commandments, and therefore, a means to approach an infinite God is needed. Having responded in grace to Israel's sin in Exodus 32 and 34, the record of the Tabernacle construction is recorded in Exodus 35—40. The Book concludes with the completion of the construction and with the presence of God inhabiting the Tabernacle. Israel was ready to worship God with the erection of the Tabernacle completed, and therefore, they needed to know how to worship an infinite God in the Tabernacle.

---

[35] Tabernacle is synonymous with מָעִיךְ, "dwelling" (Ps 76:2, cf. Song 1:8); בַּיִת, "house" (Gen 28:17; 33:17; Exod 23:19; 34:26; Josh 6:24; 9:23; Judg 18:31); מִקְדָּשׁ, "sanctuary" (Exod 25:8; Lev 12:4); and, אֹהֶל, "tent" (e.g. Gen 9:21; cf. 1 Kgs 1:39). Temple can be regarded as another name for the Tabernacle (cf. 1 Sam 1:9; 3:3), yet distinct as the permanent, stately structure (2 Kgs 24:13; 1 Chron 29:1, 19).

The problem of how finite human beings can approach an infinite God is an issue that every religious person encounters. Leviticus 1—10 demonstrates two needs for approaching an infinite God: (1) fallen, finite human beings need an offering, that is, expiation (chs. 1—7); therefore, the sacrifices are described; and, (2) an offerer or priest is also essential, that is, mediation (chs. 8—10);[36] therefore, the priesthood was established. The Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled both these prerequisites. More than any study in the entire canon of Scripture (with perhaps the exception of Hebrews), an exhaustive study of Leviticus 1—7 will provide the most comprehensive revelation with regard to the work of Christ.[37]

The section describing the priesthood follows logically from the prior section describing the sacrifices. Aaron, the high priest, was inducted into his office followed by the consecration of his sons as priests. The ceremony involved three components: (1) cleansing (8:6); (2) clothing (8:7-8); and, (3) consecration (8:10-12). Leviticus 9 records that Aaron offered four of the five primary sacrifices (vv. 2-4, 18), excepting the trespass offering since there was no reason for reparation at the ceremony. The induction/consecration ceremony would have been unnecessary without the revelation concerning the Levitical offerings. Not only does Leviticus 8—10 follow logically from chapters 1—7, but also the Book follows logically from Exodus 25—40.

The five primary types of Levitical offerings can be divided into two main categories. The division is natural since 4:1 ("Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying") begins with language comparable to 1:1 ("Then the LORD called to Moses

---

[36] Additional instructions with regard to offerings are provided in Numbers 15—19 and 28—30. Leviticus is sufficient to demonstrate the terminology of sacrifice in the Old Testament and will, therefore, be the emphasis of this section.

[37] Hebrews 9:12 states through His shed blood Christ ascended into heaven. As the elect's High Priest, who was entirely without sin, the Lord Jesus did not need to bring any blood into the heavenly sanctuary. The blood was the proof indisputable that He, the sinner's substitute had truly died. He was both the offering and the offerer, completely acceptable to God, and effectual to remove the sins under the law and under grace (9:15; 10:10, 19). Christ presented Himself in heaven as the risen Savior having complete right of entrance there. Jesus serves effectively as the believer's High Priest because He has made "ἱλάσκεσθαι for the sins of the people" (2:17) and has "obtained eternal redemption" (9:12) for His people. The merits of His once-for-all sacrifice make the Lord Jesus Christ the perfect and only intercessor for the believer.

and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying"). *First*, the burnt, meal, and peace offerings reflect the Godward perspective toward the cross. The "Godward" offerings remind believers that the sacrificial work of Christ is entirely acceptable to God, and His atonement is satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. The burnt, meal, and peace offerings were voluntary in the sense that they were given as a component of the regular offerings that constituted daily thought and duty. The sacrifices were "a soothing aroma" to God (1:9, 13, 17; 2:2, 9; 3:5, 16). *Second*, the sin and trespass offerings reflect the humanward understanding of the cross. The "humanward" offerings depict the benefits of Christ's sacrifice for those who believe. The sin and trespass offerings were mandatory atonement for certain types of sins, and would provide forgiveness and cleansing (4:26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7).

> The very heart of the covenant relationship—fellowship between Yahweh and His people—and the means of its achievement are spelled out in the opening statement of Leviticus where, with respect to the burnt offering, Yahweh says, "He must present it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting so that He will be acceptable to the Lord" (Lev. 1:3). The servant, therefore, had to approach his Sovereign at His dwelling place by presenting an appropriate token of his obedient submission.[38]

The five primary offerings revealed in Leviticus 1—7 include: the burnt offering (ch. 1), the meal offering (ch. 2), the peace offering (ch. 3), the sin offering (chs. 4:1—5:13), and the trespass offering (chs. 5:14—6:7).[39] The first three offerings are classified as sweet savor sacrifices, whereas the other two are classified as non-sweet savor sacrifices.[40] The typical significance of the sweet savor offerings is noteworthy because they secure "the same sufficient legal ground for the bestowment of merit as it provided in the non-sweet savor offering aspect for

---

[38] Eugene H. Merrill, "A Theology of the Pentateuch," in *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, ed. Roy B. Zuck (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991) 57.

[39] Leviticus 6:8—7:38 provides the law of the offerings, which is a review of the five offerings and additional regulation with regard to the manner in which they are to be offered. The section demonstrates that God is not only interested in *what* is offered but also in *how* one presents the offering to Him.

[40] Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 8 vols. in 4 (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947-48; reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1993) 3:121.

the removal of demerit."[41] The three sweet savor offerings represent the truth that Christ offered Himself to God without blemish (cf. Eph 5:2; Heb 9:14). The Lord Jesus fulfilled the just requirements of God by offering Himself as the sacrifice for sin. Christ's obedience to God's just demands procured righteousness unto justification. The offerings demonstrate substitutionary atonement "to the extent that, as the sinner is wholly void of merit before God (Rom. 3:9; Gal. 3:22), Christ has released and made available upon grounds of perfect equity His own merit as the basis of the believer's acceptance and standing before God."[42]

III.A.2.b.i. The Burnt Offering

The burnt offering was unique because it was consumed in entirety upon the altar. The sacrifice was wholly consecrated to God, and depicts the complete consecration of Christ in death, who gave Himself entirely for sinners (cf. Gal 1:4; 1 Tim 2:6; Tit 2:14). The root meaning of עוֹלָה is "to ascend," and therefore, signified a burnt offering in which a sacrifice was consumed entirely upon the altar. The word ὁλοκαύτωμα ("whole burn") is used for עוֹלָה in the Septuagint.[43] The English word "holocaust" is based upon the Septuagint.

The animal victim had to be "a male without defect," but could be either "from the herd" or "from the flock, of the sheep or of the goats." The offerer was to present the animal "at the doorway of the tent of meeting." The offerer designated the animal victim for atonement, and then slaughtered it before the Lord so that the priests could "sprinkle the blood around on the altar"[44] and "skin the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces." Lastly, the priest would "arrange the pieces . . . on the fire that is on the altar." If the offerer was impoverished, the burnt offering could also be

[41] Ibid. 3:75.

[42] Ibid. 3:122.

[43] The Jewish people use the term שׁוֹאָה ("disaster") in reference to the Nazi holocaust, as opposed to עוֹלָה, which became the established name for the Nazi destruction of the Jews (by the late 1950s) and would infer that six million Jews died as a sacrifice.

[44] The blood was a graphic manner to ensure the death of the victim, since the life of the body is in the blood. Blood sprinkled around on the altar was a public witness that the sacrifice was truly made.

a dove or pigeon. In this case, the priest would "wring off its head and offer it up in smoke on the altar;" its blood would "be drained out on the side of the altar" (presumably because the blood would be less). The abrupt presentation of blood was a figurative cry to God that atonement was made through the death of the victim (cf. Heb 12:24). The ritual portrayed graphically the truth that God required the shedding of blood for atonement.

Atonement was not accomplished by the shedding of blood or by the actions of the offerer; rather, it was received based upon the representation of the sacrificial ritual in accord with the will and purpose of God. However, this does not mean, that the offering "serves merely as a symbol and expression of man's desire to purify himself and become reconciled with Him."[45] Scripture reveals that the offerings were much more than a mere symbol and expression. The Godward perspective was to reveal the legislation because it dramatically represented the divine arrangement for reconciliation. God graciously bestowed forgiveness and cleansing (atonement) for the individual who through faith surrendered to Him, as evident in exactly heeding the divine instruction for the sacrificial ritual. God would declare forgiveness based upon His eternal decree that He would eventually provide the perfect sacrifice for sin in a conclusive manner. The offerer was not cognizant as to how the sacrifices foreshadowed the death of God's own Son (nor at this point in history did they need to know); the worshipper simply needed to believe God's prescription for forgiveness and heed the divinely ordained ritual to receive forgiveness.

The burnt offering began when the offerer placed his hand upon the sacrifice.[46] The action would also signify close association with the animal victim, and would therefore indicate the offerer's own surrender to God through the

---

[45] Nehama Leibowitz, *Studies in Vayikra (Leviticus)*, trans. Aryeh Newman (Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization, 1980) 22.

[46] Gordon J. Wenham noted that this action was emphasized because the offerer would have "said his prayer. The laying on of hands is associated with praying in Lev. 16:21 (cf. Deut 21:6-9) as well as in later Jewish tradition" (*The Book of Leviticus* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979] 61).

sacrificial act (this was the purpose for the offering).[47] The action would also signify the transfer of the offerer's guilt to the animal victim that would be killed in place of the worshipper.[48] Not only did the life of the victim cease when the blood was shed, but also the entire sacrifice was consumed entirely by the Lord. The victim was consecrated entirely to God, which was evident in the entire sacrifice being consumed, with the result being as if God's wrath was averted from the offerer, who would then have access to the presence of God. Consequently, both the blood and the body of the animal victim were consecrated entirely to God on behalf of the offerer.

Marx believed conversely that the sacrifice was for divine life and fellowship; therefore, the burnt offering would be a means whereby the offerer would celebrate the presence of God.[49] He argued, "Ce n'est pas le sacrifiant qui, par l'intermédiaire d'une victime monte à Dieu, c'est au contraire Dieu qui descend sur terre pour venir auprès du sacrifiant et recevoir la victime qui lui est présentée. . . . Il ne s'agit pas, pour le sacrifiant, de monter vers Dieu, même pas de faire monter quelque chose à

[47] Mays, *Leviticus*, 26-32.

[48] Jacob Milgrom referenced Leviticus 16:21 to argue that two hands were used for transference, and therefore, the offerer would not have been identifying with the animal victim; rather, he would have established ownership (and therefore, validity) of the offering (*Leviticus: A Book of Ritual and Ethics* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004] 171; cf. Notker Füglister, "Sühne durch Blut — Zur Bedeutung von Leviticus 17,11," in *Studien zum Pentateuch: Walter Kornfeld zum 60,* ed. Georg Braulik [Vienna: Herder, 1977] 143-64). Perhaps he contends too much for even establishing ownership would identify the animal victim as the offerer's substitute that would be offered "to make atonement on his behalf" (Lev 1:4) (see also, R. K. Harrison, *Leviticus* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1980] 48). Leviticus 4:24, 26 does indicate that laying a hand upon the animal victim is associated with making "atonement" and being "forgiven" (cf. Lev 8:14; 16:21; Numb 8:10; 27:18-20). The dramatic act, whereby an offerer laid his hand upon the head of the animal sacrifice and then slit the throat (resulting in death and the animal collapsing at the offerer's feet), would certainly communicate that if the victim's blood was not shed, the offerer's body should lay lifeless before the altar. Consequently, in Romans 6:1-4, the true assertion is made that those who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are identified with Him by such faith in His death, burial, and resurrection; sacrificial identification by faith is the means by which the benefits of the sacrifice are appropriated.

[49] Alfred Marx, *Les Systèmes Sacrificiels de l'Ancien Testament: Formes et Fonctions du Culte Sacrificiel à Yhwh* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

Dieu; il s'agit que Dieu vienne sur terre auprès du sacrifiant."[50] Rejecting the translation "a soothing aroma," Marx translated רֵיחַ־נִיחֹוחַ as "d'odeur apaisante." Marx applied this expression to the offerings of Leviticus 1—3, in contrast to the sin offering and trespass offering that he believed were prescribed for procuring forgiveness of sins in contrast to the burnt offering, meal offering, and peace offering which were not associated with any remedy for sin and defilement. The primary reason for the offerings of Leviticus 1—3 was "d'offrir l'hos-pitalité." According to Marx, the purpose of the burnt offering would be to honor God. "En offrant un sacrifice à Dieu, en lui présentant de la nourriture . . . on l'honore." Marx explained this honor as twofold.

> La première : comme Abraham, on prépare à l'intention exclusive de Dieu un repas auquel on ne prend pas part soi-même, se contentant de se tenir à distance, à sa disposition, pour répondre à ses moindres désirs. Cette forme d'hospitalité nous est peu familière, puisque nous avons l'habitude de manger avec les autres; elle est pourtant attestée en Gn 18 et 1 S 28 et sa traduction au plan rituel, c'est l'holocauste où la victime est entièrement offerte à Yhwh. La seconde forme d'hospitalité, que nous connaissons bien et dont la traduction au plan rituel est le sacrifice de communion, est celle où le repas est partagé entre Dieu, les prêtres et l'offrant. Si donc Dieu vient auprès du sacrifiant, c'est afin d'accepter l'invitation qui lui est adressée et recevoir les marques d'honneur de la part de ses fidèles.

The sin offering and the trespass offering would be given for minor sin (or for defilement) with a "réparatrice" purpose of the offerer in the community. The purpose then for the offerings of Leviticus 1—3 was "à créer les conditions permettant à Dieu de continuer à résider au milieu de son peuple; elle est destinée à permettre, à ceux qui se sont trouvés exclus de la possibilité de vivre dans la proximité de Dieu, de retrouver toute leur place dans la communauté." The offerings would also be "qu'un moyen destiné à enlever les obstacles à cette présence de Dieu. Dieu donne à Israël le moyen de laver, si je puis ainsi dire, l'impureté et le péché afin que la relation avec Dieu et la bénédiction qui en découle puissent s'épanouir

[50] Alfred Marx, "Le Sacrifice dans l'Ancien Testament." Speech given at Session Nationale des Équipes de Recherche Biblique, Versailles, 1996; see also, idem, *Les Offrandes Végétales dans l'Ancien Testament: Du Tribut d'Hommage au Repas Eschatologique* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

pleinement."[51]

The recurrent use of רֵיחַ־נִיחֹוחַ in Leviticus 4:31, with regard to the sin offering, is indication that Marx made too much of a distinction between the offerings of Leviticus 1—3 and 4:1—6:7. Moreover, the presence of the verb כִּפֶּר with regard to the burnt offering in Leviticus 1:4, which, of course, also begins the presentation of the first and most important sacrifice, certainly indicates a noteworthy meaning. For instance, regardless of whether there is an association with some particular sin or not, all sacrifice is given as a consequence of sin and for forgiveness. Such an understanding may be confirmed by observing that the use of the verb כִּפֶּר with regard to the burnt offering also occurs in the same sentence that instructs the offerer to "lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering." Although the precise means for administering the blood may vary between the offerings, the contact of blood with the altar is required for all sacrifices, which corresponds with the latter statement in Leviticus 17:11 ("'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.'").

> As we will observe, sacrifice often, but not always, focuses on the blood of the victim. Some critical scholars speak of this as a magical understanding of sacrifice, and some evangelical readers of the Old Testament seem to have this idea also when they insist on the translation "blood" rather than its symbolical referent, death. It is the death of the sacrificial victim that renders the rite effective, and the manipulation of the blood highlights the death that stands in the place of the sinner who offers it.[52]

The specific role of blood in the five primary sacrifices (Lev 1—7), even when there was not any particular sin, demonstrated to all the worshippers that they were sinners who needed God's forgiveness for their souls.

> The burnt offering was the commonest of all the OT sacrifices. Its main function was to atone for man's sin by propitiating God's wrath. In the immolation of the animal,

[51] Marx, "Le Sacrifice."

[52] Tremper Longman III and Raymond B. Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006) 63-64.

> most commonly a lamb, God's judgment against human sin was symbolized and the animal suffered in man's place. The worshiper acknowledged his guilt and responsibility for his sins by pressing his hand on the animal's head and confessing his sin. The lamb was accepted as the ransom price for the guilty man. The daily use of the sacrifice in the worship of the temple and tabernacle was a constant reminder of man's sinfulness and God's holiness. So were its occasional usages after sickness, childbirth, and vows. In bringing a sacrifice a man acknowledged his sinfulness and guilt. He also publicly confessed his faith in the Lord, his thankfulness for past blessing, and his resolve to live according to God's holy will all the days of his life.[53]

Atonement is revealed in all sacrifices, whether voluntary or mandatory.[54] The purpose for the burnt offering is evident in the biblical text, which will be examined in additional detail, particularly with regard to the meaning of the verb כִּפֶּר and the laying of the hand upon the head of the offering.

III.A.2.b.i.$_a$) The Meaning of the Verb כִּפֶּר. The verb כִּפֶּר is normally translated as "atonement," which bearings the following meanings: "to appease," "to expiate," and "to pacify."[55] The term indicates that sin (or defilement) has been removed, which results in the averting of the potential wrath of God, and the sinner being at peace with God. There is, however, additional examination needed of this complicated ritual term. The context of this verb is extremely important, especially the grammatical objects and indirect objects.[56] The most common grammatical structure indicates that כִּפֶּר occurs to an object that is sanctified (e.g. altar, mercy seat, veil, etc.), and this is done on behalf of an individual or group. The question, of course, is how could one offer "atonement" for an object? The agent of כִּפֶּר is most often the blood of the animal victim, which will be a primary for understanding this verb.

---

[53] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 63.

[54] Emile Nicole, "Atonement in the Pentateuch," in *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Historical & Practical Perspectives: Essays in Honor of Roger Nicole*, eds. Charles E. Hill and Frank A. James III (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004) 43-44.

[55] Benjamin Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, 2nd ed. (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, 1850; reprint, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993) 390.

[56] Bernd Janowski, *Sühne als Heilsgeschehen* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1982); Baruch A. Levine, *In the Presence of the Lord: A Study of Cult and Some Cultic Terms in Ancient Israel* (Leiden: Brill, 1974) 123-27.

The definition "to cover" is common in Hebrew lexicons.[57] However, the definitions "to cover" and "to expiate" are quite different in meaning. The reason for these two meanings is the use of the root כפר, yet the stem applied to the root כפר must be studied separately so that each stem is regarded as a separate word until further study indicates that the meanings of each stem are directly related to each other, and only then should the two words be classified together. For instance, the ritual contexts use the *piel* stem, whereas usage in Genesis 6:14 is the *qal* stem (which is also the only occurrence of the *qal*). Both the ritual contexts and Genesis 6:14 use the root כפר, yet caution must be exercised with regard to the possibility that there are two separate roots being used. Indeed, it does seem that two Hebrew homonyms, at least, were spelled כפר, in which case the two separate roots should be designated as כפר I and כפר II, and not be classified together. Indeed, the root כפר is used in Akkadian for covering with tar,[58] similar to the root used in Genesis 6:14 for caulking the ark, and which the context indicates is an entirely different root (albeit an homonym) than the cultic texts that use the *piel* stem. Consequently, the definition "to cover" is from a different root and must be distinguished from the cultic term.

Sin was not merely covered in the Old Testament, in the sense that there was not complete atonement or forgiveness (such a notion is based upon the failure to distinguish the meanings between כפר I and כפר II).[59] Atonement was made for sin and the offerer was truly forgiven. The purpose for the burnt offering was clearly לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו. The manner in which the burnt offering made atonement was somewhat different than the sin offering and trespass offering. "Whereas the purification [sin]

---

[57] Ibid; see also, Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1906; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005) 497.

[58] Roy Gane, *Ritual Dynamic Structure* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2004) 176; William K. Gilders, *Blood Ritual in the Hebrew Bible: Meaning and Power* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2004) 28-29; Levine, *Presence of the Lord*, 63; John H. Walton, gen. ed., *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament*, 5 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009) 1:290.

[59] R. Laird Harris, "Leviticus," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 12 vols., gen. ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990) 2:538.

offering is concerned with cleansing the different parts of the tabernacle from the uncleanness caused by sin, the burnt offering makes atonement for sin in a more general sense." Therefore, the burnt offering did "not remove sin or change man's sinful nature, but it makes fellowship between sinful man and a holy God possible."[60]

Atonement was one function for the burnt offering, yet the sacrifice was also the means by which the offerer was cleansed from defilement and was reconciled with God. The sacrifice truly appeased God's wrath against defilement and sin, and was the means for purifying the offender. The fact that the entire victim was consumed in the burnt offering not only indicated that the holiness of God was satisfied and the offerer was, therefore, presently acceptable to God, but also, the sacrifice indicated that the offerer needed to be entirely consecrated to God for that acceptance (cf. 2 Chron 29:29-36). When the Levitical sacrifices were offered to God, the worshippers were not cognizant as to how the offerings foreshadowed the death of Christ; rather, they were responsible to trust God's plan for reconciliation and forgiveness. God graciously bestowed cleansing and purification upon the worshipper who submitted to His revealed legislation through faith, and God declared the offerer as righteous based upon His eternal decree to provide the ultimate sacrifice for sin in the Person and work of Jesus Christ.

Noting that various "features of the sacrificial use of the verb [כִּפֶּר] indicate that the intent of the rite could not be reduced to some kind of purification," Nicole demonstrated that כִּפֶּר is primarily concerned with substitution.[61] The meaning of כִּפֶּר is atonement (or what Nicole termed "compensation"). Accordingly, it is sin that makes the offering of sacrifice necessary (Lev 4—7), more frequently than defilement, and forgiveness is demonstrated to be the consequence of the כִּפֶּר rite, more frequently than such purification (Lev 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7; 19:22; Numb 15:25, 28). Moreover, human beneficiaries of the כִּפֶּר rite are never consistently mentioned as direct objects of the verb, which would be expected if the

[60] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 57.
[61] Nicole, "Atonement in the Pentateuch," 48.

purpose of the rite was for purification; rather, the action of the כִּפֶּר rite was performed for the sake of the offerer.

Therefore, as Wenham noted, the meaning "to atone" is evident in Numbers 25:13.[62] The כִּפֶּר action resulted in the death of the guilty Israelite in addition to the guilty Midianite woman. The outcome of the action was that God stopped the plague that He was inflicting upon the people of Israel for their sin in taking foreign wives and for their idolatry (Numb 25:1-9). The verb כִּפֶּר has reference to God turning away His wrath from the Israelites so that He did not destroy the people of Israel in His jealousy (25:11). Substitution is fairly evident in this context. "The burnt offering was the commonest of all the OT sacrifices. Its main function was to atone for man's sin by propitiating God's wrath."[63]

Leviticus 10 is another portion of Scripture that substantiates the doctrine of substitution. God's wrath is evident against Nadab and Abihu who offered "strange fire." The exact same phrase is found in Leviticus 9:24 and 10:2 ("fire came out from the presence of the LORD"). God communicated the reason for His wrath: "I will be honored," which, of course, is one of great themes of Leviticus. Certainly, when one contemplates the holiness of God, then His judgment against violation of it will not be offensive. Nevertheless, the meaning of כִּפֶּר is evident in 10:17, where it is stated that God gave the sin offering "to bear away the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD." The use of כִּפֶּר in verse 17 is with reference to bearing away the guilt of another, which is the notion embedded in the words, "to make atonement for them" (לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיהֶם). The *piel* stem of כפר is used with regard to "the *present* offered by Jacob to obtain the pardon of his brother Esau (Gen 32:21),"[64] which given the context can have the meaning "to appease" one who was offended. Certainly, כִּפֶּר can be understood to have a meaning that cannot "be reduced to some kind of purification."[65]

---

[62] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 60.

[63] Ibid. 63.

[64] Nicole, "Atonement in the Pentateuch," 50; cf. Nicole, "Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 150.

[65] Nicole, "Atonement in the Pentateuch," 48.

The Levitical sacrifices provide various analogies or models for describing the effects of sin and the means for a remedy. The image of the burnt offering is that of the guilty sinner, who deserves death for his/her sin, yet the animal victim dies as the sinner's substitute. God accepts the life of the animal as compensation for the guilty sinner. Nevertheless, purification and substitution are not mutually exclusive to the meaning of כִּפֶּר. The image of the sin offering, for example, is medicinal. Sin made the world so dirty in general (and the Tabernacle, in particular) that the presence of God could not abide there. The blood of the animal victim disinfects the Tabernacle so that God may dwell among His people. The image of the trespass offering is the commercial aspect of sin. Sin is a debt that humanity incurs against God, and compensation of the debt is by the offering of the animal victim.[66] Moreover, purification is an appropriate image with regard to forgiveness of sin that is the consequence of atonement. Psalm 51 indicates that forgiveness is the removal of sin, or ritual defilement that is the consequence of sin.[67] The Levitical sacrifices were truly atoning, yet purification was impossible without substitution (i.e. escape from divine displeasure toward sin through a compensation).

III.A.2.b.i.$_b$) The Laying of the Hand upon the Head. Another purpose for the burnt offering is evident in the laying of the hand upon the head of the animal victim. More literally, the offerer "pressed" (סָמַךְ) his hand on the head of the burnt offering, but not upon the birds (cf. Lev 3:2, 8, 13; 4:4, 15, 24; 16:21; Isa 59:16; Ezek 24:2; 30:6; Amos 5:19).[68] Laying of the hand was an act that confirmed more than merely ownership of the animal.[69] "He lays his hand upon the animal's head, indicating that it is his substitute as well as his own property, and that he is giving of himself

[66] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 111.

[67] Bruce K. Waltke, "Atonement in Psalm 51," in *Glory of the Atonement*, 51-60; see also, Lawrence O. Richards, *Bible Reader's Companion* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 1991) 357.

[68] Brown et al., *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 701; M. C. Sansom, "Laying On of Hands in the Old Testament," *The Expository Times* 94 (August 1983): 323-26; Wenham, *Leviticus*, 60.

[69] Contra Füglister, "Sühne durch Blut," 146; and, Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 171.

symbolically in the ritual."[70] The act depicted substitution, that is, the animal was to take the place of the guilty sinner, and be offered symbolically, as if the guilty had offered himself.[71]

According to Leviticus 4:24, 26, the action of laying the hand upon the animal victim was related to atonement and forgiveness, demonstrating substitution (or transference). Similarly, in Leviticus 16:21, on the Day of Atonement, the priest was to "lay both of his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions in regard to all their sins." Certainly, more than mere possession is depicted by the imposition of the hands. The imagery of the action was to represent the transference of sins to the scapegoat.

Leviticus 1:4 requires laying one hand upon the head of the burnt offering, whereas 16:21 requires laying both hands upon the head of the scapegoat. The two actions do not represent two different meanings,[72] so that the symbolism of the action in 1:4 cannot be confirmed by 16:21. The substitutionary (transferring) action can be attested in other passages, such as when hands were laid upon the Levites to appoint them in service of the firstborn (Numb 8:10; cf. 3:40-51).

---

[70] Harrison, *Leviticus*, 48. Wenham argued more adamantly: "This is so self-evident that it hardly seems necessary to express such a sentiment in a specific act" (*Leviticus*, 62).

[71] Paul S. Fiddes argued against the notion that propitiation can satisfy God's justice through the punishment of an animal victim as a substitute. He offered two points in defense of this proposition. *First*, the sacrifice is "conceived as fresh life used by God by wipe out the taint of sin." The problem with the first defense is that the outpouring of blood represented death not life. Fiddes, *secondly*, asserted that propitiation was not possible since "there could have been no idea of transferring sin from the sinner to the lamb, goat or bull which was to be an offering, since it would then no longer be in a state of purity" (*Past Event and Present Salvation*, 73). Angel Manuel Rodriquez, however, demonstrated from Leviticus 10:16-18 that the animal victim would still be considered holy and simultaneously would bear the sin of the offerer ("Substitution in the Hebrew Cultus and in Cultic-Related Texts" [unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Andrews University, 1979] 217-19).

[72] Contra Füglister, "Sühne durch Blut," 146; and, Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 171. With regard to the scapegoat, Milgrom objected that Azazel was not punished or sacrified for others. While it is true that Azazel is not an example of sacrificial substitution, Rodriquez argued correctly that the role of laying hands in the rite indicated that when the sacrifice was offered, it was substitution ("Substitution in the Hebrew Cultus," 219-20). Moreover, it is possible that the scapegoat was sent into the wilderness to die (see David Peterson, "Atonement in the Old Testament," in *Where Wrath and Mercy Meet*, ed. idem [Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001] 15; and, Garry Williams, "The Cross and the Punishment of Sin," in ibid. 79).

Similarly, when Moses laid hands upon Joshua, it was to confer authority upon him to act as his successor (Numb 27:18, 23; Deut 24:9).[73]

One last similarity can be located in Leviticus 24:14, wherein the blasphemer was required to have those who heard the blasphemy to "lay their hands on his head," thereby transferring their sin in even hearing the blasphemer speak, so that the blasphemer was stoned with the guilt of his own sin and those who heard him speak. There is no need to suppose that these texts have different meanings for all communicate the notion that sacrifice accomplishes atonement, and the animal victim was the substitute of the guilty sinner and truly served as substitute for the life of the guilty. Either the animal truly died as a substitute in the place of the offerer, or the victim truly received the death penalty because guilty was transferred by laying the hand on its head.[74]

Laying the "head on the head of the burnt offering," used in connection with כִּפֶּר in Leviticus 1:4, further confirms the doctrine of substitution. Certain aspects of the sacrifice can be identified with regard to the death of Christ. *First*, the offering typifies Christ's offering Himself—without blemish—to God, with delight to heed His will even in death. *Second*, the offering is atoning because Christ delighted in the will of God. *Third*, the offering was substitutionary because Christ offered Himself in the sinner's stead. *Fourth*, the offering was voluntary, as was Christ's sacrifice.[75]

---

[73] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 62. Note that "hand" in Numbers 27:18 and "hands" in verse 23 do not result in two different meanings. Deuteronomy 34:9 uses the plural.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Rodriquez ("Substitution in the Hebrew Cultus") investigated the ancient Near Eastern texts to present the essential ideas of substitution within them, and then the cultic legislation of Scripture (e.g. Gen 22:1-19; Exod 12:1—13:16; Isa 52:13—53:12), albeit primarily within the Book of Leviticus. He concluded that substitution could be identified in Sumerian, Assyro-Babylonian, Hittite, and Ugaritic literature. However, such substitution was related primarily to rituals that involved magic, which meant the purpose was to preserve the offerer's life. The offerer identified with the substitute primarily through the spoken word. Distinguished from the ancient Near Eastern practices, the reason for the sacrificial offerings of Scripture was a consequence of the sinner's guilt (or defilement), which made them culpable to divine punishment. Sin and defilement separated an individual from God, with death as the ultimate result of that state. Through the sacrificial rite, the guilt of the sinner could be removed. The sacrificial blood was a ritual act whereby the guilt of the sinner was transferred to the sanctuary. As the only Source of Life, the blood returned to God and was accepted by Him in place of the offerer. The laying of the hand(s)

III.A.2.b.i.c) The Soothing Aroma to the Lord. A third purpose for the burnt offering is evident in the expression of Leviticus 1:9, "a soothing aroma" to the Lord (נִיחֹוחַ־רֵיחַ). As an adjective נִיחֹחַ can mean "quieting, soothing, tranquilizing."[76] The translation "pleasing" (NASB) is the attributive of רֵיחַ with respect to the offerings. The aroma of the burnt offering is not pleasing in a sensual manner; rather, it is the notion of peace, quiet, and rest. The sacrifice was offered in faith; therefore, the anger of God is rested. Hartley noted, "The phrase ריח ניחח means that aroma arising from the sacrifice moved Yahweh to be favorably disposed to its presenters."[77] In contrast to the Levitical offerer, who appeased God's anger through the offering of a pleasing aroma, those who sacrificed without faith—as evident in their idolatrous practice (Ezek 6:13-14; 16:19; 20:28; cf. Deut 12:2)—provoked the anger of God.[78]

The verb יָנַח in Genesis 2:15—recording how God "put" Adam in the garden of Eden—is the Hiphil form of נוּחַ. With regard to God's "anger" (אַפִּי) spending itself in "[His] wrath" (חֲמָתִי) upon His people, the Hiphil perfect ("and I will satisfy") is used in Ezekiel 5:13 in a causal manner for this cessation (cf. 16:42; 21:22; 24:13). The verb נוּחַ is used in relation to the wrath of God as it achieves satisfaction in expending His judgment upon His own people for their disobedience. The root נוח appears in several of the Semitic languages, including Akkadian, Aramaic, and Ugaritic, with the meaning being "rest."[79] Although the Akkadian cognate includes

---

was for the purpose of transferring the guilt of the offerer to the sacrificial victim; therefore, a substitutionary relationship was established between the offerer and the victim. Rodriquez concluded that substitution was inherent in all the cultic sacrifices. In the sinner's place, God accepts the substitute to whom was transferred the sin and penalty of the offerer, and therefore, the substitute truly died in the place of the sinner. Biblical substitution is unique in the ancient Near East.

[76] Brown et al., *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 629.

[77] John E. Hartley, *Leviticus* (Dallas: Word, 1992) lxviii; cf. James M. Hamilton Jr., *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010) 107-11; Gordon J. Wenham, "The Theology of Old Testament Sacrifice," in *Sacrifice in the Bible*, eds. Roger T. Beckwith and Martin J. Selman (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1995) 84.

[78] John N. Oswalt, "נוח," in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 3:58.

[79] Ibid.

the meaning "appeasing," Milgrom favored the translation "a soothing odor."[80] The Septuagint translated רֵיחַ־נִיחֹחַ as εὐωδίας, which is then translated as "fragrant aroma" in Ephesians 5:2.

Genesis 8 can be seen to support the doctrine of propitiation. Verse 21 states, "The LORD smelled the soothing aroma[81] [אֶת־רֵיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ]; and the LORD said to Himself, 'I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done." When the Lord smelled the aroma of Noah's postdiluvian sacrifice, He determined to never again curse the ground and destroy His creatures as He did with the Flood. The רֵיחַ quieted His anger because it was truly a רֵיחַ of נִיחֹחַ sacrifice.

Of course, the olfactory reference is anthropomorphic,[82] yet the idea is unambiguous that Noah's postdiluvian sacrifice was an atoning, aromatic offering that assuaged God's wrath because He loved the sacrifice.[83] When the smoke ascended to heaven, the notion of the soothing aroma was transferred to God as an expression of the offering's effect.[84] The smoke would not have actually reached God

---

[80] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1991) 162-63, 252; cf. Walter Baumgartner and Johann Jakob Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 5 vols., trans. M. E. J. Richardson (Leiden: Brill, 1995) 2:696.

[81] Various translations read as follows: "the pleasing aroma" (ESV); "the sweet savor" (KJV); "the pleasing aroma" (NIV); "a soothing aroma" (NKJV); "the pleasing odor" (RSV).

[82] The notion that a "sweet savor" could appease the anger of the gods is found in the postdiluvian *Gilgamesh Epic* (11.159-61). Although the Bible may use similar language, God is spirit not human (as were many of the pagan deities, if they were not contrived); therefore, the language is anthropomorphic. Moreover, the simplicity of the biblical account ("The LORD smelled the soothing aroma") is quite a contrast to the description in the Babylonian account. The pagan gods did not merely smell "the savor . . . the sweet savor," they were famished from the week of the blood (since they had no sustenance during that time) and "gathered like flies over the sacrificer" (Alexander Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949] 87).

[83] The כִּי clause, which is the same as in Genesis 6:5, indicates the reason why it was appropriate to destroy humanity, and therefore, emphasizes the propitiatory power of sacrifice to assuage the wrath of God from the guilty sinner who is deserving of such.

[84] "The *olah* was a signal to God that His worshipers desired to bring their needs to His attention. . . . The term *olah* refers to the 'ascent' of the smoke and flames of the sacrifice itself. The sacrifice, in its transmuted form, reaches God" (Baruch A. Levine, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Leviticus* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989] 5-6, as quoted by Joseph H. Prouser, *Noble Soul: The Life and Legend of the Vilna Ger Tzedek Count Walenty Potocki* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2005) 44).

for it would have dissipated; therefore, the offering would be reduced to an aroma. The emphasis is upon the offerer's need to receive atonement. God did not merely accept the offerer and the offering; it was soothing to Him.[85]

III.A.2.b.i.$_d$) The Purpose for the Burnt Offering. The clearest indication for the purpose of the burnt offering is identifiable within the Levitical law. The burnt offering is "to make atonement on his behalf" (Lev 1:3). However, since there are no sins mentioned as the reason for the burnt offering, and the sin offering and the trespass offering atone for sin, then how can the burnt offering be understand to atone for the worshipper's sins? With regard to the purpose for the burnt offering, Keil believed it "expressed the intention of the offerer to consecrate his life and labour to the Lord, and his desire to obtain the expiation of the sin which still clung to all his works and desires, in order that they might become well-pleasing to God."[86] De Vaux described it as "the sacrifice in which the victim 'ascends' to the altar;" therefore, it is "above all an act of homage, expressed by a gift."[87]

The text does state explicitly that the burnt offering is "to make atonement," therefore, it must do so in a manner somewhat differently than the sin offering and trespass offering. As will be demonstrated, the purpose of the sin offering was for certain types of sins, which defiled various parts of the Tabernacle, and were necessary for the uncleanness caused by sin. The trespass offering, of course, was for reparation, in addition to being sacrifice for certain types of sins. The burnt offering made atonement for sin in general, as indicated by the term קָרְבָּנוֹ. "Since

[85] Milgrom referenced several Hittite sources that were also said to be "clearly propitiatory and expiatory (for 'wrath,' 'guilt,' 'offense,' 'sin')" (*Leviticus 1-16*, 175).

[86] Carl Freidrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 10 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1866-91; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996) 1:511.

[87] Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament Sacrifice* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1964) 27, 37. Similarly, the burnt offering signified "complete surrender to God, [which] was therefore associated with the sin offering in the process of atonement" (Anson F. Rainey, "Sacrifice and Offerings," in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 5 vols., gen. ed. Merrill C. Tenney [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975-76] 5:205-06); or, its "essential role" appears "to have been that of *attraction* . . . offered up with the objective of evoking an initial response from" God (Levine, *Presence of the Lord*, 22).

there is not reference to a specific sin, it is assumed that expiation is made for the general sinful disposition of the presenter."[88]

The burnt offering, however, was for God's acceptance of the worshipper. The acceptance was not general, as in the NIV: "that it will be acceptable." The phrase in verse 3, לִרְצֹנוֹ, would certainly have been placed earlier in the sentence, if it were referring to the offering, as in verse 4. The offering was for the worshipper to be accepted (cf. Lev 19:5; 22:19, 29; 23:11). The offering was essential because sinful humanity could not worship before the presence of God within the Tabernacle without the sacrifice to make atonement for one's sins. Therefore, the burnt offering was a continual reminder of humanity's sinfulness, and the unworthiness of humanity to approach the presence of God to worship Him, yet the offering also testified to the grace and mercy of God, as evident in the legislation for how the sinner could receive forgiveness and then worship God.

The purpose of the burnt offering was not to change the sinner's fallen disposition or to remove sin; rather, its atoning value was as provision for fellowship between the holy God and sinful humanity. The offering truly resulted in the propitiation of God's wrath, which is in opposition to sin. The truth that the burnt offering truly appeased God's anger is evident in many other biblical texts. Numbers 15:24 refers to a sin "done unintentionally" and the need "for a burnt offering, as a soothing aroma to the LORD," in addition to other sacrifices. David took an unwarranted census so "the anger of the LORD burned against Israel," and God "sent a pestilence upon Israel" so that many of the people died (2 Sam 24:1, 15). The plague did not cease until David built "an altar to the LORD and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings" (24:25). The "wrath of the LORD was against Judah and Jerusalem" because King Ahaz neglected the "dwelling place of the LORD" by not burning incense or offering burnt offerings (2 Chron 28:1—29:11). Concerned that any of his seven sons may have sinned, Job rose early in the morning and offered burnt offerings for each of them (Job 1:5). The folly of Job's friends elicited God's displeasure, yet Job was able to offer a burnt offering for them to appease the

[88] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 19. "Humans continually needed to be cleansed from the impurity of sin in order to worship in Yahweh's presence" (ibid.).

kindling of God's wrath against them (42:7-8). The few texts that have been cited are sufficient to demonstrate that the purpose of the burnt offering was to propitiate "God's displeasure" against the sinfulness of humanity, and to appease His wrath and anger against sin. For this reason, a burnt offering was necessary every morning and every evening to atone for the sins of the people. The daily offering was a perpetual reminder that the sin of the people was permanent, and that there was never ultimate satisfaction of God's wrath.[89]

III.A.2.b.ii. The Meal Offering

The meal offering (קָרְבַּן מִנְחָה) was a voluntary act of worship, and accompanied the burnt offering and the peace offering. The meal offering is one of three "soothing aroma" sacrifices (1:9, 13, 17; 2:2, 9; 12; 3:5, 16). The offering was unlike the burnt offering and the peace offering because an animal was not sacrificed; rather, it was composed entirely of grain (or a similar commodity), and it was to be evenly textured with no quality in excess or deficiency. The sacrifice was also to be without either honey or leaven, which symbolized corruption and sin. The sacrifice depicts the sinlessness of Christ, and serves as a reminder that Christ's character was without corruption and sin (cf. 2 Cor 5:21; 1 John 3:5).

The church is reminded that as the Old Testament believer offered the grain to God, so did the Lord Jesus offer Himself to God as the Bread of Life (John 6:32-35). Consequently, the "memorial" of the meal offering provides the theological context for the Lord's Supper (communion) because the bread represents Christ sacrificial flesh, which is the symbol for communion with God. The body of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was sacrificed for the sins of the world, is compared to the bread that is used for the Lord's Supper (Matt 26:26; 1 Cor 11:23-25). As a translation for מִנְחָה, θυσία is the most common term for sacrifice in the Septuagint.

The worshipper would bring an uncooked (Lev 2:1-3) or cooked (2:4-10) meal offering with only the finest of ingredients. The priests burned only a portion

[89] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 54-58.

on the altar as a memorial. The larger portion of the offering belonged to the priests as "a thing most holy." The priests served as God's representatives, which is why they could eat the meal offering, and by eating the offering, they would demonstrate God's acceptance of the offering. Additionally, the priests took upon themselves the sins of the offerer when they consumed the larger portion of the meal offering. The meal offering truly appeased God when it was burnt upon the altar for it is said to be "a soothing aroma" (2:2, 9, 12), which is the meaning of this expression, as already demonstrated. The offering was an atoning in some sense because it could be brought as a sin offering by those of insufficient means (5:11-13; cf. Lev 14:20).

The meal offering was not a burnt offering for the impoverished. Milgrom asserted that the meal offering was originally a burnt offering in this manner. Therefore, originally the offering would have been consumed entirely, and was later restricted by the priestly legislation.[90] The different manner in which this sacrifice was offered makes the rabbinic suggestion unlikely. When the meal offering was given at the same time as the burnt offering, the former was always given subsequent to the latter (Numb 28:4-5, 9, 15; Josh 22:23, 29; 1 Kgs 8:64). Consequently, the placement of Leviticus 2 subsequent to the legislation of Leviticus 1 is logical. However, the meal offering was not always offered in accompaniment with the burnt offering. For example, the meal offering could be given when the offering of firstfruits was brought to the Tabernacle (Lev 2:14; Deut 26).

The general cultic use of מִנְחָה is "offering." There are usages of מִנְחָה in noncultic texts where the word could mean "tribute," as when money is paid by a vassal to a suzerain. Therefore, the meal offering would be a kind of tribute paid from the faithful vassal to his divine suzerain (cf. Judg 3:15, 17-18; 2 Sam 8:6; 1 Kgs 4:21; 10:25; 2 Kgs 17:3; etc.). The meaning of "tribute" should be understood as a more specialized meaning because only in certain contexts does מִנְחָה refer to a tribute from a vassal to a suzerain.

[90] Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 25.

The Hebrew term also means "gift" or "present," as when Jacob gave מִנְחָה to Esau (Gen 32:19, 22), and later to Joseph (Gen 43:11, 15, 25-26; cf. 2 Kgs 8:7-9).[91] The more "natural development" of מִנְחָה is "gift" because "even when it refers to a present from man to man, there is always an implied desire to propitiate the person to whom the gift is offered," as in the two examples of Jacob. "More frequently, however, it denotes an offering presented to Jehovah for the purpose of winning his favor."[92] Averbeck noted that the primary meaning of מִנְחָה "appears to be gift."[93] Therefore, "every sacrifice is a gift,"[94] either "to God or to people."[95]

III.A.2.b.iii. The Peace Offering

The peace offering was unique because the fat and inner parts were burnt upon the altar, the right shoulder and the right thigh were given to the priest, and the worshippers in the courtyard ate the remaining meat communally. The peace offering was entirely voluntary as an expression of thanksgiving to God (Lev 7:12-13; Ps 56:12; 107:22). Another reason for the offering was to fulfill a vow in which a worshipper promised a sacrifice to God.[96] The third reason for the peace offering was as a voluntary expression of thanksgiving and devotion to the Lord (Lev 7:16; 22:18, 21).

---

[91] Michael David Coogan, *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) 139; William R. Scott, "Cereal Offering," in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. David Noel Freedman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 229; Wenham, *Leviticus*, 69.

[92] P. A. Nordell, "Old Testament Word-Studies: 7. Sacrifice and Worship," *The Old Testament Student* 8 (March 1889): 257.

[93] Richard E. Averbeck, "מִנְחָה," in *Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 2:980.

[94] Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1997) 452.

[95] Averbeck, "מִנְחָה," 2:980.

[96] Throughout the Psalms, a vow of praise is subsequent to a petition. The vows anticipated what the worshipper would speak in the Tabernacle when God answered the prayer. Claus Westermann, *The Praise of God in the Psalms*, trans. Keith R. Crim (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1965) 52-81.

The sacrifice depicted both communion and fellowship that resulted from the offering, as evident in the communal meal. The sacrifice typified the communion and peace that results from the death of Christ Jesus (Col 1:20). Therefore, this offering depicts the consequences of the first two offerings. The Lord's sacrificial death (the burnt offering) and sinless life (the meal offering) result in communion and peace with God (the peace offering). The peace offering depicts the entire work of Christ with regard to the believer's peace. The Lord Jesus proclaimed peace (Eph 2:17) and made peace (Col 1:20) because He is the believer's peace (Eph 2:14).

There are several characteristics of the peace offering that demonstrate its atoning purpose. The first characteristic is the laying of a hand upon the head of the offering (Lev 3:2, 8, 13). The second characteristic is the sprinkling of blood "around on the altar" (3:2, 8, 13). The final characteristic is the pleasure of the Lord in response to the offering (3:5, 16). Furthermore, in Ezekiel 45:13-17, the prophet received instruction with regard to the appropriate offerings in the Temple for the purpose of God's people maintaining their relationship with Him. A certain portion of sacrificial materials is to be donated by the people for a special gift offering. The materials would be donated for a meal offering, burnt offering, and peace offering "to make atonement" for the people.

The זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים was the apex of Old Testament worship. The זֶבַח is "the common and most ancient sacrifice, whose essential rite was eating" the meat of the offering "at a feast."[97] The plural noun שְׁלָמִים is related to שֶׁלֶם, and corresponds with the normal meaning of שָׁלֵם, which is characteristic of salvation in the most complete expression. Keil termed it "more correctly a saving-offering."[98] As indicated by the name, the purpose of the "peace offering" (or "fellowship offering") was the realization of peace with God by the offerer of the sacrifice, and the worshipper was expressing the celebration of this peace. The offering celebrates and expresses peace with God.

[97] Brown et al., *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 257.
[98] Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 1:520.

Milgrom argued that שְׁלָמִים should be translated "well-being offering," that is, "the sacrifice repays God for his blessings."[99] The translation "peace offering" is certainly more consistent with the cognates שֶׁלֶם and שָׁלֵם, and therefore, the purpose is best understood with an atoning significance. Milgrom also affirmed the primary function of the "well-being offering" as providing "meat for the table. . . . For the commoner, the occasion had to be a celebration—-and because the meat was probably too much for the nuclear family, it had to be a household or even a clan celebration—hence the joyous character of the sacrifice. That this sacrifice implied a mystic union with the deity must be categorically rejected."[100] Eating the communal meal before the presence of the Lord signified more than "meat for the table;" the worshippers were celebrating their relationship with the Lord, which certainly represented a spiritual relationship. In agreement, the Septuagint reads simply, θυσία σωτηρίου.

There are three reasons to understand זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים with an atoning significance. *First*, the worshippers ate the communal meal within the presence of the Lord, which indicates the reality of a peaceful relationship. The communal meal was certainly quite significant to the offerer. Giving a portion of the meat to the offerer and his family perhaps "symbolized the way God gave back to the worshipper his life to go on enjoying."[101] Nevertheless, the eating of the meal was certainly more than symbolic because it was in the presence of the Lord, in the courtyard of the Tabernacle.

Solely those worshippers in the courtyard consumed the communal meal, as opposed to the notion that God would eat or need the offering upon the altar. For instance, God stated, "'If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is Mine, and all it contains. 'Shall I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of male goats? 'Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving and pay your vows to the Most High." Additionally, from the sermon on Mars Hill, it is taught that God is not "served by human hands, as though He needed anything" (Acts 17:25). Although the sacrificial

[99] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 220.
[100] Ibid. 221.
[101] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 81.

altar is called "the table of the LORD" (Mal 1:7, 12), there was never a priest or anyone else who sat to eat at "the table."

Deuteronomy 27:7 refers to peace offerings eaten in the presence of the Lord, but never did a priest or anyone eat with God. Nevertheless, the joyful celebration "before the LORD your God" included the sprinkling of blood, which served as a reminder that humanity is sinful and is always in need of atonement for sin. The fat was offered upon the altar and the blood was sprinkled along the altar, and the worshippers were expressly forbidden to eat either of them, yet there was not any meat that was burnt upon the altar, which would suggest that the portions of the sacrifice that were offered to God were exclusively His, and therefore, the portions allotted to the worshippers was clearly demarcated. Consequently, neither the priest nor the worshippers eat with God in any of the offerings of sacrifice.

The manner in which the fat and the inner parts were burned was, of course, different than the burnt offering wherein the entire animal was burnt upon the altar. Certainly, there must be an important reason for burning parts of the animal in one offering, and burning the entire animal in the other. Identifying the reason for the difference can be challenging. For instance, as in the sacrifice of the peace offering, the fat and the inner parts of the animal were also burned for the sin offering (Lev 4:8-10). The Old Testament explicitly forbids eating either the blood or fat of an animal (Lev 7:22-27). Leviticus 17:11 explains why blood is forbidden: "the life of the flesh is in the blood . . . to make atonement for your souls." However, there is not an unequivocal clarification why fat is prohibited.

The term חֵלֶב refers to that which covers the entrails and organs; it represented the choicest part of the animal, and therefore, it belonged to God (3:16). The fat belonged to God and must be offered in sacrifice to Him. Some assumptions as for the meaning of חֵלֶב include regarding the fat as "a life-giving part"[102] or as the strength of an animal.[103] The term חֵלֶב is certainly synonymous with "the best" (cf. Gen 45:18; Deut 32:14; Numb 18:12; 2 Sam 1:22; Ps 81:16). Therefore, offering the

[102] De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 418.

[103] Hartley, *Leviticus*, 41; Jan Heller, "Die Symbolik des Fettes im AT," *Vetus Testamentum* 20 (1970): 106-08.

fat to God was giving the best of the animal, and since the animal "was thought to represent the man, the worshipper showed he was giving God the best part of his life."[104]

The *second* reason for understanding זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים with an atoning significance is the ratification of the Mosaic covenant by it (Exod 24:5; Deut 27:7; 1 Kgs 8:63). As already stated, God did not eat with either the priest or the worshipper in the offering of sacrifice. Nevertheless, there is an evident time of communion between those who made a covenant with each other, such as that between Jacob and Laban at Mizpah (Gen 32:43-55). The making of the covenant with each other culminated in eating a meal together as a sign of peace and time of communion (32:54). Similarly, in Exodus 24, subsequent to God's legislation of the Mosaic covenant and Israel promising to obey it (vv. 3, 7), there was a sacrifice to ratify the covenant.[105] Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel climbed Mount Sinai, "and they saw the God of Israel . . . yet He did not stretch out His hand against the nobles of the sons of Israel ; and they saw God, and they ate and drank" (24:11).

Food was given to the gods in pagan sacrificial rituals. Essentially, within the daily cult of the pagan temples, food was a provision to the gods. For example, a Babylonian "dialogue of pessimism" reads, "Do not offer, my lord, do not offer it. You may teach a god to trot after you like a dog when he requires of you, saying, 'Celebrate my ritual' or 'do not inquire by requesting an oracle,' or anything else."[106] At a temple of Erech in southern Babylonia, one of four meals provided for the gods

---

[104] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 80.

[105] "These rituals are meant to establish or renew a certain union and communion between God and Israel" (Rekha A. Chennattu, *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006] 57). The peace offering is not merely a "communion sacrifice" because the communion is only one aspect of the significance of the sacrificial ritual, nor does the name "communion sacrifice" express the fullness of the Hebrew meaning of זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים. The importance of the communal meal is to indicate the relationship with God based upon atonement. The food is for the people—not God—as it "gives life and strengthens the person" (ibid. 58).

[106] James B. Pritchard, *Archaeology and the Old Testament* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958) 243; cf. David P. Wright, *Ritual in Narrative: The Dynamics of Feasting, Mourning, and Retaliation Rites in the Ugaritic Tale of Aqhat* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000) 21.

was the daily breakfast, which "was composed of large quantities of beer, wine, milk, mutton and beef."[107] In the Ugaritic tale of Aqhat, there is a similar account.

> The *offerings*, [the gods], ...
> The gods eat the *offerings*
> The deities drink the [offerings].[108]

In Hesiod's *Theogony* (535-616), one finds the well-known myth of Prometheus. According to this legend, Prometheus deceived Zeus so that he could receive the better portion of the sacrificial victim as men's share, and Zeus would receive the long bones covered with fat. In response, Zeus removed fire from humanity to make it impossible to consume the better portion. The myth is said to explain the various divisions of the sacrificial portions between humans and the gods.[109] In Book I of Homer's *Iliad*, an inquiry was made by Achilles to determine why Phoebus Apollo was angry with the Achaeans. The suspected reason was offense from a failed ritual or vow. Therefore, prayer was made to the god on the basis of "a savoury offering of sheep or of full-grown goats."[110] In the Roman word, a *lectisternium* was held, which was "a feast of the gods," in which the images of the deities were placed upon coaches (*pulvinaria*) and food of all kinds was placed before them.[111]

The biblical account uses anthropomorphic language to describe the sacrificial ritual. "The sacrifices were carefully prepared as though they were food as in paganism, including the addition of salt, but there is never the slightest suggestion of God's eating them."[112] Throughout the Bible, the Israelite sacrifice is distinct from the pagan sacrifices because God "does not consume the food. In

---

[107] G. Ernest Wright, *The Old Testament Against its Environment* (London: SCM Press, 1950) 103.

[108] Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Literature* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1949) 86.

[109] Yves Bonnefoy, comp. ed., *Greek and Egyptian Mythologies*, trans. Wendy Doniger (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992) 122-24; Uma Marina Vesci, *Heat and Sacrifice in the Vedas*, 2nd rev. ed. (1985; reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1992) 47.

[110] Homer, *The Iliad*, 24.

[111] D. Brendan Hagle and Stanley M. Burstein, *The Ancient World: Readings in Social and Cultural History*, 4th ed. (New York: Prentice Hall, 2010) 172.

[112] Wright, *Old Testament*, 104.

contrast to the primitive gods of its neighbors who regularly eat and are clothed, Israel's God was radically different."[113] Mesopotamian literature may have diverted from anthropomorphic descriptions; however, its use in Scripture is frequent.[114] For instance, since the Tabernacle is described as the dwelling place of God, it only makes sense that the language of drink, food, and meals would describe the offerings brought to God. The most crucial matter to note is that the difference between the biblical and extrabiblical descriptions, with regard to the sacrificial ritual, is the essence of the God/god being worshipped, and thus language may be similar between the biblical text and ancient Near Eastern texts.

God did not eat the meal with those present upon Mount Sinai, yet the Israelite practice to have a communal meal subsequent to the making of a covenant was certainly a modification when the meal was consumed before the presence of God, whose transcendence is evident in verse 10, which reads, "and they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself." Therefore, the meal is consumed before the presence of the Lord, and God does eat the meal with the participants in the covenant ceremony.

The reality that the Israelite practice was modified indicates that one significant aspect of the peace offering was the celebration and expression of communion with God. The order of the offerings is significant (first, the burnt offering, then, the meal offering) so that when the sacrifice of the peace offering was made it was the culmination of the Israelite worship. The peace offering was eaten within the presence of the Lord, "yet He did not stretch out His hand" against the worshippers. The *third* reason for understanding זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים with an atoning significance is the order of the sacrifices. The peace offering was subsequent to the burnt offering—literally offered on top of the burnt offering (cf. 1 Sam 13:9; 1 Kgs 9:25)—which symbolically emphasized that peace with God is based upon atonement.

---

[113] Gary A. Anderson, *Sacrifices and Offerings in Ancient Israel: Studies in Their Social and Political Importance* (Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1987) 15.

[114] Ibid. 16-19; cf. Jeffrey H. Tigay, *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982; reprint, Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2002).

There are several aspects of the peace offering that find correspondence in the New Testament, and the reason is that the sacrifices were part of the development from shadow to fulfillment. Generally, both the Old Testament and the New Testament teach that peace with God is the essence of a covenant relationship; therefore, both reveal that the recipients of God's benefits and provisions are to share His blessings with other believers, and both emphasize the celebration inherent in a communal meal. Nevertheless, the peace offering was unique because the meat that the worshippers ate came from the sacrifice. By giving a portion of the sacrifice to the worshippers, God used the sacrificial meal as His tangible pledge for the fulfillment of promised blessings. The New Testament believer does not eat meat as a physical pledge of God's goodness; rather, the church has the elements of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper.

III.A.2.b.iv. The Sin Offering

The purpose for the sin offering was to remove the effects of sin, namely defilement and uncleanness. The reason for the provision of this offering was for the people of God to be able to enter His presence. God was not threatened by the impurity of sin; rather, it was fallen humanity who needed atonement for their sin.[115] If there was not atonement for sin, the holiness of God may be expressed in wrath. God's dwelling place was the Tabernacle; therefore, it needed to be pure from sin for His presence to remain with His people, and for them to continue experiencing His mercy as opposed to the expression of His wrath. God's presence among His people was truly a blessing, yet as a consequence of humanity's sinfulness, His presence could also arouse His wrath. The provision was essential given the conditions of life

[115] "One become impure as the result of an offense against the deity introduced a kind of demonic contagion into the community. The more horrendous the offense, the greater the threat to the purity of the sanctuary and the surrounding community by the presence of the offender, who was a carrier of iniquity" (Levine, *Presence of the Lord*, 75). According to Levine, any threat to the purity of the Tabernacle could result in God attacking through the employment of demons because sin is "a kind of demonic contagion" that can be introduced into the Tabernacle by humanity.

in a sinful world. Defilement and sinfulness must be remedied if the people of God are to remain in fellowship with Him.

The חַטָּאָה was given for certain types of sins, such as unintentional sin (Lev 4:1-2), priestly sin (4:3-12), congregational sin (4:13-21), leadership sin (4:22-26), or individual sin (4:27-35). The legislation for the sin offering provides an obvious progression of responsibility from the individual to the leadership. The sins of a leader were more serious and required a more costly sacrifice than those of the average person. God did make provision for all sin—known and unknown—and for anyone who would bring the sin offering.[116] The sin offering serves the didactic function of illustrating the reality that sin results in guilt, even if unintentional (4:1-2). All sin results in defilement because it is against the honor of God in some manner, and it, therefore, hinders one's relationship with Him.

The legislation in 5:1-13 continues the specifications with regard to the sin offering. If an individual touched anything unclean or was irresponsible in making an oath, "then he will bear his guilt," even though unaware of such offense (5:1-4). When the individual became aware of the offense, the requirement was to confess the sin and bring a sin offering for atonement (5:5-13).

The non-sweet savor offerings were to be sacrifices for sin and typify the Lord as sin-bearer. The sin offering was necessary for certain types of sins, which are listed at the beginning of Leviticus 5. The sacrifice typified Christ as sin-bearer (cf. 1 Pet 3:18). If an individual sinned, he/she must bring an offering to the Lord for

---

[116] Even childbearing (12:6, 8) or consecration of the priests (Exod 29:10-14, 36) was regarded as needing חַטָּאָה; therefore, Milgrom concluded that "purification offering" would be a more appropriate rendering (*Leviticus 1-16*, 232), especially with consideration for the verb חָטָא in the Piel form, which would have the meaning "to cleanse." The fact that the verb חָטָא ("miss [a goal or way], go wrong, sin") is an archery term (among other nuances; cf. Brown et al., *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 306-07) renders the discussion with regard to those who had not sinned as insignificant. Certainly, there is an understanding of "purification offering," yet the verb חָטָא is used in the Piel to indicate cleansing for the one who sinned against God, whether they missed the divine goal either morally or ritually. Therefore, childbirth is ritual impurity, hence it is חָטָא. Priests needed an חַטָּאָה when consecrated because their past sins defiled the Tabernacle wherein they were standing. Similarly, the Nazirite would need an חַטָּאָה if he was defiled during the time of his vow (cf. Numb 6:6-11). The reason why the priest (and the Nazirite) needed an חַטָּאָה was because the office (or vow) was insufficient as atonement for sin.

such sin. Christ Jesus did not commit any sin, neither was any deceit found in Him (Isa 53:9; 1 Pet 2:22); therefore, His rendering Himself as a sin offering was both efficacious and substitutionary (cf. 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 2:9-10, 14-18). Moreover, the sin offering communicates the biblical doctrine of progressive sanctification because those offering the sacrifice had a relationship with God, and desired to maintain that fellowship and to continue to enjoy His presence.

The legislation of the sin offering makes provision for the sinner to bring a substitutionary sacrifice. The blood ritual is the primary characteristic of the offering, which is evident in the various sprinkling of the blood depending upon who sinned. For the average person, the blood was daubed "on the horns of the altar of burnt offering" and the remainder of the blood was outpoured "at the base of the altar of burnt offering" (Lev 4:25). Individual sin did not necessitate the blood to be sprinkled within the Holy Place; rather, only the altar within the courtyard was purified.

For priestly sin or for congregational sin, blood was sprinkled within the Holy Place, and in various locations. Some blood was sprinkled "seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil of the sanctuary" (4:6, 17). More blood was daubed "on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense which is before the LORD in the tent of meeting; and all the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering which is at the doorway of the tent of meeting" (4:7, 18). If a bull was offered on the Day of Atonement, the blood was sprinkled upon the propitiatory of the Ark and also in front of it.[117] Not only was the blood sprinkled in a manner consistent with the severity of the impurity, but also it was sprinkled in a manner consistent with the offerer's degree of access within the Tabernacle. For instance, the blood was sprinkled within the Holy Place for priestly sin or congregational sin; on the Day of Atonement, the blood was sprinkled within the Holy of Holies for the

[117] Propitiatory seems to be a better name than the more common Mercy Seat since the designation is derived from the blood of propitiation that was sprinkled upon the Ark in the Holy of Holies (Lev 16:14), in addition to" the horns of the altar on all sides" and seven times upon the altar itself (16:18-19). For instance, as evident in Romans 3:25, the Lord displayed Christ publicly as "a propitiation in His blood through faith." Ἱλαστήριον is identical to that used in Hebrews 9:5. Propitiatory is less ambiguous because Christ is the antitypical Mercy Seat by virtue of the propitiation that He offered to God.

high priest; and, finally for leadership sin or individual sin, the blood remained in the courtyard of the Tabernacle.

The location for the sprinkling of the blood would have also been significant, especially with regard to the horns of the altar of fragrant incense. The altar of burnt offering was the place where the sacrifices were burned, and to daub blood upon the horns of that altar indicated the effectiveness of the sacrifice. The altar of incense was situated in the middle space near to and in front of the inner veil (Exod 30:1-6; 37:25-28; 40:5; Lev 16:18), and was regarded as belonging to the Holy of Holies (1 Kgs 6:22; Heb 9:4) because it was considered most holy as the place of intercessory prayer (Ps 141:2; Rev 8:3-5). Neither burnt offerings nor meal offerings were to be offered upon the altar of incense, nor were drink offerings to be outpoured. The altar was used exclusively to burn incense upon morning and evening. The incense was burnt upon pieces of burning coal from the altar of burnt offering, which provided a fragrant aroma to the Lord, as prayers were made to God. Therefore, when the blood of the sin offering was sprinkled upon the horns of the altar of incense, it would have symbolized the intercessory efficacy of the daubed blood. Prayer is the cry of humanity to God (cf. Exod 14:15-20), yet God receives it only because the blood cries on behalf of the sinner, and testifies that blood was shed for atonement and forgiveness of sin.

The priest made atonement for the guilty by performing the sacrificial ritual. Moreover, when the sacrifice was offered the priest serving at the altar was required to eat part of the meat "in a holy place, in the court of the tent of meeting" (Lev 6:25-30). The eating symbolized that the priest took upon himself "the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD" (10:17).

The purpose of the sin offering was truly for atonement in regard to sin and forgiveness of sin (4:26, 31, 35). The offering was a tangible demonstration of faith in God's desire to forgive and to restore the guilty sinner who is truly repentant. Of course, the ritual (of its own merits) did not alone accomplish forgiveness of sin for that came with the realization of sin and true repentance from sin (cf. 2 Sam

12:13).[118] The sin offering was necessary to "be once again restored to grace,"[119] and also to purify the Tabernacle, which was essential for the possibility of such restoration. Therefore, the sin offering also purified the locations within the Tabernacle where the offerer had access, which was necessary because the sanctuary of God was defiled by the uncleanness of the Israelite's sins, thus cleansing and purification was essential as a consequence of their sin (Lev 15:31; 16:19). The purpose of the sin offering is to cleanse the various locations of the Tabernacle from the defilement caused by sin.[120]

The sin offering was offered less frequently than the burnt offering, and for it even less valuable animals were sacrificed. The defilement of the Tabernacle by human sin demonstrates the enduring aftereffects of one's action. Specifically, sins defile the location where they have occurred. For example, the "rite of elimination" described in Deuteronomy 21:3-9 was to remove defilement upon an area caused by bloodshed.[121] Leviticus 18:24-30 refers to the defilement of the land by the Canaanites; therefore, the land "spewed out its inhabitants." The sin offering remedied the defilement that sin caused. If sin defiled the land, it would pollute God's sanctuary in particular, and such defilement by the sins of His people was an expression of the deprivation of honor toward Him. Sin of any kind is against God and resulted in His anger because it deprived Him of the honor that He deserved; therefore, a barrier existed between the guilty sinner and God. The need to remove

---

[118] Milgrom (*Leviticus 1-16*, 232) noted that the knowledge of and repentance from sin is not indicated on behalf of the high priest but is implied. "Because the high priest performs most his rituals in the privacy of the tent-shrine, only he can inform himself of his error. And once discovered, it is inconceivable that he would not feel remorse."

[119] Commenting upon the significance of the offering, he also noted that the worshipper brings the offering "because he knows that his wrong . . . has polluted the altar and, hence, has alienated him from God. By his sacrifice he hopes to repair the broken relationship" (ibid. 245).

[120] Though somewhat different from the sin offering and the trespass offering, the burnt offering makes atonement for sin in a more general manner. "Das Brandopfer hat nur insofern eine versöhnende Kraft, als es Gott geneigt und gnädig macht, mithin ihn auch bestimmt, die sittlichen Mängel, die dem Menschen überhaupt anhaften, wegen der durch das Opfer bewiesenen Frömmigkeit zu übersehen" (August Dillmann, *Die Bücher Exodus und Leviticus* [Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1880] 392).

[121] David P. Wright, "Deuteronomy 21:1-9 as a Rite of Elimination," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 49 (July 1987): 387-403.

the defilement of the Tabernacle was certainly didactic to God's people so they would understand that sin deprived God of the honor due Him, and would endanger the guilty.[122]

III.A.2.b.v. The Trespass Offering

Leviticus 5:14—6:7 addresses violations that not only make one אָשַׁם but also require an offering for such אָשָׁם. One word describes the offense and the remedy. Milgrom called this phenomenon the "consequential" use of the word, and "that the biblical terms for good and bad behavior also connote their respective reward and punishment."[123] The offering is regarded as both חָטָא and אָשָׁם in verse 6 because the sin offering demands reparation.

The trespass offering was necessary not only for certain types of sins, but also so that restitution could be made. The offerer had to "make restitution for it [a sin] in full and add to it one-fifth more" (Lev 6:5). The increased value in the offering was given to the priest, which is understandable since the priest would have been wronged by the failure to bring the appropriate sacrifice to the Tabernacle. The sacrifice was offered whenever reparation could be made for אָשָׁם, and primarily because someone sinned either unfaithfully or unintentionally against the Lord's sacred property (5:14-19): the *sancta* trespass. The sacrifice was also necessary if one sinned and acted unfaithfully against the Lord by deceiving a neighbor and swearing falsely (6:1-7): the oath violation. The oath was "against the LORD" because it was sworn in His name, and therefore, the action not only violated the holy name of God but also His sacred property.

The trespass offering was the particular sacrifice "if any one sins and commits a breach of faith" (נֶפֶשׁ כִּי תֶחֱטָא וּמָעֲלָה מַעַל). The word describing the חָטָא is מָעַל, which is a legal term for remedying sin by means of the trespass

[122] Wenham, *Leviticus*, 89, 95-96.

[123] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 12, 339. Moreover, "the wrongdoing creates guilt and fear of punishment, and, conversely, suffering reinforces the presence of guilt feelings because it is interpreted as punishment for sin" (ibid. 343).

offering. The term describes "a sin against God, in contrast to a sin against humanity."[124] Consequently, מָעַל "means trespassing upon the divine realm either by poaching on his sancta or breaking his covenant oath; it is a lethal sin which can destroy both the offender and his community."[125] The antonym of מָעַל is apparent in the following parallelism: "because you broke faith [מְעַלְתֶּם]. . . because you did not revere as holy [קִדַּשְׁתֶּם] (Deut 32:51). Therefore, the primary meaning of מָעַל is sacrilege.

Both the *sancta* trespass and the oath violation necessitate reparation because both were sacrilege and the guilty desired "divine punishment."[126] As confirmed by Scripture and the ancient Near East, divine punishment would consume the guilty person and the entire household of the offender. "Both trespasses provoke God's consuming wrath on the family and community of the sinner."[127] Therefore, מָעַל does not refer to insignificant actions; rather, the term has reference to violations of the sacred, which included oath taking.

The sacrificial ritual for the sin of מָעַל is essentially the same as that of the sin offering (Lev 7:7). Such sacrilege against the Lord would not be forgiven without complete restitution and then by means of a substitutionary sacrifice. The legislation emphasized that a price was involved in the payment for sin, and typified Christ paying the price of sin (1 Pet 1:18-19). Therefore, the two non-sweet offerings have a twofold emphasis with regard to sin. Each offering was a prophetic type of some aspect of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ (although the circumstances may not correspond exactly).[128]

---

[124] Mark J. Boda, Daniel K. Falk, and Rodney A. Werline, eds., *Seeking the Favor of God, Volume 1: The Origins of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006) 29; cf. Jacob Milgrom, *Studies in Cultic Theology and Terminology* (Leiden: Brill, 1983) 53.

[125] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 349; idem, *Cult and Conscience: The* Asham *and the Priestly Doctrine of Repentance* (Leiden: Brill, 1976) 21.

[126] Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16*, 349. "The Literature of the ancient Near East is replete with examples of divine punishment in the wake of sancta or oath violation" (Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 21).

[127] Milgrom, *Cult and Conscience*, 21.

[128] For example, Passover was one of the three great annual festivals of Israel, which commemorated Israel's freedom from bondage; however, the New Testament fulfillment of

III.A.2.c. Conclusions from the Study of the Five Offerings

Each of the five primary offerings in Leviticus 1—7 was propitiatory and atoning. The animal sacrifices, in particular, were a substitutionary atonement. God commanded the sinful, the unclean, and the worshipful to bring their offering into the courtyard within the Tabernacle. Once offerers entered the courtyard, the worshippers would apparently inform the priest as to why they were making a sacrifice. The burnt offering was not made for any particular sin; rather, it was offered for sins in general. The offering made the Israelite acceptable to God when the offerer entered the presence of the Lord to worship Him.

The animals were to be finest that the offerer owned, that is, "without defect," as is emphasized repeatedly (Lev 1:3, 10; 3:1, 6; 4:3, 23, 28, 32; 5:15, 18; 6:6; see also, 9:2-3; 14:10; 22:19-25; 23:12, 18). Consequently, the sacrifices were to be valuable (and hence truly sacrificial) to the one offering them. Once the sacrifices were brought into the courtyard, the offerer would lay a hand upon the head of the animal, which not only symbolized public identification with the animal, but also denoted substitution in that the animal bore the guilt of the offerer and truly died as a substitute. When the animal was slaughtered, the blood was sprinkled upon the altar and around its base in various manners to demonstrate that a life was truly substituted on behalf of another, and that such death occurred to make atonement.

Typically, the meal offering accompanied the burnt offering in addition to other sacrifices (most frequently involving animals). The priest ate a portion of the meal offering, which signified that he took upon himself the sins of the offerer. The fact that this offering was "a soothing aroma to the LORD" (2:2, 9, 12) indicates an atoning function. The peace offering also appeased God's wrath, and culminated in a meal eaten by the worshippers in the presence of the Lord, which signified communion and fellowship with God. The celebration of this peace with God was based upon the shed blood of the substitutionary sacrifice (3:1-2, 6-8, 12-13).

Passover is found in the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus, who delivered those He came to save from a much greater bondage.

The sin offering not only atoned for all sin (whether known or unknown), but also purified the Tabernacle from the defilement that sin causes. Of course, sin of any kind angered God because it deprived Him of the honor due Him. The defilement of God's Tabernacle was caused by this dishonor, and therefore, resulted in an impediment with God by the guilty.

The trespass offering was necessary for the *sancta* violation and the oath violation. Complete restitution was made prior to the repentant obtaining forgiveness by means of a substitutionary sacrifice. However, it is also important to note the limitations of these sacrifices. If someone sinned unconsciously and unintentionally against God's sacred property, or even blatantly and deliberately against God's name by defrauding someone and then swearing falsely, and complete restitution could be made (as evidence of true repentance), then there could be atonement by means of the trespass offering. However, other sins such as various pagan religious and sexual practices, which are described in Leviticus 20, necessitated capital punishment so that God's people could pursue holiness and obedience to the Lord, and thereby avoid the divine judgment that such abominations caused.

The sin of murder was another offense that demanded the death penalty (24:17, 21; cf. Exod 21:12-14). Capital punishment was required as the only means for removing the guilt, which would then purify the community from the defilement that the sin caused. Adultery also demanded the death penalty. Therefore, when King David committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband, he declared, "For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering" (Ps 51:16). God did not legislate any sacrifice for the sins of adultery and murder; therefore, David's only appeal was to God as judge. The limitations of the Old Testament sacrifices, therefore, foreshadowed the ultimate satisfaction of God's wrath in the work of Jesus Christ upon Calvary's cross.

Irregular sacrifices were offered to make atonement for certain types of sins, and regular sacrifices were planned: some daily, weekly, monthly, and annually. The reason for planning the regular sacrifices is because human sin is persistent; consequently, there would not be any cessation of the bloody sacrifice. For this very

reason, God instructed the priests that the fire upon the altar must be kept burning continually (Lev 6:12-13; 24:2-4). In addition to the irregular sacrifices for certain types of sins, there were those offerings that accompanied every occasion of worship. The burnt offering was given perpetually, every morning and evening (Exod 29:38-42; Numb 28:3, 6). The only complete atonement was on the annual Day of Atonement, which was a general atonement for the people, the priests, and the place of worship.

The priests were consecrated to service, and their lives were devoted to the service of God within His dwelling place. Not only were priests the representatives of God, but also they represented the Israelite worshippers to God. Functioning as God's representatives, the priests could be wronged by the sins of the Israelites because they received some portions of the sacrificial offerings. Functioning as the representatives of the worshipping community, the priests would take upon themselves the sins of those bringing their offering, as they made atonement for them. God used this customary institution for the service in the Tabernacle because the notion conveyed by the priesthood was that atonement was absolutely necessary for the people to have true access to the presence of the Lord. The sacrificial system was not only didactic so that Israel knew that God is holy, but also to understand that He must punish the guilty, and must outpour His wrath (as an expression of His holiness) unless one makes atonement for sin. The fact that God instituted the sacrificial rituals indicates that He is willing to forgive sin.

The offerings did make atonement for sin and demonstrate God's willingness to forgive; yet, there would still be the perpetual awareness of personal guilt that was never removed ultimately. The sacrifices were "*only* a shadow of the good things to come *and* . . . can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshippers, having once been cleansed, would not longer have had consciousness of sins?" (Heb 10:1-2).

III.A.2.d. The Death (Blood) of the Animal

The well-known verse in Leviticus that explains the relationship between blood and life is 17:11. The legislation in Leviticus 17 also uses the verb כִּפֶּר in explaining why blood must not be consumed: "'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.' "Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, 'No person among you may eat blood, nor may any alien who sojourns among you eat blood.'" Leviticus 17:11 is a foundational text in substantiating the doctrine of substitution because it indicates that blood is to be used exclusively for atonement. Before proceeding, it should be noted that Leviticus 17:11 is a general statement with regard to the precise dynamic of the כִּפֶּר action of blood in all sacrifices.[129]

There is an unmistakable relationship between blood and נפשׁ in 17:10-11. Verse 10 refers to God's displeasure "against any person" (בַּנֶּפֶשׁ) who eats blood. Verse 11 references the "life" (נֶפֶשׁ) of the flesh in the blood, which is given to make atonement for "your souls" (נַפְשֹׁ) because it is the blood "by reason of the life [בַּנֶּפֶשׁ] that makes atonement [יְכַפֵּר]." Context determines whether נפשׁ should be

[129] Baruch J. Schwartz, "The Prohibitions Concerning the 'Eating' of Blood in Leviticus 17," in *Priesthood and Cult in Ancient Israel*, eds. Gary A. Anderson and Saul M. Olyan (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991) 59; contra. Jacob Milgrom, "A Prolegomenon to Leviticus 17:11," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 90 (June 1971): 149-56. Milgrom believes the text refers to a particular sacrifice, namely the peace offering. The reason for this restriction is that the prohibition with regard to eating blood is only relevant to the peace offering since the worshipper was forbidden to eat any meat from the other sacrifices, and the peace offering is the only sacrifice whose meat could be eaten by the offerer (Lev 3:3-4, 17). The reason for this assertion is that Milgrom believes the peace offering would be expiation for the murder of the victim since "animal slaughter constitutes murder except at the authorized altar" (p. 155). The reason for rejecting such an understanding is that nowhere subject to the flood account (Gen 9; cf. 1:29-30) does Scripture assert that killing an animal for the purpose of eating its meat is murder. The particular sin in Leviticus 17:3-4 is not bringing the blood of the animal sacrifice to the doorway of the Tabernacle to present it as an offering to God. Leviticus 17:11 is not restricted to the peace offering, as evident from 17:8 which references the burnt offering. The precise dynamic of the כִּפֶּר action of blood for the peace offering is also true for the burnt offering in Leviticus 1:3-4. The revelation of Leviticus 17:11 is applicable to all offerings that involve blood.

translated as "person" (as in verse 10), or "your souls" (i.e. "yourselves") as in 11b and "life" as in verses 11a and 11c.

Leviticus 11a states, "'For the life of the flesh is in the blood." A common argument contrary to substitutionary atonement is the notion that the blood offered upon the altar actually possessed a life force. Truly, the Old Testament distinguished between plant life and animal life. The *first* distinction is that of blood, which animals possess and plants do not possess. The *second* difference is the word נפֶשׁ translated "person" or "life" ("soul"). Both animals and humans have souls but plants do not. According to Leviticus 17:11, there is an obvious connection between life and blood. For this reason, the Old Testament does not qualify the death of a plant as belonging to the same category as the death of an animal or human.

Throughout the Bible, shed blood has reference to death. Genesis 9:6 states, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man." The biblical passage does not mean if someone cuts another and makes that person bleed that the person who is bleeding should then be made to bleed. The passage means that if someone kills another human being that his/her life will also be taken from him/her. Genesis 9:6 is an unambiguous example wherein the shedding of blood has the metaphor of death. Similarly, when the New Testament references Christ's shed blood it refers to His life being taken from Him violently.

Three passages in the Old Testament (Gen 9:14; Lev 17:11; Deut 12:23) unmistakably assert that "the blood is the life." However, the contexts in which the phrase is used cannot be interpreted to mean that life can be released from the flesh for subsequent activity as the result of blood shed. Indeed, the life of the body ceases when the blood is shed; therefore, it is unwarranted to argue that shed blood releases life for a posthumous active existence.

> In three places in the Old Testament the truth is dogmatically stated that the blood is the life. . . . But a careful examination of the contexts reveals that in each of the three cases these statements say not that "blood" is "life" in isolation, but that the blood is the life of the flesh. This means that if the blood is separated from the flesh, whether in man or beast, the present physical life in the flesh will come to an end.

> Blood shed stands, therefore, not for the release of life from the burden of flesh, but for the bringing to an end of life in the flesh. It is an evidence of physical death, not an evidence of spiritual survival.[130]

The assertion that the blood offered upon the altar actually possessed a purifying life force is evident in the following statement: "It is because blood carries life that the priest can use it in the ritual of pardoning sins."[131] Leviticus 17:11 does truly state, "it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement" There are two interrelated matters that will clarify the Leviticus teaching. *First*, the life needs to be identified as either belonging to the animal or the offerer of the sacrifice. *Second*, the meaning of the preposition בְּ needs identification, particularly whether it should be translated as essence ("blood . . . is life," JPS, LB, NEB), instrumental ("by reason of the life," NASB, RSV), or in another manner.[132]

If one accepts the notion that that life belongs to the animal, then the preposition בְּ will be translated as instrumental, thereby granting the meaning of purification to the verb כִּפֶּר. Consequently, the life of the animal victim is liberated when the sacrifice is made, which would result in the life force purifying the offerer from the power of death. For example, Gerstenberger wrote, "The background to these blood rites apparently involves legal considerations. Life forfeited through guilt—namely, that of the offerer—is redeemed from the warranted punishment through the presentation of the life of another."[133] Therefore, atonement would be effected through the life of the animal. There are reasons to oppose this understanding of the sacrificial blood. One reason for objection has already been demonstrated, which is that the meaning of the verb כִּפֶּר is not purification.

As opposed to purification, the sacrificial blood is substitution for human life. Schwartz noted, "It should be noted that one of the reasons scholars have labored so

---

[130] A. M. Stibbs, *The Meaning of the Word "Blood" in Scripture* (London: Tyndale Press, 1947) 12.

[131] René Peter-Contesse and John Ellington, *A Handbook on Leviticus* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1990) 267, as quoted by Nicole, "Atonement in the Pentateuch," 36.

[132] Nicole, "Atonement in the Pentateuch," 36.

[133] Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Leviticus: A Commentary*, trans. Douglas W. Stott (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996) 242.

arduously at proposing other interpretations of how blood serves על נפשׁתיכם לכפר, and have often ignored the obvious derivation from כֹּפֶר, has been their reluctance to admit that the idea of vicarious sacrifice, indeed, vicarious *self*-sacrifice, might be at work here. . . ."[134] How it is that blood and/or life could purify is also difficult to understand, especially considering what God legislated for the administration of the sacrificial blood.

If the sacrificial blood was to purify the offerer, why not sprinkle the blood upon the worshipper, as opposed to sprinkling the "life giving" blood upon the altar. If it were possible for the sacrificial blood to convey a purifying power of life, it is inexplicable as to why it would be outpoured upon the altar as opposed to be sprinkled upon the offerer. The only two occasions wherein blood was applied to a person was the ordination ceremony of the priests (Lev 8:22-30), and the sanctifying ritual following restoration from skin diseases (14:1-20). Allowing for these few exceptions, the sacrificial blood was primarily sprinkled upon the bronze altar of sacrifice that was at the doorway (courtyard) of the Tabernacle, or it was sprinkled annually upon the mercy seat in the inner court of the Tabernacle. The reason for the process is that the blood was given for the soul of the offerer (Lev 17:11); therefore, the blood of the victim was not to be sprinkled upon the worshipper but placed upon the altar, which represented God's domain. The offerer was not allowed to sprinkle the blood upon the altar since this action was reserved exclusively for the priests, who were consecrated to God. The exclusive activity of the priests communicated that the altar was sacred to God and belonged to Him. The sacrificial blood, therefore, was offered to Him. Certainly, there was no reason that God would need the purifying life force of the blood. God would accept the blood (death) of the animal as substitute for the sinner whose wages of sin demanded his/her death. Leviticus 17 reveals that God gave the sacrificial blood for the "souls" of humanity in a rite that truly demonstrated the doctrine of substitution: the offerer gave the sacrifice to God through the mediation of the priest. The action emphasizes the gracious, omnisufficiency of God because the guilty are able to offer

[134] Schwartz, "Prohibitions," 57. In particular, Schwartz referenced the example of Füglister, "Sühne durch Blut," 146-47.

only what God has given to them (1 Chron 29:14). The blood is reserved for God, and used for the sake of sinful human beings who need atonement. With reference to the blood upon the altar, Schwartz noted "the direction of the action: 'It is not you who are placing the blood on the altar for me, for my benefit, but rather the opposite: it is I who have placed it there for you—for your benefit'."[135]

If the sacrificial blood was "life giving," how would the poorest of worshippers—who could not even bring turtledoves or pigeons to sacrifice—be able to receive atonement and forgiveness? The answer is that God allowed a provision of "the tenth of an ephah of fine flour" for an offering (Lev 5:11). Only as an absolute exception would someone be able to offer fine flour as a sin offering. If the sacrificial blood possessed the "vital force" necessary to accomplish purification, how could someone offer fine flour to make atonement and receive forgiveness (5:11-13)? Water would have been more appropriate than fine flour if purification were intended (cf. Lev 15). The offering was a substitution of inevitable inequality (since the life of an animal could hardly be considered equivalent to the life of human being), and was the reason why in the most extreme cases of poverty that a grain offering could be substituted for a living, human being.

The obvious subject of כִּפֶּר in Leviticus 17:11 is "blood," which means that "life" is the agent of action, and therefore, negates the instrumental use of the preposition בְּ. The language of Leviticus 17:11 is that the "life" (נֶפֶשׁ) of the flesh is in the blood, which does not mean that the blood contains life because 17:14 expressly states, "blood is *identified* with its life" (i.e. the "life of all flesh") and "the life of all flesh is its blood." Blood and life are so intricately related in the context of Leviticus 17 that it can be said, "life is in the blood" and the "life is blood."[136] Blood is the life of all creatures. Therefore, the relationship between blood and נֶפֶשׁ is that is was given by God to sinful human beings to make atonement. The relationship between blood and נֶפֶשׁ is not because there is a life force of the blood.

[135] Schwartz, "Prohibitions," 51.
[136] Nicole, "Atonement in the Pentateuch," 39, 45-46.

Throughout the Bible, blood represents life taken from a creature (resulting in death), as opposed to the offering of life in the sacrificial rite.[137] Morris demonstrated that דָּם is used 362 times in the Old Testament, and of those occurrences the usage can be classified as follows: (1) 203 examples of death with some kind of violence (e.g. Gen 9:6; Lev 10:9; 17:3-14; Numb 35:19; Deut 19:13; Ps 9:12); (2) 7 examples where life is associated with blood (e.g. Lev 17:14); (3) 17 examples where the practice of eating meat with blood was narrated or prohibited (e.g. Lev 3:17; 17:11, 14; 1 Sam 14:32); (4) 103 examples of sacrificial blood (e.g. Exod 23:18); and, (5) 32 other examples (e.g. Exod 7:14-25; 2 Sam 23:17). The נֶפֶשׁ of a creature is its blood, albeit while it is living. The most common usage of דָּם is "to denote death by violence, and, in particular . . . to denote the blood of sacrifice."[138] When the animal victim died, נֶפֶשׁ departed from it as the flood flowed from its body. Blood is not a life force; rather, it is a sign of death and if there is a significant loss of body from the body it is often the actual cause of death. The

[137] When the Lord Jesus shed His blood in the supreme sacrificial act, He both ratified the New Covenant and secured the believer's salvation. Vincent Taylor (*The Atonement in New Testament Teaching* [London: Epworth, 1945] 177) has noted that when the New Testament references Christ's blood, it does so nearly three times as often as it mentions the cross of Christ. Additionally, the New Testament refers to the blood of Christ five times as often as it refers to the death of Christ. Likewise, *The Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary* reads, "References to the 'blood of Christ' always mean the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross" (Herbert Lockyer Sr., gen. ed., *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary* [Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986] 186). Therefore, "blood" is the prominent term used in reference to the atonement in the New Testament. As it is used in the New Testament, the blood of Christ indicates the all-encompassing salvific work of the Lord Jesus upon the cross. While it is absolutely true that believers are saved on the virtue of Christ's death, it is also true that Christ had to shed His blood since the Father required a blood-shedding sacrifice (cf. Heb 9:22) so that it would be evident that the life of the sacrifice had been outpoured. On the cross, Christ shed His literal blood as a literal sacrifice. The shedding of Christ's blood was not enough to save; the sacrifice had to result in death. If there was efficacious value in the blood alone then Christ would not have needed to die on the cross since either the sweat that "became like drops of blood" (Luke 22:44) in the Garden of Gethsemane or the blood shed in His scourging could have atoned for sin. No doubt the soldiers that scourged Jesus had some of His literal blood upon them but that literal application of His blood was not efficacious.

[138] Morris, *Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, 108-09.

outpouring of blood is a sign of death, and the shedding of blood is synonymous with killing (either in murder or sacrificially).[139]

III.A.2.e. Conclusions from the Biblical Sacrificial Rite

The wrath of God is a fundamental component to the theology of the Old Testament. Furthermore, the concept of propitiation is also fundamental to the biblical sacrificial rite. The verb כִּפֶּר "reveals that the worshipper felt the need of escaping the divine displeasure at sin," and thus it "had a basic propitiatory connotation," even though the grammatical construction may vary. The non-cultic usage of כִּפֶּר is confirmation of this meaning (cf. Gen 32:21; Prov 16:14).[140] Furthermore, the phrase "a soothing aroma" to the Lord (רֵיחַ־נִיחוֹחַ) indicates a sacrifice offered in faith, which resulted in the resting of God's anger. The expression applies to the wrath of God against sin, which the offerer appeases through the offering. The sacrifice moved God to be favorably disposed to the worshipper.

The biblical sacrificial rites indicate the identity of reconciliation. Reconciliation is the removal of God's anger against sin. When a sinner experiences reconciliation, it is because the attitude of God has changed. The sinfulness of humanity deserves God's wrath; however, in reconciliation, God adopts a favorable attitude toward the sinner, and the consequence is a personal and living relationship with Him. Consequently, reconciliation is Godward, that is, it is not the removal of the sinner's enmity toward God; rather, reconciliation is the removal of God's wrath toward sinners.

The only reason why the sanguinary sacrifices were propitiatory is that they typified the substitutionary sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, and thus mediated the effects of His final substitution for sin. The Levitical sacrifices involving blood were not only

---

[139] "Since bleeding is the way in which slaughtered creatures and murdered humans were seen to die, this was the most logical way of saying what it was that made them die: the loss of blood. . . . The text is merely trying to make use of a well-known fact in order to ground its explanation for the prohibition of eating blood" (Schwartz, "Prohibitions," 49-50).

[140] Nicole, "Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 152.

a loss of a valuable animal, but also the offerings resulted in the cessation of a life. The sacrifices were truly didactic so that the Israelites knew that sin results in death, and that God instituted the shedding of blood to make atonement (Lev 17:11). Only when the details of the Mosaic sacrificial system and the meaning of those offerings in general are applied to the death of the Lord Jesus can one discern the complete revelation of the eternal plan of God.

The typological significance of the sacrificial ritual was already evident in the Old Testament. For example, the Book of Isaiah prophesied that the suffering Servant of the Lord would take upon Himself the iniquities of a great multitude, and "He would render Himself as a guilt [trespass] offering" (Isa 53:6, 10-11). Isaiah 53:5 prophesied, "He was pierced through for our transgression." The verb מְחֹלָל indicates much more than a wound (as in the KJV); it was a violent death of the Lord Jesus, yet it was not for Himself but for those He came to save. The doctrine of substitution is evident. For instance, those in Christ's day thought He deserved to die. He was accused of blasphemy and condemned for that very reason. He was considered deservedly "smitten of God, and afflicted." The prophecy of Genesis 3:15 even uses a synonym for the word דָּכָא, meaning "broken," "crushed," or "smitten." Consequently, the Lord Jesus died not for Himself but for others. The sinless Son of God died upon the cross for guilty sinners.

The sacrificial ritual in the Old Testament is didactic because in it God revealed that a relationship between Him and sinful humanity is impossible without atonement for sin. The offerings typified the death of Christ, which, for those who have faith in Him, alone satisfies that need for atonement. There are several New Testament texts that confirm this typological understanding of the Old Testament sacrifices. Χριστός . . . παρέδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν προσφορὰν καὶ θυσίαν τῷ θεῷ εἰς ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας (Eph 5:2). God redeems the believer by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, who alone was a sinless man just as the sacrificial victims were required to be "without defect" and made atonement when they gave their life as the substitute of the offerer, which was evident by the outpouring of their blood. Similarly, the believer is redeemed "with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished

and spotless, *the blood* of Christ" (1 Pet 1:18). Christ's life atoned for the sins of those who believe. He "died for sins once for all, *the* just for *the* unjust" (3:18). The blood of Jesus "cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). The Lord Jesus "offered up Himself" for sinners, just like the daily sacrificial offerings of the Old Testament; however, His sacrifice was "once for all" (Heb 7:27). The relationship between justification (i.e. redemption, hence reconciliation) and sanctification (i.e. purification)—based upon the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—is a prominent motif in the Book of Hebrews (e.g. 10:10, 14, 22). As the fulfillment of Isaiah 53, the Lord Jesus is the perfect high priest in Hebrews 5—10, who took upon Himself the sins of those for whom He made atonement.

Christ is the perfect substitute; the innocent took upon Himself the sinner's guilt and imputed His righteousness through a faith relationship in a legal transaction ordained by the Father (cf. Lev 1:4; Isa 53:6, 10-11; Matt 20:28; Mark 10:45; John 10:11; Rom 5:6, 15; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 2:9). The grace of God ordained the death of Christ as the perfect and final substitute for the sinner; through His death, Christ did what the sinner could never do for himself.[141] Therefore, any synergistic views of salvation (sc. man can assist, or collaborate with, God in his salvation) do not comprehend the benefits of the death of Christ; the individual believing in synergism can never be "crucified with Christ" (Gal 2:20) and "raised up with Christ" (Col 3:1) to "walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:4). Christ gives "a better hope" (Heb 7:19) because His death is the final substitution for sin.

[141] If the sinner dies without the love of God through faith in Christ, the Father's holiness and justice demands eternal death from the unbeliever. Propitiation demonstrates the love and holiness of God. Without the provision of Christ, the sinner will endure the wrath of God eternally (Rom 1:18). God demonstrated His love by ordaining Christ as the sinner's substitute (5:8). The sinner appropriates God's provision, and God is the "just and justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (3:26).

III.B. The Sacrificial Language of the ‘Ιλάσκομαι Word Group

III.B.1. *In Classical Greek*

The word ἱλασμός is “not very common” in classical Greek literature. When he examined the indexes, Büchsel could not find ἱλασμός in the Attic orators, Sophocles, Thucydides, Epictetus, the Orphic fragments, the pre-Socrates, or the older Stoics. Plutarch is said to use ἱλασμός most often for a total of six times. According to Büchsel, the emphasis is “both cultic propitiation of the gods and expiatory action in general.”[141]

III.B.1.a. *The Usage of ‘Ιλασμός by Plutarch*

There are four works by Plutarch wherein one may find the usage of ἱλασμός. The works include: *Solon*, *Camillus*, *Fabius*, and *Moralia*. The historicity for each occurrence will be examined, and will be followed by the contextual examination of the usage of ἱλασμός.

III.B.1.a.i. *Solon*

The first usage to consider from Plutarch is the story of Solon (638-559 BC), the famous statesman and lawgiver. Cylon was an Eupatrid and Olympian, who sought to seize the Acropolis of Athens during the celebration of Zeus. When the Athenians learned of Cylon’s intent, they blockaded the Acropolis. Megacles the archon was an Alcmaeonidae, a powerful noble family of ancient Athens, and he killed the followers of Cylon, when they took refuge in the temple of Athena. The “Cylonian pollution” was regarded as an unholy event. When calamities and epidemics occurred in

[141] Büchsel and Herrmann, “ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός,” in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:317. The Dryden translation reads: “and the priests declared that the sacrifices intimated some villanies and pollutions that were to be expiated . . . but the greatest benefit was his purifying and sanctifying the city by certain propitiatory and expiatory lustrations” (Plutarch, *Lives*, 4 vols., ed. Arthur High Clough [London: Folio, 2010] 1:85).

Athens, the Athenians invited the sage Epimenides from Crete to purify the city from its guilt. Epimenides visited Athens, and performed sacrificial rites to purity and sanctify the city. The sage assisted Solon in his noble reform of the Athenian state.

> Now the Cylonian pollution had for a long time agitated the city, ever since Megacles the archon had persuaded Cylon and his fellow-conspirators, who had taken sanctuary in the temple of Athena. . . .
>
> The city was also visited with superstitious fears and strange appearances, and the seers declared that their sacrifices indicated pollutions and defilements which demanded expiation [καθαρμῶν]. . . .
>
> On coming to Athens he [Epimenides] made Solon his friend, assisted him in many ways, and paved the way for his legislation. For he made the Athenians decorous and careful in their religious services, and milder in their rites of mourning, by attaching certain sacrifices immediately to their funeral ceremonies and by taking away the harsh and barbaric practices in which their women had usually indulged up to that time. Most important of all, by sundry rites of propitiation [ἱλασμοῖς] and purification [καθαπμοῖς], and by sacred foundations, he hallowed and consecrated the city, and brought it to be observant of justice and more easily inclined to unanimity (*Solon* 12.1, 4-5).[142]

The story is worth consideration because it indicates the aspects of propitiatory and purificatory rites in ancient Greece. The reason for the sacrificial rite was the calamities and epidemics in Athens resulting from the Cylonian pollution. The priests declared that various "pollutions and defilements" demanded καθαρμῶν. Therefore, "the seventh wise man" from Crete (Epimenides), who was "reputed to be a man beloved of the gods, and endowed with a mystical and heaven-sent wisdom in religious matters," was requested to come to Athens. Epimenides purified and sanctified the city by various rites of ἱλασμοῖς and καθαπμοῖς. As is evident from this story, Strecker noted correctly, "In the pre-Christian Greek world a distinction was made between *καθαρμοί* (purifying sacrifices) and *ἱλασμοί* (atoning sacrifices)."[143]

Homer's *Iliad* provides a similar usage of propitiatory rites. Book 1 of the *Iliad* begins with "the quarrel," that is, the wrath of Achilles "which, in fulfillment of the will of Zeus, brought the Achaeans so much suffering." Agamemnon was king of

---

[142] Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives*, 10 vols., trans. Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914-21) 1:431, 433, 435.

[143] Strecker, *Johannine Letters*, 30.

the Achaeans, and Achilles was one of the Achaeans' most valuable warriors. The question is asked, "Which of the gods was it that made them quarrel?" The god that made Achilles and Agamemnon quarrel was Apollo, Son of Zeus and Leto. Apollo began the quarrel as punishment of Agamemnon "for his discourtesy to Chyrses, his priest." When the Achaeans attacked a Trojan allied town, they captured two beautiful maidens: Briseis and Chryseis (Achilles claimed the former, and Agamemnon claimed the latter as his prize). Chryseis' father (Chryses) pleaded with Agamemnon to return his daughter, and even offered to pay an enormous ransom. Agamemnon refused the plea and offer, therefore, Chryses prayed to Apollo for help. Apollo inflicted a deadly plague upon Agamemnon's army and destroyed his men. "He attacked the mules first and the nimble dogs; then he aimed his sharp arrows at the men, and struck again and again. Day and night innumerable fires consumed the dead" (*Iliad* I.50-52).[144]

Similar to the events in *Solon*, a seer is summoned to reveal the cause of the plague. Achilles appeals to Agamemnon to "consult a prophet or priest, or even some interpreter of dreams" to "find out from him why Phoebus Apollo is so angry" with the Achaeans. Achilles' concern was that the god Apollo was "offended at some broken vow or some failure in our rites. If so, he might accept a savoury offering of sheep or of full-grown goats and save us from the plague" (*Iliad* I.61-67). Calchas, son of Thestor, was unrivaled in soothsaying among the Achaeans. The "worthy seer" explained, "The god is angry because Agamemnon insulted his priest [Chyrses], refusing to take the ransom and free his daughter [Chryseis]." Moreover, the god will not relent his wrath until Chryseis is returned to her father, "without recompense or ransom," and "holy [ἱερὴν] offerings" [ἑκατόμβην, "hecatomb," that is, "an offering of a hundred oxen"[145]] (*Iliad* I.92-100). When the ἑκατόμβην is sent, then Apollo might be propitiated [ἱλασσάμενοι] and relent his anger. The reason for summoning Calchas in the *Iliad* is quite similar to the reasons why, in *Solon*, the seer from Crete was requested to come to Athens. Calchas is even described in similar words as those of Epimenides. "As an augur, Calchas had no rival in the camp. Past,

[144] Homer, *Iliad*, 23-24.
[145] Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 500.

present and future held no secrets from him; and it was his second sight, [that was] a gift he owed to Apollo" (*Iliad* I.69-72).[146]

Agamemnon eventually allows Chryseis to return by ship—navigated by Odysseus—to her father. "Meanwhile Agamemnon made his people purify [ἀπολυμαίνεσθαι] themselves by bathing. When they had washed [ἀπελυμαίνοντο] the filth from their bodies in the sea water, they offered a rich sacrifice [ἑκατόμβας] of bulls and goats to Apollo on the shore of the unharvested sea; and savoury odours, mixed with the curling smoke, went up into the sky" (*Iliad* I.311-17).[147] There are two actions to discern in the propitiatory rite. The first action was for purification, and the second action was to propitiate an angry deity. As the story continues in the *Iliad*, it is even more apparent that the Greeks practiced the propitiatory rites with this twofold division.

Odysseus did return Chryseis to her father, Chryses. Odysseus informed Chryses that Agamemnon ordered him to return his daughter "and to make ceremonial offerings [ἱερὴν ἑκατόμβην] to Phoebus . . . in the hope of pacifying [ἱλασόμεσθα] the Archer-King, who has struck their army a grievous blow" (*Iliad* I.440-45). Homer described the offerings that were "destined to do honour to the god" as "quickly set in place round the well-built altar." The procedure for the propitiatory offerings was for the priest to offer prayer to the deity, and then to scatter sacrificial grains. Next, the animals would be slaughtered and slices from the thighs, wrapped in folds of fat, were burnt upon the altar, with red wine sprinkled as a libation over the flames. When the rite was completed, the Achaeans "made music to appease [ἱλάσκοντο] the god, praising the Great Archer in a lovely song, to which Apollo listened with delight" (*Iliad* I.473-75).[148] The reason for the propitiatory rite was the wrath of a deity toward the Achaeans.

In the Greek world, Büchsel noted, "cleansing is on the whole more important than propitiation." Hellenistic "ἱλασμός includes various cultic acts such as prayers,

[146] Homer, *Iliad*, 24-25.
[147] Ibid. 31.
[148] Ibid. 34-35.

sacrifices, purifications, dances and games."[149] Homer provided a much more complete description of these propitiatory rites than Plutarch. Nevertheless, the brief accounts by Plutarch are similar to Homeric propitiation. However, there is a notable difference, and that is Plutarch's distinct usage of the noun ἱλασμός, in contrast to the Homeric usage of the verb to indicate the notion of propitiation.

III.B.1.a.ii. *Camillus*

Furius Camillus (ca. 446-365 BC) was a Roman solder and statesman. He was honored as "the second founder of Rome" for his defeat of the Gauls. Plutarch narrated the life of Camillus as one of arrogance for "his achievement in conquering a city that was the rival of Rome." Camillus

> assumed to himself more than became a civil and legal magistrate; among other things, in the pride and haughtiness of his triumph, driving through Rome in a chariot drawn with four white horses, which no general either before or since ever did; for the Romans consider such a mode of conveyance to be sacred and specially set apart to the king and the father of the gods. This alienated the hearts of his fellow citizens, who were not accustomed to such pomp and display.
>
> The second pique they had against him was his opposing the law by which the city was to be divided. . . . (*Camillus* 7.1-2).[150]

Camillus departed to siege the fortified city of Veii, and he "vowed to Apollo that if he took the city he would dedicate to him the tenth of the spoil." He did not fulfill his promise to dedicate the tenth to Apollo. "Some time afterwards, when his authority was laid down, he brought the matter before the senate, and the priests, at the same time, reported, out of the sacrifices, that there were intimations of divine anger, requiring propitiations [ἱλασμοῦ] and offerings [χαριστηρίων δεομένην]" (*Camillus* 7.5).[151] The priests announced that the gods were angry, and so the Senate ordained that the public would fulfill the oath. The "propitiations and offerings" were

[149] Büchsel and Herrmann, "ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός," in *Theological Dictionary*, 311.
[150] Plutarch, *Lives*, 138.
[151] Ibid. 139. The Perrin translation reads: "and the seers announced tokens in their sacrifices that the gods were angry, and must be propitiated with due offerings" (Plutarch, *Plutarch's Lives*, 2:113).

necessary for Camillus' arrogance, dividing of the city, and failure to fulfill his vow to Apollo.

III.B.1.a.iii. *Fabius*

The story of Fabius is later and somewhat different than Plutarch's discussion of Camillus and the necessity for the "propitiations and offerings." Fabius Maximus (280-203 BC) was a Roman commander and statesman. His cautious delaying tactics during the early stages of the Second Punic War (218-01 BC) earned him the nickname Cunctator, meaning "Delayer." Nevertheless, his tactics allowed Rome to conserve her vigor and be able to take the offensive against Hannibal's army, the Carthaginians. Nevertheless, there were those who questioned the wisdom of Fabius, and at one point, Varro was allowed command of the Roman army, which resulted in great defeat at Cannae. The Romans were dejected and placed all their hopes in the wisdom at Fabius.

> Accordingly, he [Fabius] put guards at the gates, in order to keep the frightened throng from abandoning the city, and set limits of time and place to the mourning for the dead, ordering any who wished to indulge in lamentation, to do so at home for a period of thirty days; after that, all mourning must cease and the city be purified of such rites. And since the festival of Ceres fell within these days, it was deemed better to remit entirely the sacrifices and the procession, rather than to emphasize the magnitude of their calamity by the small number and dejection of the participants. For the gods' delight is in honours paid them by the fortunate. However, all the rites which the augers advocated for the propitiation [ἱλασμοῦς] of the gods, or to avert inauspicious omens, were duly performed (*Fabius* 18.1-3).[152]

The reason then for the "propitiation" was the defeat of the Romans by Hannibal at Cannae. The augers assume that the calamity was the displeasure of the gods, who needed to be propitiated.[153] Fabius allowed the ἱλασμοῦς to be "duly

[152] Ibid. 3:171. The Dryden translation reads: "the worship most acceptable to the gods is that which comes from cheerful hearts. But those rites which were proper for appeasing their anger, and procuring auspicious signs and presages, were by the direction of the augers carefully performed" (Plutarch, *Lives*, 229-30).

[153] Romans sacrifices "were performed in reverent silence." The sacrificial victim was led to the altar; "it was important that the animal go willingly, and preferably with

performed." The purpose for propitiation among the Romans was to placate "an offended deity, as distinguished from the effort to secure a continuance of divine good-will." Consequently, "the general object of the Roman festivals was so to propitiate the gods as to forestall any hostile intention by putting them under an obligation."[154]

III.B.1.a.iv. *Moralia*

The next Plutarchan usage of ἱλασμός to consider is located in *Moralia*, which is a miscellaneous collection of 78 moral essays and treatises (i.e. everything that Plutarch wrote in addition to his *Lives*). There is some pseudepigrapha in some editions of *Moralia*. The two essays, "On the Delays of Divine Vengeance" and "On the Cleverness of Animals," where ἱλασμός is located are regarded as authentic.

There are two uses of ἱλασμός in the essay with regard to divine vengeance, and both refer to "propitiatory rites" to appease the dead. The story is with regard to Pausanias (died. ca. 470 BC) who was the nephew of the Spartan king Leonidas I. He commanded the Spartan army at the Battle of Plataea (479 BC) wherein the Persians were defeated and expelled from Greece. Pausanias also led the Greek fleets in a victorious expedition to Cyprus and Byzantium (478 BC).

> When Pausanias was at Byzantium, he had in his insolent lust sent for Cleonicê, a maiden of free birth, intending to keep her for the night. As she drew near, he was

bowed head, in a straight line and with no sense of fear or unease" (Elizabeth Pepper and John Wilcock, *Magical and Mystical Sites: Europe and the British Isles* [Grand Rapids: Phanes Press, 2000] 101). The most important part of the sacrifice was subsequent to the killing of the animal. The *exta* (viz. the gall, heart, liver, lungs, and interior skin) would be extracted and examined, and then prepared for burning upon the altar. Great attention was given to the liver to determine "whether the god was pleased; the idea being . . . that he showed his good and ill will in the organs of the victim." Once the ritual was completed, the priests who offered the sacrifice could eat the remaining flesh (*viscera*) since it was no longer regarded as holy (W. Warde Fowler, "Sacrificum," in *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, 3rd. rev. ed., 2 vols., eds. William Smith, William Wayte, and G. E. Marindin [London: John Murray, 1901] 2:586-87).

[154] A. C. Pearson, "Propitiation (Roman)," in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, 13 vols., ed. James Hastings (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908-26) 10:398-99; cf. Valerie M. Warrior, *Roman Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

> seized by some wild suspicion and killed her. Thereafter he often saw her in his dreams saying to him:
>
> > Come meet thy doom; by pride are men undone.
>
> As the apparition did not cease, he sailed (we hear) to the Passage of the Dead at Heracleia and with certain propitiatory [ἱλασμοῖς] rites and libations evoked the maiden's ghost; it appeared to him and said that his trouble would be over when he went to Lacedaemon. On going there he presently died (*Moralia* 555C).[155]

In the story, Plutarch was one of the two priests of Apollo at Delphi. His concern was to refute those who believe "nothing exists for the soul when life is done, and death is the bourne of all reward and punishment." The ghost of Cleonicê is proof that the soul exists subsequent to death. The story does not provide a description of the propitiatory rites and libations. However, it may be that Homer's story of Odysseus raising the ghost of Teiresias may explain "the service of the placation of ghosts, because in the vengeance of the ghost exacted for bloodshed lies the kernel of the doctrine of purification."[156]

Book 9 of *The Odyssey* ended with Odysseus blinding Polyphemus, a Cyclops, the son of Poseidon, whose vengeance is for Odysseus to wander aimlessly at sea while attempting to reach his home in Ithaca. Book 10 begins with the Achaeans sailing from the land of the Cyclops to the floating island of Aeolia, the home of Aeolus. Odysseus received a leather bag from Aeolus, which contained "the boisterous energies of all the winds." Within ten days of sailing, Odysseus and his crew are already in sight of their homeland. The crew, however, thinks the bag of wind contains gold and silver. Undoing the bag, all the winds escape and a tempest comes upon them, which returns all the ships to Aeolia. Aeolus is astounded to see Odysseus again, and this time will not assist him believing no one to be "more damnable" than he. Moreover, he believes it not right "to entertain and equip a man detested by the blessed gods."

---

[155] Plutarch, *Plutarch's Moralia*, 15 vols., trans. Phillip H. De Lacy and Benedict Einarson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959) 7:223.

[156] Jane Ellen Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908) 74.

Odysseus and his crew departed from Aeolia "in a state of gloom," and within seven days, they arrived at the land of the Laestrygonians, who are "more like Giants than men." Odysseus learns quickly that the Laestrygonians are cannibals, and only his ship escapes the land. Odysseus and his men arrive next at the island of Aeaea, "the home of the beautiful Circe, a formidable goddess, with a mortal woman's voice," where they stay for a year. When it is eventually time to resume the voyage homeward, Circe advises Odysseus to journey "to the Halls of Hades and dread Persephone, to consult the soul of Teiresias, the blind Theban prophet." Odysseus traveled to the River of Ocean in the land of the Cimmerians, and there outpoured libations to all the dead and offered sacrifices to obtain the seer's prophecy. Once he completed the propitiatory rites, the ghost of Teiresias informs Odysseus that Poseiden is "enraged that you blinded his beloved son. Therefore, the seer explains how to propitiate Poseiden with various sacrifices of animals and ceremonial offerings.[157]

The story of Pausanias is similar to that of Odysseus. For instance, the ghost of Cleonicê, who he killed by some wild suspicion, troubled him. Pausanias' troubling is the reason for the "propitiatory rites and libations." Therefore, as the tormenting ghost did not cease troubling him, he also had to sail to place of the dead, and "evoke" the girl's ghost with "certain propitiatory rites and libations." Once the ghost was propitiated, "it appeared to him" with a prophecy of how Pausanias' troubles would cease.

The remarkable similarities between the stories of Pausanias and Odysseus make it likely that the propitiatory sacrifices and offerings of the latter explain the nature of the former. The procedure was first to make "prayers and invocations to the communities of the dead," then to slaughter the sheep and outpour the dark blood into a trench, which would summon a multitude of dead souls to drink the blood. Odysseus then offered a sheep as a burnt offering, and prayed to Hades and Persephone. "The dead in the Odyssey exist in a world of mist and inactivity. They

[157] Homer, *The Odyssey*, rev. ed., trans. E. V. Rieu (New York: Penguin, 1991) 138-63.

have no consciousness, no self-consciousness."[158] They are only able to regain consciousness temporarily when Odysseus allows them to drink from his trench containing the outpoured blood, which was "the principle of life which was believed to reside in the blood. When the souls speak so intelligently to Odysseus in Hades, it is because they have momentarily recovered their senses through the drinking of the blood of the victims which he had been ordered to sacrifice."[159] One may formulate two conclusions from the propitiatory rites in the Plutarchan and Homeric stories: (1) blood is a life giving force; and (2) blood is food for the dead.

The fifth Plutarchan usage of ἱλασμός to consider is also located in *Moralia*. Continuing the essay, "On the Delays of Divine Vengeance," there is an account where Olympichus interrupted Plutarch to contest his "considerable assumption" in "the survival of the soul." Olympichus questioned why the gods care for humanity if the soul is "altogether imperishable" or is to "survive some time after death." Plutarch responded,

> "Is God instead so petty and so absorbed in trifles that if we had nothing divine in us, or is some sort resembling him and enduring and constant, but like leaves, as Homer said, withered quite away and perished after a brief space, he would make so much of us. . . ?
>
> But if you will, leave the other gods aside, and consider whether in your opinion our own god of this place, knowing that when men die their souls perish immediately, exhaled from the body like vapour or smoke, nevertheless prescribes many appeasements of the dead [ἱλασμούς τε πολλοὺς προσφέρειν τῶν κατοιχομένων] and demands for them great honours and consideration, deluding and cheating those who put their faith in him (*Moralia* 560C-D).[160]

Plutarch's response is for Olympichus to consider why Apollo "prescribes many appeasements [ἱλασμούς] of the dead and demands for them great honours

---

[158] Patricia Fagan, "Plato's Oedipus: Myth and Philosophy in the *Apology*," in *Reexamining Socrates in the* Apology, eds. Patricia Fagan and John Russon (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2009) 94; cf. Jean-Pierre Vernant, "Death with Two Faces," in *Reading the Odyssey: Selected Interpretative Essays*, ed. Seth L. Schein (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996) 59.

[159] "Death in Classical Antiquity," *The Edinburgh Review* 180 (July 1894): 134; cf. John Proudfit, "Homeric Ideas of the Soul and a Future Life," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 15 (October 1858): 784

[160] Plutarch, *Plutarch's Moralia*, 253-54.

and consideration," if he is correct that the soul does not survive subsequent to death. Büchsel noted the significance of both the dead and heroes in this regard.

> Propitiatory sacrifices and actions may be required for the most varied reasons. The cult of the departed and of heroes is significant in this respect. . . . Apollo is the καθάρσιος. He understands the act of purifying those who are stained. In times of emergency, or when there are other reasons for detecting the anger of the gods, cities call in men who are skilled in discovering the reason for this anger and in suggesting and applying ways of averting it, like Epimenides of Crete, who was brought in by the Athenians to make expiation for the Cylonic outrage. Oracles may also be consulted in such cases. Such things play a considerable role in the Orphic rites.[161]

The hero was always "ready to kill and die. Even in death their anger was alive and terrifying; the cult of the hero was a ceremony which aimed to appease his wrath, and the sacrifices were called *μειλίγματα* 'propitiatory offerings.' Even the hero needed appeasement for his mighty deeds and could be quick to wrath.[162] Plutarch's usage of ἱλασμός demonstrates the prevalence of propitiatory rites for the dead. The sacrifices were given to the dead, whether a hero or spirit in Hades, in addition to the deities. Moreover, the offerings were πολλούς. Plutarch's use of προσφέρειν with ἱλασμούς is significant because it indicates that the "appeasements" were propitiatory offerings.[163]

There is one usage of ἱλασμός in the essay with regard to animal cleverness, which is a reference to appeasing an angry deity. The plot is similar to the previously referenced essay. The story is with regard to Ptolemy IV Philopator (ca. 238-205 BC), the Macedonian king of Egypt, who reigned from 221-205 BC. Antiochus III the Great, who was Seleucid king of Hellenistic Syria, led several military campaigns against Egypt, and eventually as a consequence of Ptolemy's

---

[161] Büchsel and Herrmann, "ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός," in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:311.

[162] Bernard M. W. Knox, *The Heroic Temper: Studies in Sophoclean Tragedy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964) 56; cf. Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion*, trans. John Raffan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985) 204-08; Martin P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion*, 2nd ed., trans. F. J. Fielden (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949) 194.

[163] For example, Hebrews 2:17 reads, "Πίστει προσενήνοχεν Ἀβραὰμ τὸν Ἰσαὰκ πειραζόμενος. . . ."

indolence, he restored territory to Syria as far as Gaza (Dan 11:10-19). In 217 BC, Ptolemy's armies encountered the Seleucid forces at Raphia in southern Palestine, and he was successful with the help of the Egyptian phalanx. Plutarch referenced Ptolemy's vanquishing of Antiochus the Great, and how he commemorated his victory in battle by sacrificing four elephants.

> He also relates that, without any instruction, elephants pray to the gods, purifying themselves in the sea and, when the sun rises, worshipping it by raising their trunks, as if they were hands of supplication. For this reason they are the animal most loved of the gods, as Ptolemy Philopator has testified; for when he had vanquished Antiochus and wished to honour the gods in a really striking way, among many other offerings to commend his victory in battle, he sacrificed four elephants. Thereafter, since he had dreams by night in which the deity angrily [ὀργῆς] threatened him because of that strange sacrifice, he employed many rites of appeasement [ἱλασμοῖς] and set up as a votive offering four bronze elephants to match those he had slaughtered (*Moralia* 972C).[164]

Plutarch described Ptolemy's sacrifice as strange because the elephant was the animal most beloved by the gods. Consequently, a deity was angry with Ptolemy and threatened him. The reason for Ptolemy's ἱλασμοῖς was to appease the angry deity. The only difference of this description with the story of Pausanias is that the ghost of Cleonicê was appeased, whereas Ptolemy appeased the deity. The use of ἱλασμός in the story of Ptolemy is with regard to the anger of a deity.

III.B.1.b. *The Use of 'Εξιλάσκεσθαι in Classical Greek*

There are two examples from classical Greek that are also relevant for understanding the meaning of ἱλασμός. The first is Plato's *Laws*, and the second is the Men Tyrannus Inscription. Dodd asserted that these two usages provide a meaning such as "to cancel sin" or "to expiate," especially with a human subject.[165]

The account from Plato concerns a crime that was committed. The passage reads, πεσὸν ὑπό του πάλιν ἐξορθοῦντα, καὶ τὸ θανατωθὲν ἢ τρωθέν, ὑγιές, τὸ

[164] Plutarch, *Moralia*, 15 vols., trans. Harold Cherniss and William C. Helmbold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957) 12:397.

[165] Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 88-89.

δὲ ἀποίνοις ἐξιλασθὲν τοῖς δρῶσι καὶ πάσχουσιν ἑκάστας τῶν βλάψεων, ἐκ διαφορᾶς εἰς φιλίαν πειρατέον ἀεὶ καθιστάναι τοῖς νόμοις.[166] Saunders translated the account as follows: "And when atonement has been made by compensation, he must try by his laws to make the criminal and the victim, in each separate case of injury, friends instead of enemies" (*Laws* 9.862c).[167] According to Plato, the lawgiver must strive to promote friendship by means of "compensation" for the case of injury. The question is whether τὸ δὲ ἀποίνοις ἐξιλασθὲν was used with regard to the crime or toward the person. The context favors the ἐξιλασθέν of a person. For instance, the dialogue reads, "You see, my friends, in effect we should not simply call it 'just' when one man bestows some object on another, not simply 'unjust' when correspondingly he takes it from him." The emphasis is upon "someone," that is, a person.[168] While it is possible to render ἐξιλασθέν as "expiated" because the offender was freed from guilt by making compensation to the one who was injured, it is better to render ἐξιλασθέν as "propitiated" because the one who was injured was motivated by the compensation to be "friends" with the offender, as opposed to remaining angry. The notion of expiation is certainly present; however, the context of the account is that one who was offended was compensated, and on that basis relinquished the anger against the one who caused the injury.[169]

The Men Tyrannus inscription reads: "Whoever meddled with the things of the god is guilty of such a sin [ἁμαρτίαν ὀφιλέτω] against the god Men Tyrannus that nobody can expiate it [ἐξειλάσασθαι]."[170] As is common knowledge, the inscription is dated to the 2nd or 3rd century AD, which would make any influence upon the Septuagint quite unlikely. Sin is the object of the verb ἐξιλάσκεσθαι, which led Büchsel to render it "to expiate a sin." The notion derived from this inscription is

---

[166] Plato, *Platonis Opera*, ed. John Burnet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1903).

[167] Plato, *The Laws*, trans. Trevor J. Saunders (1970; reprint, New York: Penguin, 2004) 328.

[168] Ibid.

[169] Büchsel and Herrmann, "ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός," in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:316.

[170] Wilhelm Dittenberger, *Sylloge inscriptionum Græcarum*, 1042, 16, as quoted by Büchsel and Herrmann, "ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός," in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:316; and, Lyonnet and Sabourin, *Sin, Redemption, and Sacrifice*, 125.

that a man who sinned in a certain manner would not be able to receive expiation; however, it could also be rendered in such a manner that the man's sin prevented him from making propitiation.[171]

Neither the reference from Plato or the inscription demand rendering ἐξιλάσκεσθαι as either "expiation" or "propitiation." Furthermore, when one considers the Plutarchan usages especially, it is apparent that the predominant classical Greek usage of ἱλασμός was "propitiation," or, at least, the concept of it. Therefore, if one were to favor "expiation" and exclude any conception of "propitiation," the argument would have to be that the translators of the Septuagint and/or New Testament writers developed a new meaning for ἱλασμός and its cognates.

III.B.1.c. *Conclusions from Classical Greek Usage*

First John 1:7 asserts that the blood of Jesus cleanses those who have fellowship with Him "from all sin." The notion of cleansing by means of sacrifice is also communicated in *Solon*. The word that Plutarch used is καθαπμοῖς, which is parallel in concept to John's assertion that το ἅιμα Ἰησοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ καθαρίζει ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἁμαρτίας. Plutarch used the term ἱλασμοῖς with καθαπμοῖς with regard to the purification of the city. He did not explain how the purification was accomplished. However, there are accounts of Epimenides' purification of Attica in other sources. Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* attested to an ancient tradition (albeit prevalent) with regard to the influence of Epimenides upon the Athenians.

> Epimenides, according to Theopompus and many other writers, was . . . a native of Cnossos in Crete. . . . So he became famous throughout Greece, and was believed to be a favourite of heaven.

---

[171] James H. Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources* (1930; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949) 303.

> Hence, when the Athenians were attacked by pestilence, and the Pythian priestess bade them purify the city, they sent . . . to ask the help of Epimenides. And he came in the 46th Olympiad, purified their city, and stopped the pestilence in the following way. He took sheep, some black and others white, and brought them to the Areopagus; and there he let them go whither they pleased, instructing those who followed them to mark the spot where each sheep lay down and offer a sacrifice to the local divinity. And thus, it is said, the plague was stayed. Hence even to this day altars may be found in different parts of Attica with no name inscribed upon them, which are memorials of this atonement. According to some writers he declared the plague to have been caused by the pollution which Cylon brought on the city and showed them how to remove it. In consequence two young men, Cratinus and Ctesibius were put to death and the city was delivered from the scourge [*Lives* I.109-10].[172]

Interestingly, the account by Laertius referenced the sacrifice of Cratinus and Ctesibius, which was intended to purify the city on account of the Cylon pollution. Athenaeus gave an additional account of Cratinus, which is relevant to explaining how the purification was accomplished in Attica.

> The circumstance, too, that happened to Cratinus the Athenian, are very notorious. For he, being a very beautiful boy, at the time when Epimenides was purifying Attica by human sacrifices, on account of some old pollution . . . willing have himself up [*Deipnosophists* XIII.602C-D]. . . .[173]

The two accounts with regard to the purification are contradictory. Diogenes stated that Epimenides led black and white sheep to the Areopagus, where they were sacrificed, whereas in the Athenaeus' account, it was human blood that purified Attica. Athenaeus made be helpful in resolving the contradiction because he asserted that the story with regard to Cratinus was "stated by Polemo Periegetes, in his Replies to Neanthes, to be all mere inventions" (*Lives* I.110).[174] The usage of human blood for purification is most likely false since Herodotus (5.70-71) and Thucydides (1.126-27) did not mention it in their accounts of the Cylonian

---

[172] Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 2 vols., trans. R. D. Hicks (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970) 1:115.

[173] Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists*, 3 vols., trans. C. D. Yonge (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1854) 3:960-61.

[174] Ibid. 3:961; see also, Harrison, *Prolegomena*, 487-88.

pollution and its repercussions. Aristotle also was silent with regard to purification by human blood (*Athenian Constitution* 1).[175]

When one examines the evidence, it is not entirely convincing that blood was used in Greek sacrificial rituals. For instance, McCarthy concluded, "In fact, ordinary Greek sacrifice did not bother about the blood."[176] The reason is that the blood belonged to humans as opposed to the gods.[177] Of course, the eating of blood was detestable among the Jews. The "cult of the dead and the netherworld did stress blood" because it was "connected with death, not life."

> In ritual, blood was used in the cult of the dead. The oldest evidence is Odyssey x—xi, where the "strengthless dead" attain a semblance of life by drinking blood from the offerings, but all remains brooding and sinister (contrast Iliad xxiii, 34: "Everythere about the body blood ran by the cupful," which is merely an expression of Achilles' heroic bounty at Patroclus' funeral feast). This sinister aspect of the ritual use of blood appears in the very vocabulary of Greek. In the Boeotian dialect death rites were called "pourings of blood" (αἱμακουρίαι) but in standard Greek ἐναγίσματα, a noun built on the phrase ἐν ἄγει, "under a curse. These things were horrors, as in Euripedes picture of Death personified skulking about the tomb to suck the "gory clots" of blood.[178]

Precise evidence for purification by blood in Greek sacrificial rituals is lacking. Behm referenced the following: "in Greek religion, Eusthath. in Od., 22, 494 and 797: δι' αἵματος ἦν κάθαρσις . . . καὶ ἡ τῶν φονέων, οἳ αἵματι νιπτόμενοι καθάρσιον εἶχον αὐτό; Heracl. Frg., 5 (Diels, I, 78, 6 ff.): καθαίρονται . . . αἵματι

---

[175] See, for instance, Dennis D. Hughes, *Human Sacrifice in Ancient Greece* (London: Routledge, 1991) 155-56.

[176] Dennis J. McCarthy, "The Symbolism of Blood and Sacrifice," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (June 1969): 170.

[177] Antinous, for example, remarked, "We have some goats' paunches roasting there at the fire, which we stuffed with fat and blood and planned to have for supper" (*Odyssey* XVIII.42-46) (p. 274 in the Rieu translation).

[178] McCarthy, "Symbolism of Blood," 172. "There were two general concepts of offerings to the gods prevalent in the area. One, Hittite, Mesopotamian, and Egyptian saw them as simply provisioning the deities. The other, Greek, Levantine, and perhaps South Arabian, burned the god's share. Seemingly the gods needed this portion too, but the basic idea is quite different from laying a table and waiting for the god to consume the food. Further and to our purpose, neither concept generally attributes importance to blood as such" (ibid. 175).

μιαινόμενοι."[179] Eustathius was archbishop of Thessalonica (d. ca. 1194 AD) and the last allegorical commentator on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Due to its late dating, his *Commentarii ad Homeri Odysseam* is irrelevant to the present study.[180] Nevertheless, Rieu's translation is as follows: "Eurycleia . . . brought fire and sulphur, with which Odysseus thoroughly purified the hall." The Greek text supports this translation: Εὐρύχλεια . . . δ' ἄρα πῦρ καὶ θήϊον: αὐτὰρ' Οδυσσεὺς εὖ διεθείωσεν μέγαρον.

Heraclitus (ca. 540-480 BC) was a Greek philosopher, sometimes known as the "Dark Philosopher" for his enigmatic manner of speaking. Fragment 5 is a condemnation of current religious practices of his time in a manner similar to Xenophanes' criticism of religious anthropomorphism (*Fragment* 14-16). Heraclitus thought quite disparagingly of those who sought to purify themselves with blood: "They vainly (try to) purify themselves with blood when they are *defiled* (with it)! – (which is) as if one who had stepped into mud should (try to) wash himself *off* with mud! He would be thought mad, were any man to notice him so doing. Furthermore, they *pray to* these statues! – (which is) as though one were to (try to) carry on a conversation with *houses*, without any recognition of who gods and heroes (really) are" (*Fragment* 5).[181]

Merely because there is reference made of those who sought to "purify themselves with blood" does not indicate an axiomatic influence of the Greek religion or sacrifice upon the Johannine statement with regard to the cleansing blood of Jesus. Furthermore, as researched by McCarthy, blood was not thought as belonging to the gods; rather, the cult of dead and netherworld stressed blood as food for the deceased in Greek propitiatory rites. The Greek ritual is incomparable to the Johannine statement that the blood of Jesus cleanses—those who have fellowship with Him—from all sin.

---

[179] Johannes Behm, "αἷμα," in *Theological Dictionary*, 1:176.

[180] Harrison (*Prolegomena*, 24-25) noted that Eustathius "does not see that Homer's purification is actual, physical, rational, not magical." The archbishop referred to purification by blood and the *φαμακοί*.

[181] Heraclitus, *Fragments*, trans. T. M. Robinson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987) 13.

The message of the New Testament was fundamentally distinct from the traditional concepts of atonement in classical Greek. For example, an additional contrast between the atoning death of Jesus Christ and the conception of atonement in Plutarch is that the Christian message "spoke not of atonement for a particular crime," but of atonement sufficient for all humanity.[182] Furthermore, the love of God was the motivation for Him to send His Son as the ἱλασμός for sin (1 John 4:10). God's love was manifested in that He "sent His only begotten Son into the world" (4:9). John 3:16 testifies similarly: "'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. . . . " The Son is "the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14), who gave His life vicariously and voluntarily (as opposed to His life being an atoning sacrifice for a crime or to appease the dead).

First John is also distinct in its description of Jesus Christ as παράκλητον and ἱλασμός. Jesus' advocacy with the Father is for those who have fellowship with Him, and for whom He is also the ἱλασμός for their sins. A common assertion with regard to παράκλητος is that, with the exception of the New Testament, throughout the entire corpus of known Greek and Hellenistic usage the unambiguous meaning of παράκλητος is to be derived from legal activity, such as "a legal advisor or helper or advocate in the relevant court."[183] Contrariwise, the research of Grayston led him to confirm that παράκλητος "did not derive its meaning from legal activity but was a more general term, sometimes used in legal contexts, meaning superior or sponsor," which is a meaning that corresponds well with the usage in First John.[184]

The standard Greek lexicon concurred with Grayston. The entry noted that the technical meaning of "attorney" or "lawyer" is rare. " The few times that παράκλητος is found in pre-Christian and extra-Christian literature, it is used more generally to mean, "*one who appears on another's behalf, mediator, intercessor, helper*."[185] The usage of παράκλητος in pre-Christian Greek and Hellenistic

[182] Martin Hengel, *The Atonement: The Origins of the Doctrine in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007) 31.
[183] Johannes Behm, "παράκλητος," in *Theological Dictionary*, 5:803.
[184] Grayston, "Meaning of PARAKLÊTOS," 67.
[185] Bauer et al., *Greek-English Lexicon*, 618.

literature does not ever indicate a relationship (fellowship) between human beings and deities.

The noun παράκλητος is used in First John to indicate a relationship that exists between Christians and God, particularly with regard to the sin of a believer. Philo[186] provided the most frequent usage of παράκλητος and made it feasible to discern two distinguishable meanings: (1) someone who gives advice with regard to a challenging decision; and, (2) someone who gives support to an individual asserting a claim, or resolving a dispute, or refuting an allegation. The second meaning is the most common. The notion is that an individual needs someone of influence, or else a company of supporters. For instance, Philo's account of Flaccus describes how the anti-Semitic prefect of Alexandria and Egypt had favor with Emperor Tiberius but not his successor Gaius. Flaccus needed another παράκλητος, "by whom Gaius may be made propitious [ἐξευμενίζειν]" (*In Flaccum* 22).[187]

Philo also used his knowledge of contemporary politics to describe the service of Joseph within the Egyptian government. When his brothers who had sold him into slavery appeared before him, Joseph first tested them "in a most angry manner, and with the greatest possible severity." Joseph eventually informed his brothers that they would not need anyone else as a παράκλητος because he gave them his "complete forgiveness" for all that they had done to him (*De Iosepho* 220-39).[188]

Having used the language of a παράκλητος in the context of the royal household, Philo also used the word with regard to "human relations with God,"[189] which, as already stated, is unparalleled in the non-Jewish Greco-Roman religions and literatures. For example, when repentant Jews plead for "reconciliation with the Father," they have three παράκλητοι: (1) God's own mercy and gentleness, and "compassionate nature;" (2) "the holiness of all the founders of the nation;" and, (3) "the improvement and amelioration of those persons who are brought to treaties

[186] Behm, "παράκλητος," in *Theological Dictionary*, 5:802-03.
[187] C. D. Yonge, trans., *The Works of Philo* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993) 726-27.
[188] Ibid. 454-55.
[189] Grayston, "Meaning of PARAKLÊTOS," 73.

and agreements" (*De Praemiis et Poenis* IX.166-67).[190] Commenting with regard to the Levitical offerings, Philo explained that only after one "has appeased" (ἱλάσκεσθαι) an injured person, may that person enter into the Temple "to implore remission of the sins which he has committed, taking with him an irreproachable mediator [παράκλητος]" (*De Specialibus Legibus, I* XLIII.237).[191]

The last example in Philo is with regard to the high priest offering prayers and sacrifices, while wearing the sacred vestments (figuratively for "all the world"), "to procure forgiveness of sins, and a supply of unlimited blessings." "For it was indispensible that the man who was consecrated to the Father of the world, should have as a paraclete [παράκλητος], his son, the being most perfect in all virtue" (*De Vita Mosis, II* XXVI.131-34).[192] Grayston deduced, "This is good Jewish doctrine: when men ask God for forgiveness and benefits, they rely for support on God's nature and their own repentance."[193]

Philo's usage of παράκλητος is consistently with regard to either an advocate in a royal household, administrative building, or temple, as opposed to finding usage with regard to legal activity. The παράκλητος is someone who provides advice or makes a significant individual favorable toward a suppliant; it is a "propitiation" made effective "by the standing and the intercessions" of the παράκλητος; or the person of significance, in particular, may happen to be the suppliant's παράκλητος; or when guilty suppliants are repentant, they do not have need for a "separate" παράκλητος.[194]

The nature of the Lord Jesus Christ as both παράκλητος with the Father, in addition to being the ἱλασμός for sinners, depicts an human relationship with God that does not exist in pre-Christian Greek literature. In contrast to the Greek literatures (prior to the third century AD), ancient Jewish thought did regard an advocate's death as the basis for being a παράκλητος (cf. Isa 53:10, 12; 4 Macc 6:28-

[190] Yonge, *Works of Philo*, 680.
[191] Ibid. 556.
[192] Ibid. 502.
[193] Grayston, "Meaning of PARAKLÊTOS," 73-74.
[194] Ibid. 74.

29; Heb 9:11-26). Similarly, in First John, the Lord Jesus is the believer's παράκλητος with the Father based upon the fact that He Himself is the ἱλασμός for sinners.[195]

The usage of ἱλασμός in pre-Christian and extra-Christian literatures is almost exclusively by Plutarch. However, the similarities in usage of ἱλασμός and even the concept of atonement in Plutarch's writings are entirely irrelevant because the differences between the biblical usage and the Plutarchan usage is fundamentally profound. The only association between the biblical usage of ἱλασμός and the usage in classical Greek is the use of the term to indicate the reality of a propitiatory atonement (i.e. an atoning/propitiatory sacrifice). The fundamental differences between the biblical usage of ἱλασμός and the usage of ἱλασμός in classical Greek is substantial; therefore, it would not be valid to affirm an influence of the latter upon the First John usage of ἱλασμός. However, the usage of ἱλασμός within Judaism and the Septuagint is quite frequent, particularly with regard to ἱλασμός rendering the penalty of sin ineffective.

The fact that ἱλασμός is used quite frequently within Judaism and the Septuagint greatly increases the likelihood that the Apostle John relied upon the Jewish concept of ἱλασμός as opposed to any Greek concepts. The reason why this assertion is stated with such certainty is the Johannine usage of παράκλητος within the context of a relationship of fallen humanity with God, especially with regard to the forgiveness of sins because the Lord Jesus is the ἱλασμός, which finds association only within the terminology of sacrifice of sacrifice in the Old Testament and usage of sacrificial language in Judaism and in the Septuagint. Consequently, it is valid to conclude that the Apostle John did not rely upon classical Greek literature for his usage of the term ἱλασμός with regard to the forgiveness of sins.

---

[195] Talbert, *Reading John*, 21; cf. Lev Gillet, *Communion in the Messiah: Studies in the Relationship between Judaism and Christianity* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1942; reprint, 2002) 90-91; B. J. Oropeza, *Paul and Apostasy: Eschatology, Perseverance, and Falling Away in the Corinthian Congregation* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000) 125.

III.B.2. In Judaism

Whereas the usage of ἱλασμός in classical Greek was limited almost exclusively to Plutarch, the term was used by two very important representatives of Hellenistic Judaism. Philo, for instance, made several references to cultic propitiation with either the penalty or power of sin being rendered ineffective as the culminating result (*Legum Allegoriae,* III LXI.174; *De Posteritate Caini* XIII. 48; *De Plantatione* XIV.61; *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres* XXXVII.179; *De Congressu Quaerendae Eruditionis Gratia* XVII.89, XIX.107). The assertion has been made that classical and Koine Greek employ a usage of ἱλασμός and its cognates that can be regularly understood with "the meaning 'placate', 'propitiate', with a personal object;" however, Hellenistic Judaism would be an exception.[196] Whether such an assertion should be affirmed or denied will be answered by examining the writings of Josephus and Philo.

Josephus' use of ἱλάσκομαι is located within his account of the Philistine's expedition against the Hebrews and how they were beaten. Saul desired to plunder the Philistine's camp, and called Ahitub the high priest to seek God's favor in this expedition. God, however, refused to answer, and Saul perceived that some sin against Him must be concealed, which is the reason for His silence. The account in *The Antiquities of the Jews* reads, "Now I swear by him myself, that though he hath committed this sin should prove to be my own son Jonathan, I will slay him, and by that means will appease the anger of God [τὸν θεὸν οὕτως ἱλάσασθαι] against us, and that in the very same manner as if I were to punish a stranger, and one not at all related to me, for the same offense" (VI.124).[197] The use of ἱλάσκομαι in this account

[196] Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 82.

[197] William Whiston, trans., *The Works of Josephus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987) 161. The Greek text of Josephus' works is from the Perseus Digitial Library (Tufts University) available from http://www.perseus.tufts.edu. Whiston translated various Greek words as "appease" for eleven occurrences (in addition to the four sections cited [*Antiquities* VI.124; VIII.112; X.59; *Against Apion* I.308], the others include *The Antiquities of the Jews* VIII.362; XI.152; XIII.317; *War of the Jews* I.92, 521; V.19, 385; "appeased" for one occurrence (*Antiquities* 18.88); "appeasing" for one occurrence (*Antiquities* 12.113); "expiation" for seven occurrences (*Antiquities* III.238, 241, 246, 247; 3.160[a]; XVII.166[b]; *War*

indicates that God was angry because someone had committed a sin. Josephus reflects the belief that God who at first was silent could be made gracious (ἱλάσασθαι). More than the concept of expiation is evident in the account because the object of the verb is God.

Another use of ἱλάσασθαι is also located within *Antiquities*. The context is how Solomon brought the Ark of the Covenant into the Temple, and made supplications to God, in addition to offering public sacrifice to Him. Solomon praised the majesty of God, and remarked, "for with what other instrument can we better appease [ἱλάσασθαι] thee, when thou art angry at us, or more properly preserve thy favor, than with our voice (VIII.112). The thought is again upon propitiation, and how public prayers could placate the divine anger. The evidence that God was appeased was seen in how a fire came rushing from the air to consume the sacrifices upon the altar. The sacrifices were regarded as securing God's favorable disposition (VIII.118-19).

There are two occurrences of the verb ἱλάσκεσθαι. The first usage is within *Antiquities*. The context is with regard to the reign of Josiah, and how he was both religious and righteous. Having read "the holy books of Moses," he sent for Huldah the prophetess, so "she would appease [ἱλάσκεσθαι] God, and endeavor to render him propitious [εὐμενῆ] to them, for that there was cause to fear lest, upon the

---

of the Jews I.32); "propitious" for six occurrences (*Antiquities* I.208, 227; VII.158; X.42, 59; *War of the Jews* VI.47); and, "propitiated" for two occurrences (*Antiquities* VI.117ᶜ; XIII.230). In addition to the use of ἱλάσασθαι (2x) and ἱλάσκεσθαι (2x), there are several words rendered "propitious" in Whiston's translation of *The Antiquities of the Jews*. For example, one occurrence is with regard to Abraham's deception toward Abimelech in allowing the king to believe that Sarah was only Abraham's sister. God inflicted Abimelech so he would not "corrupt" Sarah, and "promised to be gracious [παρέξειν] to him" if he secured Sarah's chastity (I.208). Another is with regard to Abraham's intent to sacrifice his son Isaac. Abraham was prepared to sacrifice Isaac, yet remarked, "if God pleased to be present and propitious at this sacrifice, he would provide himself an oblation [δώσειν οὖν κἀκείνῳ ἱερεῖον, εἴπερ εὐμενὴς μέλλει τῇ θυσίᾳ παρατυγχάνειν αὐτοῦ]" (I.227). However, with the exception of the four sections cited (*Antiquities* VI.124; VIII.112; X:59; *Against Apion* I.308), such translations were not based upon any of the ἱλάσκομαι word group. Josephus certainly used other words than ἱλασμός and its cognates to express either "expiation" or "propitiation;" nevertheless, the concept of propitiation in the sense that God's anger/wrath is averted by offerings and/or prayers was certainly a common notion for this important representative of Hellenistic Judaism.

transgression of the laws of Moses by their forefathers, they should be in peril of going into captivity" (X.59). The account with regard to Josiah commissioning Huldah is noteworthy for its use of the verb ἱλάσκεσθαι in relation to "fear" for any "transgression of the laws." The second Josephian usage is within *Against Apion*. The context is with regard to the "people of the Jews being leprous and scabby," and the intent of Bocchoris, king of Egypt, to have them drowned. Others who were "subject to certain other kinds of distempers" were "sent into the desert places, in order to be exposed to destruction." The people assembled themselves "that they also should fast the next night, and propitiate [ἱλάσκεσθαι] the gods, in order to obtain deliverance from them" (I.308). According to this account, the divine anger was not against bodily imperfections but directed toward wicked practices (I.306).

One final section in *Antiquities* is worth consideration. The context is with regard to Ptolemy II Philadelphus and how he procured the Jews to enrich his valuable library at Alexandria with a copy of the Old Testament (the Septuagint, of course). Heeding the advice of Aristeas (an officer of the royal guard), Ptolemy emancipated many Jewish captives to earn their favor for the purpose of having capable Jews to translate the Old Testament into Greek. Ptolemy "was chiefly delighted" with the translation, and wondered why more historians and poets did not make mention of it. Demetrius informed the king that two individuals, Theopompus and the poet Theodectes, had attempted to address the "sacred books" of the Jews. Theopompus was "disturbed in his mind" for more than a month when he attempted to write "somewhat about them; "and upon some intermission of his distemper, he appeased [ἐξιλάσκετο] God [by prayer], as suspecting that his madness proceeded from that cause" (XII.112). Similarly, when Theodectes desired "to make mention of things that were contained in the sacred books, he was afflicted . . . and that upon his being conscious of the occasion of his distemper, and appeasing God [ἐξευμενισάμενος τὸν θεόν] (by prayer), he was freed from that affliction."[198] Liddell and Scott indicate no other meaning for ἐξευμενίζω than "propitiate" (God,

[198] Whiston, *Works*, 315.

in particular).[199] An additional occurrence of the phrase, τὸν θεὸν ἐξευμενίζω, is located in VII.362, which is in reference to the prophet Elijah announcing the doom of Ahab and all his family for his exceeding wickedness. Ahab thus repented, "confessed his sins, and endeavored thus to appease God [τὸν θεὸν οὕτως ἐξευμενίζω]." Josephus used the term ἐξευμενίζω as a parallel to ἱλάσασθαι and ἱλάσκεσθαι. Indeed, there is no other meaning for the Josephian usage ἱλάσκομαι than the concept of propitiation.[200]

Philo used the verbs ἱλάσκομαι and ἐξιλάσκομαι infrequently. His usage of ἱλάσκομαι was usually to indicate the meaning that God was made gracious or placated. There are varying contexts in which either God or man could be the subject. Ἱλάσκεσθαι could also have the meaning that one made expiation, was cleansed from sin, or made atonement. Varying accounts refer to expiation by means of cultic or moral activity.[201]

De Plantatione has a section addressing those who drink wine "in moderation and on fitting occasions," yet first they offer prayers and sacrifices, "and then, having propitiated the deity [ἱλασάμενοι τὸ θεῖον]" they purify "their bodies and souls, the former with baths, and the latter with the waters of law and of right instruction [σώματα καὶ ψυξὰς καθηράμενοι, τὰ μὲν λουτροῖς, τὰ δὲ νόμων καὶ παιδείας ὀρθῆς ῥεύμασι]" (162).[202] God was the object of the ἱλασάμενοι, and purification (καθηράμενοι) was made thereafter. The use of ἱλάσκομαι here has the normal meaning in Philo, which is to propitiate.

One section in *De Abrahamo* (124-32) has reference to "three different classes of human dispositions. The subject of the following statement is a man: "τὸν φόβῳ τὴν ἡγεμονικὴν καὶ δεσποτικὴν ἱλασκόμενον ἐξουσίαν εἰς ἀποτροπὴν

---

[199] The account in 4 Maccabees (4:11) is with regard to Apollonius, governor Syria, and his attempt to seize treasuries from the Jewish Temple. When he entered the Temple, "angels of horseback with lightning flashing from their weapons appeared from heaven," which caused great dread in Apollonius, "and with tears begged the Hebrews to pray for him and propitiate [ἐξευμενίσωνται] the wrath of the heavenly army."

[200] Büchsel and Herrmann, "ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός," in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:314.

[201] Ibid. 3:315.

[202] Philonis Judaei, *Opera Omnia*, 3 vols. (Lipsiae: E. B. Schwickerti, 1828-30) 2:177.

κολάσεως·" (129).[203] The assertion does not have reference to God; however, the use of ἱλασκόμαι demonstrates the acquaintance of Philo with the normal meaning of the word. God is the object of the verb ἱλασκόμαι in *De Vita Mosis, II* (24): "ἑορτάζωσιν ἱλασκόμενοι τὸν πατέρα τοῦ παντὸς αἰσίοις εὐχαῖς"[204] Similarly, in *De Specialibus Legibus, I* (116), one reads: "ἵνα διὰ μέσου τινὸς ἄνθρωποι μὲν ἱλάσκωνται θεόν, θεὸς δὲ τὰς χάριτας ἀνθρώποις ὑποδιακόνῳ τινὶ χρώμενος ὀρέγῃ καὶ χορηγῇ."[205] *De Specialibus Legibus, I* references the need to appease (ἱλάσηται) someone who has been offended (237).[206] Philo also used the phrase τὸν θεὸν ἐξευμενίζω in similar propitiatory contexts as Josephus. For instance, in *De Specialibus Legibus*, II, he wrote, "αἷς στουδάζουσι τὸν θεὸν ἐξευμενίζεσθαι παραίτησιν ἁμαρτημάτων ἑκουσίων τε καὶ ἀκουσίων αἰτούμενοι καὶ χρηστὰ ἐλπίζοντες" (196).[207]

Philo used ἱλάσκεσθαι in varying contexts. *De Mutatione Nominum* refers to the fact that God "is propitiated by three different kinds of repentance [οὐκοῦν τρισὶ μετανοίας τρόποις ἱλάσκεται τοῖς εἰρημένοις]" (235).[208] *De Vita Mosis, II* (201) reads similarly: "On this account Moses ordered the man to be thrown into prison and bound with chains; and then he addressed propitiatory prayers to God [τὸν θεὸν ἱλασάμενος], begging him to be merciful."[209] The motivation for the "propitiatory prayers" does involve cleansing for "that miserable soul which has been insulted by the voice" of the impious and profane. Nevertheless, there is also the notion of cursing and the judgment of God, as combined with the request for God "to be merciful to the necessities of the external senses." The account in *De Vita Mosis* appears to have more the concept of expiation, yet not without the concept of punishment (and acceptance based upon God's mercy and propitiatory prayers).

---

[203] Philonis Alexandrini, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 5 vols., eds. Leopold Cohn and Paul Wendland (Berolini: Georgii Reimerii, 1896-1906) 4:29.
[204] Ibid. 4:205.
[205] Ibid. 5:29.
[206] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 5:57; Yonge, *Works of Philo*, 556.
[207] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 5:135.
[208] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 3:197; Yonge, *Works*, 361.
[209] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 4:247; Yonge; *Works*, 509.

De Specialibus Legibus, I refers to offenses against others, and "some against holy and sacred things" [ἱερὰ καὶ ἅγια δρᾶται] and specifically "those which are unintentionally committed" against others; but for the purification of such as have been committed against sacred things [ἐπὶ τοῖς ἱεροῖς κάθαρσιν ἱλάσκεσθαι κριῷ νομοθετεῖ] he commands" a trespass offering (234).[210] Breytenbach regarded this use of ἱλάσκεσθαι to signify the meaning of purification; therefore, purification from guilt would be the object of the verb ἱλάσκεσθαι.[211] If the verb ἱλάσκεσθαι were passive, then the result would be that cleansing "of offences . . . committed against sacred things" receives purification when a sacrificial ram is offered. If the verb ἱλάσκεσθαι is in the middle voice, then the result would be that cleansing "of offences . . . against sacred things" is purified by the offering of a sacrificial ram. Of course, the passive and the middle verb usage are both tautological. If the verb ἱλάσκεσθαι is in the passive voice, then (with God as the indirect subject of the verb), the meaning would be the normal usage of ἱλάσκομαι by Philo. Therefore, the passive voice would indicate that God is propitiated by the offering of a sacrificial ram, which results in the cleansing "of offences . . . committed against sacred things." If the verb ἱλάσκεσθαι is in the middle voice, then (with God as the object of the verb), the meaning would be that God is propitiated by the offering of a sacrificial ram, which is for the cleansing "of offences . . . committed against sacred things." Similar to the usage of ἱλάσκεται in *De Mutatione Nominum* (235), which was already cited, the better rendering is to convey the meaning that God is the one who is propitiated; therefore, the notion of purification would not have an object of the verb specified (wherein there is purificatory application). Wherever ἱλάσκεσθαι means "purification," the circumstances indicate that divine anger has been abated.

De Praemiis et Poenis refers to the high priest, who "worships the living God, and by which also he will bring before him in a propitiating [ἱλασκόμενος] manner" (56).[212] A similar usage to that found in *De Mutatione Nominum* (235) and *De*

---

[210] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 5:57; Yonge, *Works*, 556.

[211] Cilliers Breytenbach, *Versöhnung: Eine Studie zur paulinischen Soteriologie* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1989) 94.

[212] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 5:348; Yonge, *Works*, 669.

Praemiis et Poenis (56) is the usage of ἐξιλάσασθαι, in *De Posteritate Caini*, which translated reads, "For to offer prayers [Τὸ γὰρ ἐξιλάσασθαι] over them has nearly such an effect as this: it is confessing that, though we have them in our soul living and flourishing, we nevertheless do not yield, but make a stand against them all, and resist them vigorously, until we have entirely sent away the scape-goat and made atonement [μέχρις ἂν παντελῶς ἀποδιοπομπησώμεθα]" (72).[213] Philo's usage of ἐξιλάσασθαι here is perhaps a direct citation from the Septuagint. However, if that is questioned, then *De Posteritate Caini* 70 was certainly cited directly, as seen in the following comparison.

> Philo: Τοῦ δ' ἐναντίου βίου παράδειγμα τίθεται τὸν ἀπατυχόντα τοὺ κλήρου τράγον. "Στήσει γὰρ αὐτὸν," φησὶ, "ζῶντα ἐναντίον κυρίου, τοῦ ἐξιλάσασθαι ἐπ᾽αὐτοῦ ὥστε, ἐξαποστεῖλαι αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν ἀποπομπήν)" ἄγαν ἐξητασμένως.[214]
>
> Septuagint: καὶ τὸν χίμαρον, ἐφ᾽ὅν ἐπῆλεν ἐπ᾽αὐτὸν ὁ κλῆρος τοῦ ἀποπομπαίου, στήσει αὐτὸν ζῶντα ἔναντι κυρίου τοῦ ἐξιλάσασθαι ἐπ᾽αὐτοῦ ὥστε ἀποστεῖλαι αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν ἀποπομπήν· ἀφήσει αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν ἔρημον.

One can easily discern that Philo used the phrase ἐξιλάσασθαι ἐπ᾽, in the same manner as the Septuagint translation of Leviticus 16:10. *De Posteritate Caini* 72 appears to be more interpretative, as evident in the explanation of the human activity, τὸ γὰρ ἐξιλάσασθαι, and the explanatory result as ἀποδιοπομπησώμεθα. Moreover, he likely read ἀποπομπήν as "*carrying away evil*, of the scapegoat,"[215] and thus Philo conveyed a predominant meaning from the Septuagint and his own time. The usage and meaning of ἱλάσκομαι and ἐξιλάσκομαι by Philo involves either God or sometimes an individual being propitiated, and occasionally includes the notion of expiation also, in addition to the expression of mercy.

Josephus did not use ἱλασμός in any contexts, yet Philo used the term primarily with regard to the sacrificial cult. Philo wrote regarding Leviticus 16:8 in *De Plantatione* as follows: "τὸ γινόμενον ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος ἡμέρα τῇ λεχομένῃ τοῦ

---

[213] Philonis, *Opera Omnia*, 2:20; Yonge, *Works*, 139.
[214] Philonis, *Opera Omnia*, 2:19.
[215] Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 213.

ἱλασμοῦ"(61).[216] *Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres* reads similarly: "καταπλήττει με καὶ ἡ τῶν προσαγομένων τῷ ἱλασμῷ δυεῖν τράγων ἐπίκρισις ὁμοῦ καὶ διανομὴ τεμνομένων ἀδήλῳ καὶ ἀτεκμάρτῳ τομεῖ, κλήρῳ·" (179).[217]

De Congressu Quaerendae Eruditionis Gratia (89) refers to a hymn of Moses wherein he mentioned "most excellent things," such as prayers, first-fruits, the offerings of the priests, the Passover observance, τὸν ἱλασμόν, the remission of debts, the sabbatical year, the year of Jubilee, the tabernacle, and "ten thousand other things".[218] The usage of ἱλασμός is within the context of various provisions from God; therefore, it would probably be best to understand God as the implied subject, so that He was celebrated for His actions on behalf of sinful humanity. Perhaps later in *De Congressu Quaerendae Eruditionis Gratia* (107), an explanation of the early usage of ἱλασμός is provided. For instance, the sacrifices are called ἱλασμούς. God is then said to become at once ἵλεως and ἵλεως too.[219] God is both the subject and the object. The sacrifices, which are "propitiations," render God propitious, yet since He initiated the offerings, He is ἵλεως too.

Referring to the experience of Israel in the wilderness, and how God made His people humble and dependent upon His every word (cf. Deut 8:3), Philo wrote in *Legum Allegoriae*, III how "this ill-treating and humbling of them is a sign of his being propitiated [ἱλασμός] by them, for he is propitiated [ἱλάσκεται] as to the souls of us who are wicked on the tenth day." When God removes all "pleasant things" from His people, they "appear" to themselves "to be ill-treated," which is true, "to have God propitious [ἵλεω]" to His own (174).[220] The context in which ἱλασμός is used in *De Posteritate Caini* is with regard to various humiliations that were experienced by the descendants of Cain. Addressing a "second kind of humiliation" that "arises from the strength of perseverance, ἡ καὶ ἱλασμὸς ἕπεται, according to the perfect number of the decade" (48).[221] The humbling from God is to

[216] Philonis, *Opera Omnia*, 1:156.
[217] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 3:41.
[218] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 3:89, Yonge, *Works*, 311-12.
[219] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 3:92, Yonge, *Works*, 313.
[220] Philonis, *Opera Omnia*, 1:174; Yonge, *Works*, 70.
[221] Philonis, *Opera Omnia*, 2:14; Yonge, *Works*, 136.

experience the divine grace. Philo appears to indicate that the humiliations have an expiatory function, thus on the basis of Deuteronomy 8:3, the act of humiliation is ἱλασμός.

The allegorical interpretation is difficult to understand; yet it is similar to the emphasis upon the tenth day of the month in *De Congressu Quaerendae Eruditionis Gratia* (107),[222] which is when the soul "addresses its supplications" to God. God is seen as being made favorable, which conveys the notion of propitiation, yet the inability of fallen humanity to experience God's grace without His work for the benefit of humanity, which conveys the notion of expiation, is also communicated. Stökl ben Ezra noted that the supplications "have a propitiating function and include supplications and praise of God's gracious nature."[223] Everyone "is at this time

> occupied in prayers and supplications [λιταῖς καὶ ἱκεσίαις], and since they all devote their entire leisure to nothing else from morning till evening, except to most acceptable prayers [δεητικωτάτας εὐχάς], by which they endeavour to gain the favour of God [τὸν θεὸν ἐξευμενίζεσθαι], entreating pardon [παραίτησιν] for their sins and hoping for his mercy, not for their own merits but through the compassionate nature of that Being who will have forgiveness rather than punishment.[224]

The effect of the prayers "to gain the favour of God" (i.e. placating) is related to forgiveness, which is explained in *De Vita Mosis, II*.

> But on this fast it is not lawful to take any food or any drink, in order that no bodily passion may at all disturb or hinder the pure operations of the mind; but these passions are wont to be generated by fullness and satiety, so that at this time men feast, propitiating [ἱλασκόμενοι] the Father of the universe with holy prayers, by which they are accustomed to solicit pardon [ἀμνηστίαν] for their former sins, and the acquisition and enjoyment of new blessings.[225]

---

[222] Jutta Leonhardt, *Jewish Worship in Philo of Alexandria* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001) 43-45.

[223] Daniel Stökl ben Ezra, *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 46.

[224] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 5:135; Yonge, *Works*, 586.

[225] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 4:205; Yonge, *Works*, 493.

There is a purifying effect to the humiliations because they provide "the necessary conditions for the propitiatory effect of the prayers."[226] According to an almost parallel account in the *Apocalypse of Elijah* (1:15-22), the fast was to have a twofold effect: (1) purifying one's sinful desires and passions; and, (2) preventing the anger of God, and the accumulation of wrath on the day of judgment.[227]

Büchsel noted that Philo regarded ἱλαστήριον as synonymous for the כַּפֹּרֶת.[228] Philo did not use term ἱλαστήριον often; therefore, it would seem to be conjecture to think that he used it in a manner synonymous with כַּפֹּרֶת. He used τὸ ἱλαστήριον to denote the "mercy-seat" in *De Cherubim* (25).[229] However, in *De Vita Mosis, II*, he referred to the mercy seat of the Ark as ἐπίθεμα ὡσανεὶ τῶμα το λεγόμενον ἐν ἱεραῖς βίβλοις ἱλαστήριον (95) and also as ἐπίθεμα τὸ προσαγορευόμενον ἱλαστήριον (97), which is consistent with the practice of the translators of the Septuagint.[230]

Josephus used the word ἱλαστήριον once in *The Antiquities of the Jews*. His description of the cherubim in the Temple built by Solomon was said to be solid gold, and the inner wings were joined so that each formed a covering for the Ark of the Covenant, which was placed between them (VIII.72-73). Josephus stated how the cherubim in the Temple were interlocked by the tips of their wings, which covered the Ark "as under a tent or cupola" (VIII.103).[231] He developed an interesting and unique word, πρόστυποι δύο, for the cherubim, which would mean "two low reliefs" (III.138). Josephus did not refer to the "mercy seat" as ἱλαστήριον;

---

[226] Stökl ben Ezra, *Yom Kipper*, 46.

[227] "Remember that from the time when he created the heavens, the Lord created the fast for a benefit to men on account of the passions and desires which fight against you so that the evil will not inflame you. . . . Let the pure one fast, but whenever the one who fasts is not pure he has angered the Lord and also the angels. And he has grieved his soul, gathering up wrath for himself for the day of wrath. But a pure fast is what I created, with a pure heart and pure hands, it releases sin. It heals diseases. It casts out demons. It is effective up to the throne of God for an ointment and for a release from sin by means of a pure prayers" (James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983] 1:738).

[228] Büchsel, "ἱλαστήριον," in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:320.

[229] Philonis, *Opera Omnia*, 1:204; Yonge, *Works*, 82.

[230] Philonis, *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 4:223; Yonge, *Works*, 499.

[231] Whiston, *Works*, 216-17, 219.

rather, he used the term ἐπιθέματι.[232] Josephus' discussion with regard to the Day of Atonement did not even mention the Ark of the Covenant (III.240-43). Later in his *Antiquities* (XVI.182), Josephus made reference to "a propitiatory monument" (ἱλαστήριον μνῆμα).[233]

Both Josephus and Philo used the ἱλάσκομαι word group with the normal meaning of propitiate. One may, therefore, agree with the statement by Reed. Ἱλασμός "takes us into the sphere of sacrifice and expiation by means of it. Both Jews and Gentiles understood the meaning of *hilasmos*. When under a sense of sin they would make a propitiation—they approached the altar and laid upon it the sacrificial victim. *Hilasmos* expresses both the result and its means."[234]

III.B.3. In the Septuagint

The traditional rendition of ἱλασμός in English translations has been to denote the appeasing (propitiation) of God's anger toward sinners.[235] Primarily as influenced by Dodd, there are others who interpreted the term as denoting the removal of guilt and the purifying of the sinner.[236] Liddell and Scott simply defined ἱλασμός with a twofold meaning: (1) "a means of appeasing" and (2) "atonement, sin-offering."[237] A most unusual interpretation is that ἱλασμός was the divine action in offering propitiation to humanity.[238] The Apostle John was not dependent upon classical Greek literature for his usage of the term ἱλασμός with regard to the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, to determine whether the traditional rendering of ἱλασμός is correct, this work will now examine not only the meaning of ἱλασμός and its

[232] Ibid. 87.
[233] Ibid. 437.
[234] David Allen Reed, *Outline of the Fundamental Doctrines of the Bible* (New York and Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1893) 40.
[235] Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 23-48; Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 125-85; Nicole, "Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 117-57.
[236] Brown, *Epistles of John*, 217-22; Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 82-95; T. C. G. Thornton, "Propitiation or Expiation? *Hilasterion* and *Hilasmos* in Romans and 1 John," *Expository Times* 80 (1968): 53-55.
[237] Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 828.
[238] Clavier, "'ΙΛΑΣΜΟΣ," 287-304.

cognates from the perspective of its standard meaning, but also the respective Hebrew contexts in which the ἱλάσκομαι word group was used. The contention of this research is that the contexts in which ἱλασμός and its cognates were used is most important.

The term ἱλασμός and its cognates appear eight times in the New Testament. The noun ἱλασμός occurs twice, once in 1 John 2:2 and again in 4:10. The noun ἱλασμός is formed from the verb ἱλάσκομαι, which occurs twice, once in Luke 18:13 and again in Hebrews 2:17. The neuter term ἱλαστήριον is linked with ἱλάσκομαι, and it occurs twice, once in Romans 3:25 and again in Hebrews 9:5. The adjective ἵλεως is related to the same root as ἱλάσκομαι, and it occurs twice, once in Matthew 16:22 and again in Hebrews 8:12. The infrequent usage of these four words in the New Testament makes it necessary to consider the sacrificial language of the ἱλάσκομαι word group in the Septuagint.

The ἱλάσκομαι word group appears more frequently in the Septuagint than in the Greek New Testament. The verb ἱλάσκομαι occurs eleven times, and always in the middle or passive voice. The noun ἱλασμός occurs ten times within multiple contexts. The neuter ἱλαστήριον occurs twenty-seven times (twenty-two times in reference to the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant, and five times in reference to one of the ledges of Ezekiel's altar. The adjective ἵλεως occurs thirty-five times, in a manner consistent with the others words of the ἱλάσκομαι word group. The verb ἐξιλάσκομαι does not appear in the New Testament, yet it has an associative relationship in meaning with ἱλάσκομαι; therefore, it will be beneficial to consider its usage in the Septuagint since it occurs 105 times.[239]

To understand the meaning of the ἱλάσκομαι word group within the Septuagint, one should seek to understand how the translators understood the meaning of the cognate terms. However, it is not uncommon to identify lexicographers who fail to understand the meaning of the word group within the Septuagint because they prioritize the meaning of the *piel* stem of כפר, which was often used with the ἱλάσκομαι word group by the translators of the Septuagint.

[239] Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 138-42.

Whereas some lexicons render כִּפֶּר as "cover over, pacify, make propitiation,"[240] others render it as "to appease someone," "to make amends," "to make atonement," "to avert," "to make good by punishment," and "covers guilt, meaning forgives."[241] Dodd's argument "was basically a schematic analysis of the words used in the LXX to translate the Heb. *kipper*."[242] The essential argument of Dodd was a threefold consideration.

1. Passages in which words from the Hebrew root *kpr* are translated by words other than those from the *hilaskomai* group.
2. Passages in which the *hilaskomai* words are the translation of other Hebrew words than *kpr*.
3. Passages in which *hilaskomai* and related words translate the Hebrew root *kpr*.[243]

The first consideration does not assist in the enquiry to determine the meaning of ἱλασμός and its cognates. Having examined the occurrences of כִּפֶּר and its derivatives as rendered by words other than those of the ἱλάσκεσθαι class in the Septuagint, Dodd identified four renderings: (1) ἀπαλείφω, "to wash away" (cf. Dan 9:24); (2) καθαρίζω, "purification" (cf. Exod 29:36-37; 30:10; Deut 32:43; Isa 47:11); (3) ἁγιάζω, "to sanctify" (cf. Exod 29:33, 36); and, (4) ἀθῳόω, "to cancel," "to forgive" (Jer 18:23). The alleged conclusion is that when the translators of the Septuagint did "not render כִּפֶּר and its derivatives by the *ἱλάσκεσθαι* class," they rendered it by words that have meanings such as, "to sanctify," "purify" (either persons or ritual objects), "to cancel," "purge away," and "forgive sins." Consequently, one would "expect to find that they regard the *ἱλάσκεσθαι* class as conveying similar ideas."[244] (The reason for considering the ἱλάσκεσθαι class is

[240] Brown et al., *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, 497.

[241] Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2001) 1:493-94.

[242] Hans-Georg Link and Colin Brown, "Reconciliation," in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 4 vols., gen. ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986) 3:152; cf. Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 82-95.

[243] Leon Morris, *The Atonement: Its Meaning and Significance* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1983) 158; Nicole, "Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 123-24

[244] Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 84.

Dodd's assertion that the translators of the Septuagint "did not regard כִּפֶּר [when used as a religious term] as conveying the sense of propitiating the Deity, but the sense of performing an act whereby guilt or defilement is removed, and accordingly rendered it by *ἱλάσκεσθαι* in this sense."[245]) Dodd's examination only considered one meaning of כִּפֶּר without regard for the extensive diversity of its meanings. For the simple reason that every word has an extensive variety of meanings (i.e. "its meaning is like the area in a circle rather than like a point"[246]), one should seek to understand the meaning of ἱλασμός and its cognates in the Septuagint by considering how the translators of the Septuagint recognized the meaning of the ἱλάσκομαι word group. The assertion that whenever "the area" does not coincide, it must, nevertheless, still have a similar meaning is fallacious. Link and Brown added, "Even when there is a single theme of meaning, the actual meaning must be determined by the way in which words are used in context."[247] Examination of ἱλασμός and its cognates should be accomplished if one desires to understand the meaning of that word group in the Septuagint. One should not merely assume that the ἱλάσκομαι word group is the translation of כִּפֶּר.

Moreover, the meaning of either ἱλασμός or its cognates in the Septuagint can have a meaning such as "purification" or "to forgive" as it extensive variety of meaning, yet the primary issue is whether or not ἱλασμός or its cognates has the meaning of "expiation," "propitiation," or a mutually inclusive meaning of both. For instance, there are occasions when the better translation of ἱλάσκομαι is "to purify" or "to forgive," yet "if the particular forgiveness or purging of sin is one which involves, as a necessary feature, the putting away of the divine wrath, then it is idle to maintain that the word has been eviscerated of all idea of propitiation."[248]

---

[245] Ibid. 93.
[246] Morris, *Atonement*, 159; cf. Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 25-26.
[247] Link and Brown, "Reconciliation," 3:154.
[248] Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 138.

III.B.3.a. The Verb ‘Ιλάσκομαι

The verb ἱλάσκομαι occurs eleven times, and always in the middle or passive voice. Moreover, the subject of the verb is always God.[249] There are four occurrences in which ἱλάσκομαι was used independent grammatically from the other clauses and words in the sentence. The first occurrence of this type is in Exodus 32:14, which reads, “So the LORD changed [וַיִּנָּחֶם יהוה / καὶ ἱλάσθη κύριος] His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people.” The context involves Moses entreating the Lord to cease His burning anger against His people (v. 11), and to “turn from Your burning anger and change Your mind about *doing* harm to Your people” (v. 12). The relationship between God’s “burning anger” and His change of mind makes ἱλάσθη quite apparent in meaning.

The second occurrence of the verb ἱλάσκομαι used absolutely is found in 2 Kings 24:3-4. The context is God’s intent “to remove *them* [Judah] from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh” (v. 3; cf. v. 2). Within the context of God’s plans to destroy them, it is said that He “would not forgive [ἱλασθῆναι]” (v. 4), which is certainly more than failure to forgive sins. God’s plan for destruction indicates the meaning of “propitiation” for the use of ἱλάσκομαι, especially considering the mention of Manasseh’s sins. The third independent use of ἱλάσκομαι is found in Lamentations 3:42, which reads, “We have transgressed and rebelled, You have not pardoned [ἱλάσθης].” The verb can be rendered “forgive” (as in 2 Kings 24:4); however, the pardon sought was not forgiveness of sin but the averting of God’s anger (v. 43). The final usage of this type is located in Daniel 9:19, which reads, “‘O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive [ἱλάτευσον]!” Specifically, the prophet beseeched God to turn His anger and wrath from Jerusalem and His people” (v. 16). Apparently, the translators of the Septuagint used ἱλάσκομαι for specific reasons (based upon the context of God’s anger), as opposed to other words that could be used to indicate “forgiveness.”

[249] Ibid. 138-40.

Ἱλάσκομαι is also used with regard to specific individuals. There are two usages of ἱλάσκομαι in 2 Kings 5:18. The text is the request of Naaman for God to "pardon [ἱλάσεται]" his servant because he bowed himself in the house of Rimmon, which was an outward compromise of his true faith. The request was made twice, hence the two usages of ἱλάσκομαι. Naaman was a new convert to the Lord (v. 17); therefore, he may have entertained some pagan notions of how deities were said to act. Naaman would have been knowledgeable of the legislation for offering burnt offerings to the Lord, and was concerned with regard to the holiness and jealousy of God for his compromised actions. The apocryphal Prayer of Mordecai reads, "Hear my prayer, and have mercy [ἱλάσθητι] upon your inheritance . . . do not destroy the lips of those who praise you" (Add Esth 13:17). The Jewish people were threatened with extinction throughout all the Persian Empire, which would not been their experience if they had been obedient to God. The Jews were in exile with heathen rulers, and Mordecai did not know whether God would deliver the Jewish people or allowed them to be destroyed. The verb ἱλάσκομαι is used again in a context involving external threats, which could be the consequence of God's anger against the nation; therefore, the prayer of Mordecai did not involve forgiveness of sins; rather, he desired his prayers to be propitiatory.

Nevertheless, there are passages in the Psalms wherein ἱλάσκομαι is used and forgiveness is sought. Psalm 25:11 reads, "For Your name's sake, O LORD, Pardon [ἱλάσῃ] my iniquity, for it is great." "Pardon" is a request for the great God to cancel the effects of great iniquity, which only He can do. Rashi suggested that the greatness of the Lord's name makes it appropriate to seek pardon for the greatness of one's waywardness.[250] One could assume from this passage that the effects of David's great iniquity had aroused afflictions and troubles from God; therefore, his request was not only to receive forgiveness of sin, but also a propitiatory component seems apparent in the plea. Psalm 78:38 reads, "But He, being compassionate, forgave [ἱλάσεται] *their* iniquity and did not destroy *them*; and often He restrained

[250] Mayer I. Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on the Psalms* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2007) 270.

His anger and did not arouse all His wrath." Forgiveness of sin is sought, however, it is within the context of God restraining His anger and not arousing His wrath, which would seem to make the forgiveness and abating of anger/wrath as identical in meaning. Psalm 79:9 reads, "Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name; and deliver us and forgive [ἱλάσθητι] our sins for Your name's sake." Psalm 79 is similar contextually to the previous Psalm, which is evident in the statement of verses 5 and 8: "How long, O LORD? Will you be angry forever? Will your jealousy burn like fire? . . . Do not remember the iniquities of *our* forefathers against us; let your compassion come quickly to meet us, for we are brought very low." The prayer for help was offered within the context of the nation's sins, which resulted in God's anger and the burning of His jealousy like fire. There is also a propitiatory component in the prayer of Psalm 79.

The final passage to consider is Psalm 65:3, which reads, "Iniquities prevail against me; as for our transgression, You forgive [ἱλάσῃ] them." The use of ἱλάσκομαι indicates a reversal of the outcome. The thought seems to be that iniquitous things had prevailed against David, and hence overpowered him; therefore, his own transgressions would be removed by propitiatory shelter [תְּכַפְּרֵם], that is, those actions that would arouse God's anger.

The usage of ἱλάσκομαι within the majority of these eleven occurrences indicate that the notion of God's anger/wrath cannot be separated from an understanding of the verb's meaning. However, neither would it be accurate to translate each use as "propitiation;" nevertheless, the concept of such cannot be removed from these texts. Based upon these texts that use ἱλάσκομαι, the concepts of expiation and propitiation cannot be regarded as mutually exclusive.

III.B.3.b. The Term 'Ιλαστήριον

The neuter term ἱλαστήριον occurs twice in the Greek New Testament. In the New American Standard Bible, it is translated as "propitiation" in Romans 3:25 and "mercy seat" in Hebrews 9:5. Within the Septuagint, the term ἱλαστήριον is used to

translate כַּפֹּרֶת in twenty-two of its twenty-seven occurrences. Exodus 25:17 translates כַּפֹּרֶת with the phrase ἱλαστήριον ἐπίθεμα; however, in other passages τοῦ ἱλαστήριου is used (Exod 25:18-22; 31:7; 35:12; 37:6-8; 38:5; Lev 16:2, 13-15; Numb 7:89). In each of the twenty-two uses, כַּפֹּרֶת denotes the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant.

The King James Version always translates כַּפֹּרֶת as "mercy seat," which would make "mercy seat" a possible translation in Romans 3:25. However, the Septuagint also used ἱλαστήριον to denote one of the ledges upon Ezekiel's altar (Ezek 43:14, 17, 20), and once as "thresholds" (τὸ ἱλαστήριον) in Amos 9:1. Within the Ezekiel passages, ἱλαστήριον is the translation of עֲזָרָה, meaning "border" or "ledge" ("settle" in KJV). Consequently, ἱλαστήριον does not always denote the Ark of the Covenant, and may have a more general meaning in Romans 3:25. Lohse rendered ἱλαστήριον as the noun "*Sühneopfer*" ("expiatory offering").[251] Kümmel rendered ἱλαστήριον differently as "*sühnemittel*" ("means of expiation").[252] The frequent rendering of כַּפֹּרֶת by ἱλαστήριον does not mean that the two terms are identical in meaning.[253] The notion of expiation is impossible to deny as an aspect of propitiation. Therefore, it would be best not to render ἱλαστήριον as expiation or some variant.[254]

Commonly, one will find scholars who argue that ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 should be translated as mercy seat. Bell, for example, argued, "The term *ἱλαστήριον* in the LXX nearly always translates כַּפֹּרֶת ('mercy seat') and conversely כַּפֹּרֶת in nearly always by *ἱλαστήριον*." Therefore, he questioned, "Why then has 'mercy seat'

---

[251] Eduard Lohse, *Märtyrer und Gottesknecht*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963) 15-53. Westcott favored "propitiatory offering" (*Epistles of St. John*, 44).

[252] Werner G. Kümmel, "Paresis und Endeixis," in *Heilsgeschehen und Geschichte*, 2 vols. (Marburg: Elwert, 1965-78): 1:260-70. See also, Gerhard Friedrich, *Die Verkündigung des Todes Jesu im Neuen Testament* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1982) 60-67; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 97; Karl Kertelge, *"Rechtfertigung" bei Paulus*, 2nd ed. (Munster: Aschendorff, 1971) 55-58; and, Heinrich Schlier, *Der Römerbrief* (Freiburg: Herder, 1977) 110-11.

[253] G. Adolf Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, trans. Alexander Grieve (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988) 124.

[254] Morris, *Apostolic Preaching,* 136-60; Williams, *Jesus' Death as Saving Event*, 38-41.

not been accepted by most commentators as the appropriate reference in Rom. 3:25?"[255] Bell concluded that "mercy seat" is the better translation of ἱλαστήριον, and this understanding of ἱλαστήριον negates the notion of either expiation or propitiation.[256] The error of such an assertion is evident in the divine instruction for the Day of Atonement in the Holy of Holies. If God's precise instruction were not heeded, His wrath would be manifested against the violators (cf. Lev 10:1-3).

The rendering of ἱλαστήριον as mercy seat does seem confusing for such terminology would describe Christ as the offering and also the place of offering. Furthermore, it is questionable whether a predominately Gentile church in Rome would immediately understood an allusion to the Day of Atonement ritual without additional contextual indications. Moreover, the anarthrous use of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25 is different than those passages in the Old Testament where τοῦ ἱλαστήριου is used with regard to the mercy seat. Consequently, one may assume that Romans 3:25 is not intended to portray Christ as the antitypical mercy seat; rather, the Pauline usage is a more general meaning of propitiation, which would be consistent with the original meaning of ἱλαστήριος and ἱλαστήριον.[257]

The assessment of this research is that those who argue in defense of propitiation have accurately represented the biblical usage because the term includes the notion that God's wrath has been averted, and that His righteousness has truly been appeased or satisfied. Stuhlmacher argued against any notion of

---

[255] Richard H. Bell, "Sacrifice and Christology in Paul," *Journal of Theological Studies* 53 (April 2002): 17-18.

[256] Ibid. 19.

[257] Lyonnet and Sabourin, *Sin, Redemption, and Sacrifice*, 155-59. The authors provided three reasons to reject the rendering of ἱλαστήριον as mercy seat. *First*, there is a lack of allusion to the sacrificial mercy seat that was sprinkled with blood, and the blood shedding of Christ upon the cross. *Second*, if the mercy seat typology was intended, Romans 3:25 would not have the anarthrous use of ἱλαστήριον, or would have written more specifically, such as τὸ ἀληθινόν ἱλαστήριον. *Third*, the verb προέθετο does not correspond with the sacrificial ritual on the Day of Atonement, since only the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, that is, the most secluded place of the entire Tabernacle (ibid. 159). See also, Manson, "ἱλαστήριον," 1-10.

satisfaction because he regards the death of Jesus as motivated by the love of God.[258] His argument discounted the holiness and justice of God as manifested upon the cross. Moreover, the satisfaction of God's righteousness corresponds with the context of Romans 1:18 where the universal wrath of God is announced,[259] and with Romans 2:5 where "the righteous judgment of God" is described as "the day of wrath."[260] The basis of the argument in Romans 1:18—3:20 is to prove all humanity as guilty before God, and to provoke the reader to inquire as to how His just wrath can be averted (Rom 3:21—4:25). The answer is that God's righteousness is applied through faith in Christ's work on the cross because His sacrifice covers the sins of all people, including those who lived prior to the Lord's death and those who lived subsequent to it (3:21-31). Specifically, the means for averting God's wrath is that He is satisfied by the death of Christ.

The translation "propitiation" is consistent with the context of Romans 3. Having explained that Christ Jesus was publicly displayed as ἱλαστήριον to demonstrate the "righteousness of God," which is the holiness and justice of God in this context, mention is made how God "passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration . . . of His righteousness at the present time." The phrase, πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων, means "sins previously committed" did not receive the complete punishment that was deserved. Consequently, "the

---

[258] Peter Stuhlmacher, *Jesus of Nazareth, Christ of Faith*, trans. Siegfried Schatzmann (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993) 52, 56-57; cf. Otfried Hofius, ed., *Paulusstudien* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989) 33-49.

[259] The universality of the thought in Romans 1:18-32 may be outlined in a fourfold manner: (1) universal wrath (1:18); (2) universal revelation (1:19-20); (3) universal rejection (1:20-23); and, (4) universal results (1:24-32).

[260] The point of Romans 2:1-5 is that when God's judgment comes it "rightly falls" upon the unrepentant individual. God's justice always renders a verdict that "rightly" represents what the individual deserves, whether the person gives either approval (1:18-32) or disapproval (2:17—3:8) toward sinful living. The individual who assumes escape from judgment because it has not been received yet in the present time (cf. the present tense, ἀποκαλύπτεται, in 1:18, 24, 26, 28) presumes upon God's "kindness and tolerance and patience," which indicates a misunderstanding of the gracious character of God. God is kind, tolerant, and patient toward sinners to provide ample opportunity for repentance, as opposed to persistence in sin (cf. 2 Pet 3:9). Not recognizing the character of God amounts to "storing up wrath," that is, an investment in divine wrath with compound interest that must be paid completely when God renders "TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS."

forbearance of God" resulted in questions with regard to His justice. The answer to such questions is that God's foreknowledge of Christ and predestination of His crosswork (Acts 2:23; 1 Pet 1:20) allowed Him to be forbearing because He knew His wrath would be appeased and His justice would be satisfied through the death of Jesus Christ. As the sinner's substitute, the Lord Jesus would absorb all the wages of sin.

Romans 3:26 also confirms the interpretation that Christ's death is propitiatory. The death of Christ was "for the demonstration . . . of [God's] righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." As it is propitiatory, Christ's death demonstrates God's righteousness and justice in the outworking of His redemptive plan "at the present time." Consequently, the Lord God is demonstrated to be both "just and the justifier" of all those who have faith in Jesus Christ. The justice of God is satisfied because Christ absorbed all the wages of sin, yet God is also the justifier because faith in the crosswork of Christ is the basis for the Lord to grant forgiveness to sinners. The death of Christ is where the justice and mercy of God converge. Christ absorbing the penalty of sin satisfies the holiness of God, and those who have faith in the Lord Jesus experience the mercy of God. The emphasis in Romans 3:25-26 is upon both relationship and retribution. The mercy of God, which results in Him seeking a personal relationship with sinners, is not contrary to the justice of God, which results in Him demanding retribution for personal sin.[261]

Schreiner noted the remarkable similarity between Romans 3:21-26 and Galatians 3:10-14.[262] Galatians 3:10, in particular, reveals that God's curse remains upon everyone who does not heed the Law perfectly. The question with regard to removing the curse is answered in Galatians 3:13. "Christ redeemed us form the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, 'CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE.'" Wallace noted the difficulty in denying "a

[261] Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008) 359-60.

[262] Ibid. 360.

substitutionary sense to ὑπέρ" in Galatians 3:13.[263] The "curse" that humanity deserves is from God, and absorbed by Christ because He died ὑπέρ sinners.

The basic thought in Romans 3:25-26 is that God is just in His response to sin. God's character is just, therefore, His solution to the problem of sin must be an adequate response, yet also, enable Him to demonstrate His complete mercy. Only the death of Jesus Christ allows God to be both just and the justifier. Consequently, the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ is the emphasis.

The term "propitiation," as translation of ἱλαστήριον in Romans 3:25, indicates that an offense has been committed and that someone has been offended. The argument of Romans 3:25-26 is that sin is the offense that humanity has committed, and consequently, God is offended and wronged by that such. The consequence is that God's wrath has been incurred, and therefore, satisfaction must be made to Him for the offense. The death of Jesus Christ is the satisfaction. Christ's death is satisfaction because His life is an adequate compensation for the offense against God that resulted from sin. The only acceptable offering that can be offered to a God—who is entirely holy—is an equally holy sacrifice. Only the Lord Jesus Christ is adequately holy, and therefore, able to satisfy God's wrath against those who sinned. Christ received the imputed guilt of those who sinned and submitted Himself to God's wrath. Consequently, the wrath of God has been satisfied toward those for whom Christ propitiated—those who have faith in Jesus—so that God is able to demonstrate mercy in justifying by faith. Propitiation, therefore, is the equivalent of legal satisfaction. Even in the earthly realm, if someone's actions cause injury to another, the guilty must render satisfaction (which given the offense is not considered unfair or unreasonable). Similarly, the Lord God must be satisfied (or propitiated) for the offense of sin to His holiness, and this satisfaction is accomplished only through Christ's death.

Not only is Christ's death propitiatory, but also it is also personal. The propitiation is "in His blood." The emphasis upon αὐτοῦ is surely to stimulate analogous thinking between the cross of Christ and the mercy seat in the Old

[263] Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996) 387.

Testament. The blood that the High Priest brought into the Holy of Holies annually on the Day of Atonement was not his own blood. The Priest was the offerer not the offering because he offered the blood of the animal victim. The death of Christ was personal because He was the offerer and the offering. He offered "His own blood" (cf. Heb 9:11-14). Moreover, a curtain hid the mercy seat from all but the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. The ritual was performed only by the High Priest, which meant no one else observed the transaction. The contrast with the death of Christ is that God displayed Christ Jesus publicly as a propitiation in His blood so that all may know that He is propitiated or satisfied. Two different aspects of Christ's propitiation are made, that is, the benefits and the application. *First*, the text refers to the benefits (impetration) obtained by Christ, which is evident by the fact that the propitiation of Christ was prominent. God "displayed" Him "publicly." *Second*, the application of those benefits is made available by faith. Romans 3:25 refers specifically to the propitiation gaining benefits for those who have faith.

The death of Christ is also purposeful because it demonstrates God's righteousness. The cross of Christ is the manifestation of the righteous character of God, that is, the public display of His character. God's righteous character is evident in how He responds to sin. The sacrifice of Christ atoned for sins "previously committed" (i.e. prior to the cross) and sins "at the present time" (i.e. subsequent to the cross). Romans 3:25-26 explains how God could save people prior to the payment for sin by Christ on the cross. The explanation is that God withheld judgment and saved people in anticipation of the future payment by Christ (which also demonstrates the unity of God's salvific plan in both the Old Testament and the New Testament). Those who lived prior to Christ and those who lived subsequent to Christ are saved on the same basis, which is the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus.

Deissmann demonstrated that the usage of ἱλαστήριος in classical Greek was either as an adjective or a substantive.[264] Therefore, the term ἱλαστήριον could be an adjective with the meaning, "*of use for propitiation*" (i.e. "a propitiatory gift") or

[264] Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 124-31.

"votive-gift."[265] *The Biblical World* concluded that propitiatory gift "is the most frequent use of the term, especially as current in the Roman empire at that period, and it entirely suits the context of this passage; the crucified Christ is the votive gift set up by God himself for propitiation of sin."[266] Robertson regarded the adjectival usage of ἱλαστήριον as certain: "*hilastērion* is an adjective (*hilastērios*) from *hilaskomai*, to make propitiation [Heb. 2:17] and is kin in meaning to *hilasmos*, propitiation [I John 2:2; 4:10]. There is no longer room for doubting its meaning in Rom. 3:25."[267]

If the first usage of ἱλαστήριον in the Septuagint is considered, then Exodus 25:17 does use ἱλαστήριον as an adjective that modifies ἐπίθεμα; therefore, the other occurrences of ἱλαστήριον may also be adjectival even when there is not a noun to modify. However, it is also possible that ἱλαστήριον is a substantive, and should be understood as the "means of propitiation" (i.e. "the propitiatory place").[268] If the substantive understanding is granted, then God is surely depicted as the one whose angry is aroused by human guilt and sin, and therefore, He must be appeased or propitiated. If one interprets Christ's death—as indicated by the prepositional phrase, ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι—to be propitiatory or as a propitiation would be to describe His work upon the cross as a propitiatory sacrifice. The sacrificial death of Christ is the means by which the wrath of God is appeased. Hill noted, "In a context so dominated by the themes of judgement and wrath it seems plausible to find a trace of the idea of propitiation in the meaning of the term we are discussing."[269]

Ἱλαστήριον is also used in Hebrews 9:5 in reference to the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies. There is an obvious relationship between the blood that was sprinkled upon the mercy seat to satisfy God, and the blood of Christ that was shed for the sins of humanity. For instance, in Leviticus 16:14, ἱλαστήριον denotes the

---

[265] Ibid. 126, 133.

[266] "The New Testament Terms 'Propitiatory' and 'Propitiation'," *The Biblical World* 22 (November 1903): 396-98.

[267] Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 4:348.

[268] Ibid. 4:347. Reasoning from Deissmann (*Bible Studies*, 124-35), Robertson rejected the substantive use because "that idea does not suit here."

[269] Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 39.

golden cover over the Ark of the Covenant. Underneath this cover and within the Ark were the tablets of stone upon which were written the divine commandments that the people of God had violated. The high priest stood before the Ark as the representative of the people. When the sacrificial blood was outpoured upon the "mercy seat" (the cover), judgment was abated and mercy was the result. The blood is the intermediary between the violated law and the violators. When the Lord Jesus shed His blood, He satisfied the righteous requirements of God's law, and accomplished reconciliation for His people. The removal of the inescapable obstacle to this fellowship is quite distinct from the pagan notions of propitiation as a mere means for appeasement.[270]

The term ἱλαστήριον also occurs in 4 Maccabees 17:22. The New Revised Standard Version reads, "And through the blood of those devout ones and their death as an atoning sacrifice, divine Providence preserved Israel that previously had been mistreated." The Septuagint reads, "καὶ διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τῶν εὐσεβῶν ἐκείνων καὶ τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου τοῦ θανάτου αὐτῶν ἡ θεία πρόνοια τὸν Ισραηλ προκακωθέντα διέσωσεν." The term appears to be adjectival rather than substantive. The context of the verse is the justifiable suffering on the nation as a consequence of God's wrath against the nation for their sin. There were seven brothers who "became, as it were, a ransom [ἀντίψυχον]" on account of the nation's sin (4 Macc 17:21). The brothers were regarded as εὐσεβῶν because they were "consecrated for the sake of God," and therefore, they did not disregard God's law; rather "they vindicated [εξεδίκησαν] their nation, looking to God and enduring torture even to death" (17:7, 10, 20). According to the account, God ordained their death as the means by which He would be propitiated.

[270] Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973; reprint, 2002) 61. Wuest rendered ἱλαστήριον as "expiatory satisfaction" (*The New Testament: An Expanded Translation* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961; reprint, 2002] 356).

III.B.3.b.i. *Martyrological Theory*

Others argue that ἱλαστήριον should be understood based upon martyrological traditions. Powers, for example, intended to examine different aspects of the corporate understanding of the death and resurrection of Jesus in the earliest Christian writings. Primary concern of his work was upon the corporate implications of the "Christ died for" formula. The introduction mentions the scholarship of H. Wheeler Robinson whose theory of "corporate personality" (an individual's identity in ancient Israel was associated with the community) has been "thoroughly challenged." Nevertheless, Powers believes "the validity of the conception of corporate personality" is an important aspect of Jewish theology. Powers then summarized the problems of identifying New Testament language of the atonement in the Old Testament sacrificial theology, pagan literature, or Isaiah 53.[271]

Powers initial argument was to address Paul's understanding of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and therefore the importance of the believer's "corporate unity" in Christ. Powers first considered examples of the *Sterbensformel*—the so-called "death (dying) formula"—in 1 Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans, and affirmed the "general consensus among scholars that this phrase does indeed represent a very, early, traditional, pre-Pauline formula."[272] He concluded that ὑπέρ should not be understand that Christ died "in the place of" believers, but that He died "on behalf of" the believers.[273] Therefore, the primary idea of the atonement is not in terms of substitution but representation. "For Paul, Jesus is the representative of believers in his death as well as in his resurrection. . . .

---

[271] Daniel G. Powers, *Salvation through Participation: An Examination of the Notion of the Believer's Corporate Unity with Christ in Early Christian Soteriology* (Leuven: Peeters, 2001); cf. Marinus de Jonge, "Jesus' Death for Others and the Death of the Maccabean Martyrs," in *Text and Testimony: Essays on New Testament and Apocryphal Literature in Honour of A. F. J. Klijn*, eds. Tjitze Baarda et al. (Kampen: Kok, 1988) 142-51; Geert van Oyen and Tom Shepherd, eds., *The Trial and Death of Jesus: Essays on the Passion Narrative in Mark* (Leuven: Peeters, 2006) 191-202; Williams, *Jesus' Death as Saving Event*.

[272] Powers, *Salvation through Participation*, 38.

[273] Daniel Wallace aptly demonstrated that the preposition ὑπέρ does indeed denote substitution in many contexts (*Greek Grammar*, 383-89).

For the earliest believers, salvation – namely, justification, reconciliation, peace with God, forgiveness – was indeed a result of their participation in the fate of their representative."[274] Certainly, it is true that Christ is the representative of believers in union with Him, and this union (characterized by the prepositional phrases "in him" and "with him") does entail corporate significance. However, the death of Christ in particular has an aspect that is representative, but it cannot be adequately understood other than in terms of substitution. The inadequacy here is a distortion of biblical teaching with regard to the death and resurrection of Jesus that does not adequately consider both the exclusive substitutionary aspects and the inclusive representative aspects. Moreover, the extreme division between the forensic and participatory aspects of the Pauline theology of the atonement is a dilemma that would be rejected by the entire corpus of the New Testament.

Powers believed passages in Second Maccabees, Assumption of Moses, Prayer of Azariah, and Judith prove "that an individual's death or willingness to die results in a beneficial effect for the group to which he or she belongs. Furthermore, the individual's group is viewed as participating in the victory or vindication of the one individual." According to this view, several consequential things occur: (1) an individual dies on behalf of others (not in the place of others); (2) God vindicates the death; (3) the individual's group is benefited; (4) the group participates in the vindication of the individual; (5) the individual represents the group; and, (6) the group experiences solidarity with the martyr.[275] The apocryphal writings and pseudepigraphal work were examined as representative of Jewish antecedents that are similar to the effects of Jesus' death in the Pauline corpus. "Two remarkable differences" between the Jewish and biblical texts included: (1) "the notion 'people of God' undergoes a certain shift of meaning" and (2) "the effectiveness of Jesus' death and resurrection for the salvation of believers was considered by the earliest

[274] Powers, *Salvation through Participation*, 109-10. Powers consideration of the "surrender formula" in the Pauline corpus (Gal 1:4; 2:20; Rom 4:25; 8:32) necessitates (and even presupposes) "an existing solidarity or [corporate] unity between Christ and believers. . . . Christ shares the fate of the believers in regard to the believers' sins – namely, Christ dies – and as a result, the believers share in the fate of Christ's death and vindication – namely, the believers die with Christ and receive life [resurrection] and justification" (ibid. 142).

[275] Ibid. 194-95.

believers to be indefinite" [as opposed to being limited to Paul's contemporaries] (p. 225). Powers' alleged correspondence, however, between the Jewish and biblical texts has many deficiencies. One notable example is that the Jewish people did not share in the death *and* resurrection of the martyr. The attempt to deny the substitutionary atonement of Christ is evident in the following erroneous statement: "Jesus' death . . . provoked God's grace not only toward Jesus . . . but also towards Jesus' followers."[276] Jesus' death certainly did remove God's just wrath but the cross was predestined as the initiative of God's love.

III.B.3.b.ii. *The Wrath of God*

God's wrath is best understood as His firmly established (i.e. active and settled opposition) attitude and rejection of sin. The wrath of God is not an emotional and sudden occurrence, which is often the image that is associated with the term "wrath." God's wrath is not arbitrary, capricious, cantankerous, or conceited, nor is it infantile, malicious, resentful, or sinful. The inability to control human emotions (or even to act with violence for selfish desires) is perhaps reason why some oppose the notion of directly attributing wrath to God.[277] Dodd, for example, regarded the wrath of God as a "thoroughly archaic idea."[278] Dodd believed that wrath denoted the law of cause and effect in a moral universe ("some process or effect in the realm of objective facts"), as opposed to a personal attitude or feeling that God has toward

---

[276] Ibid. 169.

[277] Certainly, one can agree with Dodd's assertion *in this sense*: "To render it into the terms of ordinary intercourse is to bring the idea into a sphere to which it does not belong" (*Romans*, 21). "However, although it is important to say that God's anger for Paul is nothing like an irrational loss of temper, there can be very little doubt that he, like his Jewish contemporaries, believed in the real, terrifying judgment of God. The theme permeates chapters 1—3 of Romans. Paul, like his Jewish contemporaries, saw God's judgment and wrath as something to be experienced in the future (e.g., Rom 5:9; 1 Thes 1:10; 2 Thes 1:8-10; Col. 3:6), but he also saw it as something that was already being revealed in the corruption and degradation of Gentile society" (David Wenham, *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995] 64).

[278] Ibid. 21; cf. Anthony T. Hanson, *The Wrath of the Lamb* (London: SPCK, 1957) 84-85; and, G. H. C. MacGregor, "The Concept of the Wrath of God in the New Testament," *New Testament Studies* 7 (1960-61): 101-09.

sinners. Nevertheless, "wrath" (ὀργή) is the term that Scripture uses, and there does not appear to be any contextual reason for rejecting its obvious meaning. The standard Greek lexicon even defines "wrath" as the firmly established attitude of God—consistent with holy nature—against all sin: "the divine reaction toward evil; it is thought of not so much as an emotion as in terms of the outcome of an angry frame of mind (*judgment*), already well known to OT history, where it somet. runs its course in the present, but more oft. is to be expected in the future, as God's final reckoning w. evil (*ὀρ.* is a legitimate feeling on the part of a judge. . . ."[279]

God's wrath is "the holy revulsion of God's being against that which is the contradiction of his holiness. The reality of God's wrath in this specific characteristic is shown by the fact that it is 'revealed from heaven against ungodliness and unrighteousness of men'." The exercise of God's wrath "is a positive outgoing of the divine displeasure."[280] God's wrath is righteous anger, which is the only reaction that a morally perfect Creator could have toward sinfulness in those He created. God is righteous, therefore, it is just for Him to inflict the penalty upon sin that is deserved.

Wrath is indeed personal because God's holy nature opposes sin, and therefore, He cares enough to act against it. Romans 1:18 communicates that all humanity is an object of God's wrath as a consequence of ungodliness and unrighteousness. The genitive, "θεοῦ," with the ablative, "οὐρανοῦ," indicates that the wrath is indeed the divine action and attitude toward sin. God is indeed personally active in His attitude against and rejection of sin.[281] Comprehending the wrath of God makes the proclamation of salvation to be meaningful. Therefore, the wrath of God is just as evident to humanity as is His righteousness that is revealed in the gospel. The cross of Christ is truly the determination of God's wrath because it is in the events of the gospel that the revelation of His righteousness is made known.

---

[279] Bauer et al., *Greek-English Lexicon*, 2nd ed., 579.

[280] John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 1:35-36.

[281] H. C. Hahn, "Anger, Wrath," in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 1:105-13; Gustav Stählin, "ὀργή, etc.," in *Theological Dictionary*, 5:382-447; R. V. G. Tasker, *The Biblical Doctrine of the Wrath of God* (London: Tyndale Press, 1951).

God's righteousness is revealed in a twofold manner: (1) in salvation (1:16-17); and, (2) in judgment (1:18). The judgment of God is indeed deserved and just because fallen humanity will "suppress the truth."

III.B.3.c. *The Adjective ἵλεως*

The adjective ἵλεως occurs thirty-five times in a variety of manners, and it has a more extensive diversity in meaning than the other cognates of ἱλασμός. Nevertheless, despite this diversity, ἵλεως does have a general degree of correspondence with the other cognates, and normally the term denotes the anger of God as it is averted from His people (cf. Numb 14:20; 2 Chron 6:39; Jer 5:1, 7; 50:20). Ἵλεως is used seventeen times with εἶναι, thus it has the meaning of "propitious," and it is used five times as a dative in reference to a person, such as, in the sense of being propitious toward another. Liddell and Scott translate ἵλεως as meaning "appeased" or "soothed," hence, of God to "be propitious."[282]

The context of Numbers 14 is the rebellion of the Israelites, and Moses intercession on their behalf. Moses prayed to God, knowing that "the LORD is slow to anger [אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם] and abundant in lovingkindness" (v. 18). His prayer was for God to pardon "the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness, just as You also have forgiven [ἵλεως] this people, from Egypt even until now" (v. 19). God replied to Moses, "I have pardoned [ἵλεως] *them* according to your word" (v. 20). Prior to Moses' intercession, God was going to smite the nation "with pestilence and dispossess them" (v. 12). Having "pardoned" the nation, God instructed Moses that all those who tested Him and did not listen to His voice would be forbidden from entering the land of promise (vv. 20-23). The use of ἵλεως in Numbers 14 is significant for determining the extent of meaning for the ἱλάσκομαι word group in the Septuagint, especially when one considers the combined usage of אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם with ἵλεως. The use of ἵλεως in Numbers 14 does not involve forgiveness of sins, which demonstrates that the word group has a meaning that includes

[282] Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 827-28.

"propitiation" because the effect of the ἵλεως was not forgiveness but averting God's wrath against the nation. Numbers 14 is one passage where the term אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם is used with regard to God (in a temporal sense), and yet the effect was not forgiveness (cf. Jon 4:2; Nah 1:3).

Solomon's prayer of dedication in 2 Chronicles 6 (cf. 1 Kgs 8) has a cyclical characteristic. He spoke recurrently of occasions when God's people would sin against Him and God would be angry with them. When the people would be truly repentant, Solomon petitioned God to forgive those who had sinned against Him. All the calamities for their sin that the people would experience was the consequence of God's anger against them. Solomon's prayer is within this context of petitioning God to hear the prayers and supplications of His people, and to "maintain their cause, and forgive [ἵλεως] Thy people who have sinned against Thee." The usage of ἵλεως is in the sense of averting God's anger against the sins of the nation.

In a similar manner to Solomon's prayer, Deuteronomy 21:8 begins with the request for God to "forgive" (כַּפֵּר / ἵλεως) His people whom he had redeemed, and for God not to "place the guilt of innocent blood" in the midst of His people. The context for the prayer is when "a slain men" would be found "lying in the open country." The elders of the city that was closest to the murdered man were then required to break the neck of a heifer. The elders would wash their hands over the heifer as an act of exculpation (cf. Ps 26:6; 73:13; Matt 27:24).[283] Consistent with other passages where ἵλεως is found in the Septuagint, the anger of God is frequently mentioned explicitly or implicitly. For example, in Jeremiah 36:3, the Lord is said to forgive (ἵλεως) the iniquity and sin of the house of Judah, if the people will repent from their "evil way" to avert "all the calamity" that God intended to bring upon them.

The apocryphal writings are helpful as a witness to the Septuagint usage of ἱλασμός and its cognates. There are three uses of ἵλεως in 2 Maccabees (2:22; 7:37;

[283] Ziony Zevit, "The 'Eglâ Ritual of Deuteronomy 21:1-9," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95 (1976): 383-84.

10:26), and three uses in 4 Maccabees (6:28; 9:24; 12:17). According to 2 Maccabees 7:32, the people were suffering for their own sins.

> And if our living Lord is angry for a little while, to rebuke and discipline us, he will again be reconciled with his own servants. . . . I, like my brothers, give up body and life for the laws of our ancestors, appealing to God to show mercy [ἵλεως] soon to our nation and by trails and plagues to make you confess that he alone is God, and through me and my brothers to bring to an end the wrath of the Almighty that has justly fallen on our whole nation [7:32, 37-38].

Whereas the New Revised Standard Version translated ἵλεως as "mercy," the Revised Version originally read "propitious" in the margin, which is the sense of the passage. The martyrdom of the seven brothers was regarded as both propitiatory and substitutionary, and therefore, an end to the wrath of God. The other two passages in 2 Maccabees (2:22; 10:26) are difficult to determine with regard to the significance of their usage of ἵλεως; God was simply stated to be "gracious" (ἵλεω in 2:22; and, ἵλεως in 10:26). The three uses of ἵλεως in 4 Maccabees have a similar connotation with 2 Maccabees 7:37.

> Be merciful [ἵλεως] to your people, and let our punishment suffice for them [6:28].
>
> Fight the sacred and noble battle for religion. Thereby the just Providence of our ancestors may become merciful [ἵλεως] to our nation and take vengeance on the accursed tyrant" [9:24];
>
> and I will call on the God of our ancestors to be merciful [ἵλεως] to our nation [12:17]. . . .

The notion within each of the three passages is for God to be propitious (translated as "merciful" in the NRSV). Since he was referencing four canonical passages (Ps 105:30; Zech 7:2; 8:22; Mal 1:9), Dodd was certainly wrong when he stated, "There are only four passages in the LXX which could be made to support a different conclusion" for interpreting ἱλάσκεσθαι other than the sense of removing defilement or guilt.[284] Evidently, he did not consider the Maccabean usage of ἵλεως.

[284] Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 93.

An additional three passages in which ἵλεως occurs are important to consider because the meaning is certainly that of propitiation. The *first* is Genesis 43:23, wherein the steward of Joseph's house said to Joseph's brothers, "Be at ease [ἵλεως], do not be afraid." The context for interpreting ἵλεως as "peace" was fear in the sense of propitiation, as opposed to fear as a consequence of sin (which is why ἵλεως was not translated by the Seventy in the sense of forgiveness or mercy). The *second* passage is 2 Samuel 20:20 wherein Joab remarked, "Far be it [ἵλεώς μοι], far be it [ἵλεώς μοι] from me that I should swallow up or destroy." Joab's words were spoken to "a wise woman" who sought to prevent him from destroying an important city in Israel (Abel of Beth Maachah), as he was pursuing Sheba. The same expression was spoken by David: "Be it far from me [ἵλεώς μοι], O LORD, that I should do this" (23:17). The *third* passage involves three unnamed "mighty men" who came to David while he was in the cave of Adullam, and when Bethlehem was overwhelmed by the Philistines. The men risked their lives by entering the camp of the Philistines just to bring some water to David, who was overcome by the sacrifice so much that he outpoured as an offering to the Lord. The final two passages employ an idiom that is not concerned with sin; rather, there is a profound relationship with fear, which would be consistent with an understanding of propitiation but not with mercy or forgiveness. The three passages referenced here indicate that the ἱλάσκομαι word group in the Septuagint does have the connotation of "propitiation" among its extensive diversity of meanings.

III.B.3.d. *The Noun 'Ιλασμός*

Whereas the noun ἱλασμός only occurs twice in the Greek New Testament, it occurs ten times in the Septuagint. Six of those uses are within the canonical books, as translations of one of four words: כִּפֶּר (Lev 25:9; Numb 5:8); סְלִיחָה (Ps 130:4; Dan 9:9); חַטָּאָה (Ezek 44:27); and, אַשְׁמָה (Amos 8:14). Some manuscripts have a variant reading of τοῦ ἱλασμοῦ in 1 Chronicles 28:20 (cf. οἴκου τοῦ ἐξιλασμοῦ in

28:11).[285] The remaining three occurrences are in the apocryphal writings, and therefore, they are not translations of Hebrew words (Sir 18:20; 35:3; 2 Macc 3:33).

The use of ἱλασμός in Leviticus 25:9 is in reference to the Day of Atonement. The use of ἱλασμός in Numbers 5:8 is with regard to the ram that makes atonement for sin. The use of ἱλασμός in Psalm 130:4 is with regard to the rejoicing of the Psalmist that God does not maintain a record of his sins and that with God there is forgiveness of sin. "Forgiveness" (ὁ ἱλασμός) is the translation of סְלִיחָה. The context is the psalmist's prayer "out of the depths."

The use of ἱλασμός in Daniel 9:9 is the prophet's intercessory prayer, specifically his praise of God's compassion and forgiveness. "Forgiveness" (ἱλασμοί[286]) is the translation of סְלִיחָה, and again (as with Ps 130:4) the prayer is within the context of a time of trouble. The motivation for the prayer was the Babylonian captivity, which was the outpouring of the "curse" of God for the sins of the nation. Daniel testified how God brought "great calamity" upon the kingdom. The prophet's request was for God to remove His anger and wrath from Jerusalem and also His people. Amos 8:14 is an unusual use of ἱλασμός because it refers to "those who swear by the guilt [ἱλασμοῦ] of Samaria." The use of ἱλασμός in Ezekiel 44:27 is in reference to the sin offering that a priest must make for his own sin.

The first apocryphal usage of ἱλασμός in Sirach reads, "Before judgment comes, examine yourself; and at the time of scrutiny you will find forgiveness [ἐξιλασμόν]" (18:20). The next usage reads, "To keep from wickedness is pleasing to

---

[285] While it has been already stated that the translators of the Septuagint did not use ἱλαστήριον with regard to כַּפֹּרֶת and עֲזָרָה in an exclusive manner, yet the use of ἐξιλασμοῦ in 1 Chronicles 28:11 does need an explanation. The reason for the non-exclusive usage, of course, is that the two Hebrew words have other renderings also. For example, in Exodus 26:34, the translators read כַּפֹּרֶת and translated it as καταπέτασμα. When "house of the כַּפֹּרֶת" was rendered "house of the ἐξιλασμοῦ" in 1 Chronicles 28:11, it is not a verbal translation of the Hebrew but most certainly a theological gloss because ἐξιλασμός in the Septuagint most certainly does not mean כַּפֹּרֶת (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 127).

[286] The use of ἱλασμός here is a variant reading based upon the Theodotionic translation.

the Lord, and to forsake unrighteousness is an atonement [ἐξιλασμός]" (35:3).[287] The usage of ἱλασμός in 2 Maccabees 3:33 is with regard to the high priest Onias making atonement (τὸν ἱλασμόν) for Heliodorus, who was sent by Seleucus to rob the Temple in Jerusalem. God protected the Temple against Heliodorus by sending "a magnificently caparisoned horse, with a rider of frightening mien" and two spiritual beings "who were remarkably strong . . . who flogged him continuously, inflicting many blows on him" (2 Macc 3:25-26). The context is God's wrath against Heliodorus, and how it was averted by means of the τὸν ἱλασμόν.

The occurrences of ἱλασμός in the Septuagint are not sufficient to determine the meaning of the word. Most do have reference to atonement and forgiveness, yet it is not evident in the texts whether the atonement is with regard to the removal of sin or to appease God. There is a notion of propitiation in those texts that have the context of forgiveness because the circumstances indicated the removing of the divine wrath. For instance, "to forgive" is an emphasis "upon the instrumentality or the means by which forgiveness is accomplished."[288] One could not determine the meaning of ἱλασμός from the Septuagint only without also consulting the manner in which the cognates were used.

III.B.3.e. Excursus: Semantic Domains

Louw and Nida's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* is known for its emphasis upon semantic domains. The semantic domain theory not only affected how words were arranged in the lexicon, but also affected the unique format of the work. Another characteristic of the lexicon is the design of the work to be a resource for translation of the Bible, as opposed to being used for biblical and theological exegesis. Louw and Nida's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* is based upon two primary presuppositions: (1) "no two lexical items ever have completely the

[287] Some manuscripts (A, ℵ*) read ἱλασμός in Sirach 18:20 and 35:3; however, the better attested reading is ἐξιλασμός.

[288] Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989) 2:503.

same meanings in all . . . their designative or denotative meanings;" and, (2) "no two closely related meanings ever occur with exactly the same range of referents, much less the same set of connotative or associative features."[289] The particular meaning of a word is evident from its historical or linguistic context. Consequently, the demonstration of semantic domains is to isolate a word's distinct meaning by means of comparison and contrast with words that possess opposite or similar meanings. Therefore, domains are used to classify related meanings. The advantage of such classification is to discern the differences between various words, which may possess related meanings, in addition to the nuances of each word. Louw and Nida's analysis allows one to understand—with greater appreciation—why a biblical author used certain words in a particular context.

The intended beneficiary of Louw and Nida's work is the translator (as opposed to the biblical exegete). Consequently, the authors focused upon definitions "based upon the distinctive features of meaning of a particular term, and the glosses only suggest ways in which such a term with a particular meaning may be represented in English, but the definitions are the significant elements."[290] The exegetical benefit of Louw and Nida's domains must be evaluated on the basis of their stated goals and limitations. For instance, the interest of the translator is the exclusive meaning of a word for the purpose of choosing an appropriate word to be used in the language of the intended recipients. Determining the meaning of individual words is also essential for the purpose of the biblical exegete; however, meaning is determined based upon a larger linguistic unit with consideration of other factors beyond the linguistic context.

Louw and Nida's distinguishing between reconciliation and forgiveness is inadequate for exegesis because the theological nature of the use of ἱλασμός and its cognates indicates a meaning different than that identified in ordinary discourse beyond the New Testament. Consequently, the authors criticized the standard Greek lexicon by Bauer, Ardnt, Gingrich, and Danker for its emphasis upon the theological (failure to distinguish "meaning and reference" based upon a "tendency to divide

[289] Ibid. 1:xv-xvi.
[290] Ibid. 1:vii.

not along semantic lines but along theological lines") as opposed to the linguistic division of New Testament word meanings.[291] Certainly, a word may possess various references; however, the "meaning and reference" of a word cannot be entirely distinguished. For example, Louw and Nida's definition for οἰκία in some contexts as "the family consisting of those related by blood and marriage, as well as slaves and servants"[292] indicates a reference to a social group that was conceived by people in New Testament times to include "slaves and servants;" consequently, the reference determines the meaning for οἰκία.

Louw and Nida defined ἱλασμός and ἱλαστήριον as "the means by which sins are forgiven – 'the means of forgiveness, expiation.'" The authors contended, "Though some traditional translations render ἱλαστήριον as 'propitiation,' this involves a wrong interpretation of the term in question. Propitiation is essentially a process by which one does a favor to a person in order to make him or her favorably disposed, but in the NT God is never the object of propitiation since he is already on the side of people."[293] Without any reference to the reality of God's wrath upon fallen sinners, Louw and Nida failed to represent the meaning of the concept that the word "propitiation" designates. The biblical notion of propitiation involves the concept of removing God's righteous indignation toward sinners. Moreover, the authors based their interpretation of the meaning of ἱλαστήριον upon the theological proposition that God "is already on the side of people." The question of the veracity of this assumption indicates that Louw and Nida have a theological presupposition that indeed affected their interpretation of word meanings, even though they asserted an emphasis upon linguistic as opposed to theological aspects.

Moreover, the definition and glosses they provided for ἱλασμός and ἱλαστήριον is so generic that the words are devoid of any meaning. For instance, they provide no indication as to how "(Christ) himself is the means by which our sins are forgiven," nor do they define the meaning of expiation. The definition and glosses of ἱλασμός and ἱλαστήριον do not indicate why sins need to be forgiven if

[291] Ibid. 1:ix.
[292] Ibid. 1:113.
[293] Ibid. 1:504.

God "is already on the side of people." The linguistic evidence of the Old Testament background, which is the concept to which those Greek words appear, is rightly understood as "propitiation." The lexical evidence provided in detail throughout this research indicates that even prior to the specific contexts in which ἱλασμός and ἱλαστήριον were used that the notion of sacrifice to propitiate God's wrath is the better translation than expiation, which merely refers to that which atones for sin without presupposing any interpersonal enmity. Καταλλαγή and καταλλάσσω denote the broader context within which the idea of sacrifice as ἱλασμός and ἱλαστήριον are developed,[294] thus indicating the restoration of originally friendly relations.

III.B.3.f. *The Verb 'Εξιλασκομαι*

The cognate verb ἐξιλάσκομαι does not occur whatsoever in the New Testament; however, it is found 105 times in the Septuagint, within a total of 97 verses. Nevertheless, the word does have a quite similar relationship in meaning with ἱλάσκομαι, and therefore, as a consequence of its frequency in the Old Testament would be prudent to consider. The reason why the verb ἐξιλάσκομαι occurs so frequently is because it was the normal word for rendering the recurring verb כָּפַר in relation to the sacrificial system. 'Εξιλάσκομαι was used eighty-three times to translate כָּפַר, which demonstrates that the two verbs are practically synonymous in meaning or, at the very least, the translators of the Septuagint regarded them as such.[295] As already demonstrated the verb כָּפַר cannot be reduced to the notion of purification; rather, the use of the verb is primarily with regard to substitution, and has reference to God removing His wrath from His people by means of the appropriately legislated offering. The meaning of כָּפַר is consistent with the general

[294] Willem J. van Asselt, "Christ's Atonement: A Multi-Dimensional Approach," *Calvin Theological Journal* 38 (April 2003): 59.

[295] Lyonnet and Sabourin, *Sin, Redemption, and Sacrifice*, 126; Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 142.

usage of ἐξιλάσκομαι, and may be regarded as the same meaning in the Septuagint also "by virtue of the ideas contained in the verb it is used to translate."[296]

The contexts include several instances in which ἐξιλάσκεσθαι denotes atonement involving the sinner being cleansed (e.g. Lev 12:7-8; 14:18, 20, 29, 31, 53; 15:30; Numb 8:21). Many other contexts have reference to atonement effecting forgiveness (e.g. Lev 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7; 19:22; Numb 15:28; Ps 65:3; 78:38; 79:9; Isa 22:14; Jer 18:23; Ezek 16:23). Several more have reference to atonement removing wrath (Gen 32:20; Exod 30:12; 32:30; Numb 8:19; 16:46; 35:31; Prov 16:14; Isa 47:11). Moreover, there are three unambiguous contexts in which the verbal forms ἐξιλάσκομαι and ἱλάσκομαι denote propitiatory action, and would indicate that (within the Septuagint) the ἱλάσκομαι word group does have the meaning of propitiation as the basis of its diverse usage. The sampling of these texts indicate that the notion of atonement within the Old Testament is understood best in a comprehensive manner, that is, to include both the cleansing and forgiveness of a sinner, and also the removal of God's wrath. Consequently, this also indicates that neither expiation nor propitiation should be regarded as being mutually exclusive, and both should be considered for the interpretation of ἱλασμός in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10. The literary context is the best means for identifying the meaning of ἱλασμός in First John. For instance, the context of First John 2:2 does support the notion of propitiation, though this appeasement must not be regarded in pagan terms, such as that of overcoming the wrath of a capricious and hostile deity, because, as 4:10 indicates, it was God who initiated the plan of atonement when He provided His own Son as the atoning sacrifice for sinners.[297]

There are lexicons that render ἐξιλάσκομαι as "propitiation," which should be enough evidence that ἱλασμός and its cognates have the meaning of "propitiation" as the basis of its extensive diversity of usage in the Septuagint. Liddell and Scott listed "propitiation" as the first possible meaning of the verb.[298]

---

[296] Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 152.
[297] Kruse, *The Letters of John*, 76.
[298] Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 594.

Similarly, the standard Greek lexicon listed "propitiate" as the only meaning.[299] The lexical meaning is evident in, at least, three passages where the verbal forms ἐξιλάσκομαι and ἱλάσκομαι denote propitiatory action.

The first passage to denote such action is Genesis 32:20 where Jacob said to his servant (with regard to his fear of Esau), "I will appease [ἐξιλάσομαι] him with the present that goes before me" (cf. Exod 32:30; Numb 16:46-47; Deut 21:1-9). Similarly, the context in which ἱλάσκομαι was used in Psalm 78:38 also indicates that the verb expresses the meaning of propitiation. The psalmist wrote, "But He, being compassionate, forgave [יְכַפֵּר / ἱλάσεται] *their* iniquity [עָוֹן / ἁμαρτίαις], and did not destroy *them*; and often He restrained His anger, and did not arouse all His wrath." The verb is used within the context of God's anger being restrained and the non-arousal of His wrath. The object of the verb ἱλάσκομαι is "iniquity," and the dative of interest (advantage) "indicates the person (or, rarely, thing) interested in the verbal action"[300] (cf. Luke 18:13). Proverbs 16:14 states, "The wrath of a king is *as* messengers of death, but a wise man will appease [ἐξιλάσεται] it." There is atonement effecting forgiveness in Psalm 78:38, yet it also includes more than mere forgiveness, especially considering the context of anger within that passage, and how ἱλάσκομαι was used in a manner consistent with the usage in Genesis 32:20 and Proverbs 16:14.

Based upon his examination of the Septuagint terms used to translate כִּפֶּר and its derivatives, Dodd concluded: "where the LXX translators do not render כִּפֶּר and its derivates by words of the *ἱλάσκεκθαι* class, they render it by words which given the meaning 'to sanctify', 'purify' persons or objects of ritual, or 'to cancel', 'purge away', 'forgive' sins." Based upon these conclusions, he expected "to find that they regard the *ἱλάσκεκθαι* class as conveying similar ideas."[301] The meanings of those words that were used to translate כִּפֶּר in the Septuagint vary significantly; therefore, it is difficult to determine the meaning of the ἱλάσκομαι word group from

[299] Bauer et al., *Greek-English Lexicon*, 2nd ed., 276.
[300] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 142.
[301] Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 84.

them. Moreover, if is true that כִּפֶּר and ἐξιλάσκομαι are synonymous in meaning, one must not assume that each word used in the Septuagint to translate כִּפֶּר must also have a similar meaning to ἐξιλάσκομαι. The same would be true for regarding each word that was translated ἐξιλάσκομαι as having a similar meaning to כִּפֶּר. Literary context should have precedence to linguistic considerations, especially when the latter is inconclusive (and when it would be best to regard meanings such as "expiation" and "propitiation" as mutually inclusive).

The reason for prioritizing literary context is that some variations of meaning that are characteristic to the semantic diversity of a term may necessitate that a translator use a word that is characteristically different from the one actually used for the purpose of rendering the primary meaning of the term. Without regard for how literal a translation may be, the meaning of a text cannot be translated into another language without there being a change in meaning because there is not a solitary twosome of lexemes wherein one may find the exact same meaning, such as one in Hebrew and the other in Greek. Therefore, variants in translation provide an indication to the normal meaning of the translation terms, that is, if there is a single characteristic in meaning. Therefore, the "literal tradition looks to the author's intended meaning as expressed in the text as the basis for the decision."[302] Dodd assumed that the variants in translating the Hebrew Old Testament into the Greek Septuagint indicated the unambiguous "sense" that "predominated in Hellenistic Judaism" by which the meaning of the typical word for translating כִּפֶּר could be identified.[303] The meaning of ἐξιλάσκεσθαι should have been determined first, and then confirmation of that meaning could be discerned from the other words used in translation.

[302] Elliott E. Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990) 36.

[303] Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 82.

III.B.3.g. *The Verb ’Εξιλάσκομαι and Reconciliation*

Trench listed three words that “explain the inestimable benefits of Christ’s death and passion: ἀπολύτρωσις, καταλλαγή and, ἱλασμός. The purpose of this section is to consider the relationship between καταλλαγή and ἐξιλάσκομαι. Καταλλαγή is not prominent within the Septuagint, which has resulted in varying explanations for this lack. The arguments tend to be based upon the conceptual and/or semantic. For example, Breytenbach argued that the concept of reconciliation is derived from Hellenistic military and political contexts.[304] Marshall discussed Jewish concepts of reconciliation primarily based upon apocryphal and Jewish writings. As opposed to an Hellenistic understanding, Marshall argued for an Old Testament understanding that might be derived from the martyr tradition in the apocryphal Book of Maccabees. Marshall contended that in reconciliation God provided the atonement for sin and thereby reconciled Himself to fallen humanity.[305] Hofius asserted that Isaiah 53 and its surrounding context is the better means for understanding the doctrine of reconciliation in the New Testament.[306]

III.B.3.h. *Conclusions from the Septuagint*

Within classical Greek, the majority of the occurrences of the ἱλάσκομαι word group convey the meaning of “appeasement” or “propitiation.”[307] Dodd admitted that such

---

[304] Breytenbach, *Versöhnung*, 73-76.

[305] I. Howard Marshall, “The Meaning of Reconciliation,” in *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology: Essays in Honor of George E. Ladd*, ed. Robert A. Guelich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 118-21.

[306] Otfried Hofius, “Erwagungen zur Gestalt und Herkunft des Paulinischen Versöhnungslehre in NT,” in *Zeit und Geschichte: Dankesgabe an Rudolf Bultmann*, ed. Erich Dinkler (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1964) 48-49. Gregory K. Beale argued that the catalyst for the development of the doctrine of reconciliation was the Apostle Paul’s experience on the Damascus Road (“The Old Testament Background of Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5—7 and Its Bearing on the Literary Problem of 2 Corinthians 6.14—7.1,” *New Testament Studies* 35 [1989]: 550-81).

[307] Büchsel and Herrmann, “ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός,” in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:317; Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, 303; Westcott, *Epistles of St. John*, 87.

usage was common, yet asserted that within the Septuagint there is no indication of that meaning. He argued, "Thus Hellenistic Judaism, as represented by the LXX, does not regard the cultus as a means of pacifying the displeasure of the Deity, but as a means of delivering man from sin, and it looks in the last resort to God himself to perform that deliverance, thus evolving a meaning of *ἱλάσκεκθαι* strange to non-biblical Greek."[308] Westcott concluded similarly, "Such phrases as 'propitiating God' and God 'being reconciled' are foreign to the language of the N. T."[309]

Dodd did not accept "propitiation" as a meaning because he objected to the notion that God needed to be appeased, which is a common rendering in classical Greek. The ἱλάσκομαι word group was applied to the pagan deities in a manner that expressed their appeasement, or that they were placated by gifts and offerings. Certainly, the biblical writers did not intend to reflect any of such pagan conceptions, nor did they regard God as capricious and vindictive, who would inflict arbitrary punishments upon those who offended Him, and would continue to do so unless He was placated by certain offerings.

Certainly, one may appreciate Dodd's concern to avoid such notions of God that portray Him as needing bribes, as a consequence of a capricious and vindictive anger on His part. One may agree gratefully with Dodd that such is not the revelation of God in either the Old Testament or New Testament. However, one must also be cautious so that it is not asserted that God is never revealed as angry or wrathful in the Bible because such an assertion would be contrary to Scripture. The wrath of God cannot be compared to pagan deities for it is the expression of His holiness against sin, and therefore, may be regarded as responsible as opposed to being capricious. The sentiment that God's anger is aroused by sin was evident in many of the passages in which the translators of the Septuagint used words from the ἱλάσκομαι group.

The literary context is indeed a most important indication for interpretation. Many of the passages in which ἱλασμός and its cognates were used have an unambiguous context that references the anger/wrath of God; indeed, many express

[308] Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 93.
[309] Westcott, *Epistles of St. John*, 87.

the desire for God to relent from His anger/wrath (e.g. Exod 32:11-14; Dan 9:16-19), and therefore, the meaning of the ἱλάσκομαι word group does convey the notion that God has become favorable. The crude usage of this word group in classical Greek must be avoided, yet to assert that the occurrences of ἱλασμός and its cognates within the Septuagint did not contain any notion of anger or wrath would be to remove a vital component to the meaning of those words.

Two reasons why ἱλασμός was necessary are the holiness of God and the sinfulness of humanity. The emphasis in the meaning of ἱλασμός is satisfaction. Ἱλασμός and its cognates indicate that the death of Christ completely satisfied the righteous demands of the offended holiness of God. Within the Old Testament, the holy God would meet with sinful humanity on the basis of atonement, which was evidenced not only in the offering that was given but also in the sprinkling of the blood. Within the New Testament, the cross of Christ is the means by which sinful humanity is reconciled to God, and, as in the Old Testament, a substitute was offered and evidence of the offering was the shed blood of the Lord Jesus. Therefore, the Apostle John could write that Christ Jesus is the ἱλασμός—the satisfaction—for all sinners who have a relationship with Him through faith.

The doctrine of propitiation teaches that the death of Christ upon the cross was truly substitutionary on behalf of sinners. The death of Christ satisfied the righteous demands of the holy God, and Christ's sacrificial death satisfied the wrath of the holy God, which was aroused by the sin of humanity. As a consequence of Christ's propitiation, God was satisfied and the relation of those for whom He died was changed entirely. The propitiatory sacrifice of Christ was the basis upon which God was able to reconcile the world unto Himself (2 Cor 5:19). Specifically, reconciliation involves the fact that those for whom Christ died have experienced a changed relationship with God on the basis of that death. The nature of propitiation is such that God is satisfied as a consequence of the death of Christ. God was offended by the sin of humanity, and therefore, it is to Him that satisfaction must be made for that sin.

The benefits of the work of Christ as ἱλασμός is by grace through faith. The repentant sinner does not need to plead with God and persuade Him to be propitious ("merciful") as the publican attempted (Luke 18:13). The work of reconciliation has been accomplished because God has been propitiated already by the death of Christ. God is satisfied by the work of His Son, and therefore, sinners are commanded to begin a relationship with God by faith in the completed work of Christ Jesus.[310]

[310] Büchsel and Herrmann, "ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός," in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:300-23; Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 23-48; Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 125-85.

IV. CONSIDERING *HILASMOS* WITH REGARD TO THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF CHRIST'S DEATH

IV.A. Indicated by the Interpretation of ἱλασμός

The nature and extent of Christ's death cannot be separated from each other, and certainly not in the Gospel of John and the First Epistle of John. Since translations can often serve as commentaries upon the original texts, the New International Version is a noteworthy example in this regard for it reads, "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). The extent of the death of Christ is stated, yet also the nature of His sacrifice is evident in the marginal note, which reads, "He is the one who turns aside God's wrath, taking away our sins." The term "expiation" conveys the notion that humanity needs reconciliation with God, whereas the term "propitiation" conveys the notion that God must be appeased to be reconciled to fallen humanity.

Whereas this research has focused upon the meaning of ἱλασμός in First John 2:2 (cf. 4:10), the canonical arrangement of the New Testament books will consider the references to Christ's death within the Gospel of John[1] and whether there is a doctrinal substantiation in that regard with the meaning of ἱλασμός in First John. One does not have to read beyond the first chapter of the Gospel to be confronted with what appears to be sacrificial language. When John the Baptist "saw Jesus coming to him," he proclaimed, "'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'" (John 1:29). The proclamation of "the Lamb" elicits the notion of

[1] Brown, *Community of the Beloved Disciple*, 93-144. D. Moody Smith provided the typical perspective of modern scholarship with regard to the relationship between the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles: "If Raymond Brown is correct, as I think he is, 1 John . . . presupposes the Gospel of John. . . ." ("When Did the Gospels Become Scripture?," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 119 [Spring 2000]: 12). Kruse also recognized the similarities of both concepts and language between the Gospel of John and the Letters of John, especially "the prologue of the Fourth Gospel and the opening section of 1 John. Also, the purpose of both the Fourth Gospel and 1 John has to do with faith in Christ and receiving eternal life (John 20:31 / 1 John 5:13)" (*Letters of John*, 5). However, he also noted: "Even though there is a close relationship between the Gospel and the letters in respect to language and ideas, their historical backgrounds differ substantially" (ibid. 6).

sacrifice. Furthermore, the announcement from John would seem to be a prophetic reference of Jesus' death upon the cross as the atoning sacrifice for the sin of the world. If this were true, one would expect to find the verb βαστάζω used (or a similar word) and some mention of Jesus' death; however, it is said that Jesus is the one who ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτιάν τοῦ κόσμου. Consequently, the Lamb did not βαστάζω the sin of the world; rather, He is the one who ὁ αἴρων, which is an action that is neither expiatory nor propitiatory. Indeed, the self-testimony of John with regard to the Lamb is paralleled in the Lukan Gospel account of the Son of Zebedee's proclamation: "'One is coming who is mightier than I. . . . 'His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire'" (3:16-17).

The reason why the sacrificial imagery of the Lamb was used for a message of judgment is that the metaphor was not intended to connote the silence, gentleness, or patience of the Lord Jesus, or even the fact that He was not an unwilling victim who was compelled to be crucified (cf. Isa 53:2, 7-9); rather, the imagery is that of holiness.[2] Several verses later, the Lamb of God is said to be "the Son of God" (John 1:34), thus the use of the Lamb metaphor conveys the message that the One who "takes away the sin of the world" is Himself pure (cf. Exod 12:5) (i.e. without sin). Similarly, in 1 John 3:5, one reads that Jesus "appeared in order to take away [ἄρῃ] sins; and in Him there is no sin." With greater detail and in the same pericope (viz. 2:28—3:10), John explained that the removal of sins is for the purpose of destroying "the works of the devil" (3:8). Consequently, the metaphorical Lamb of God is similar to the message of Revelation, wherein it is prophesied that the Lamb who

[2] C. H. Dodd, *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958) 230-38; Paul M. Hoskins, "Deliverance from Death by the True Passover Lamb: A Significant Aspect of the Fulfillment of the Passover in the Gospel of John," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 52 (June 2009): 285-99; Hugh Dermot MacDonald, "Lamb of God," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed., ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001) 669; D. Brent Sandy, "John the Baptist's 'Lamb of God' Affirmation in Its Canonical and Apocalyptic Milieu," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 34 (December 1991): 447-60; Christopher W. Skinner, "Another Look at 'the Lamb of God'," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 161 (January 2004): 89-104; A. J . Wallace and R. D. Rusk, *Moral Transformation: The Original Christian Paradigm of Salvation* (New Zealand: Bridgehead Publishing, 2011) 213-15.

was "slain" (5:9) does not administer justice and lordship over the world as a victim, but as He who is enthroned at his Father's right hand (2:21; 7:14-15; 12:11). Dissimilar to the Book of Revelation, the Gospel of John does not reference "the blood of the Lamb," nor does it ascribe any unequivocal notion of either atonement or cleansing from sin through the blood of the Lord Jesus.

John 1:29 is the first passage among several others in that Gospel, which demonstrates that the effects of the Lord's first coming was indeed worldwide. Jesus not only "takes away the sin" from those who trust in Him, but also ὁ αἴων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου. Throughout the Gospel of John, the reality of sin within the world is emphasized. The gift of God to the world is "His only begotten Son," and the reason for God sending His Son into the world was because He "so loved the world" (3:16). Only a few verses later (3:19), it is revealed that Jesus is "the Light" who "has come into the world" (cf. 1:9; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). Jesus is "the Savior of the world" (4:42) because He "did not come to judge the world, but to save the world" (12:47; cf. 3:17). He is "the bread of God" who condescends from heaven, "and gives life to the world" (6:33). Moreover, the "bread" is His "flesh" which was given "for the life of the world" (6:51). Jesus is the "grain of wheat" who fell "into the earth" and died for the purpose of bearing "much fruit" (12:24). On the basis of His resurrection from the dead, Jesus will "draw all men" to Himself (12:32). Both "blood" and "flesh" have reference to the death of Jesus Christ (cf. Rom 7:4; Eph 2:15; Heb 5:10).[3] According to the Gospel of John, the death of Jesus does indeed benefit the world; however, there is not any actual doctrine of the atonement in that Gospel. Carson explained:

> Even though there is a close relationship between the Gospel and the letters in respect to language and ideas, their historical backgrounds differ substantially. . . . The background to the letters, however, is a conflict in the Christian community, a conflict between continuing members of the author's community and secessionist. It is not surprising, then, that when the language and concepts of the Fourth Gospel

[3] Contesse and Ellington, *Handbook on Leviticus*, 267; Lockyer, *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 186; Morris, *Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, 108-09; Nicole, "Atonement in the Pentateuch," 36, 45-46; Schwartz, "Prohibitions," 49-50, 57-59; Stibbs, "*Blood" in Scripture*, 12.

> are taken up and used in the letters they are given a different spin in order to serve the purposes of the letters. . . .
>
> What all this means for interpreters of the letters is that they find themselves referring again and again to the Gospel to seek elucidation concerning words and ideas found in the letters; but when they do so they must be careful, for often there is not a one-to-one equivalence of usage.[4]

John's Gospel simply explains the benefits of Christ's death but never specifies the basis or means by which He "takes away the sin of the world" or "gives life to the world."

The majority of the references to the death of Christ within the Gospel of John indicate the benefits of His life for those who trust in Him. For example, Jesus laid "down His life for the sheep" (10:11, 15), who are those who "hear" and "know his voice," and thus "they follow" Him (10:3-4, 27). Jesus laid "down his life for his friends" (15:13), who are those who do what He commands (15:14). There is no mention of the benefits for those who are not His friends, that is, those who do not heed His commands.

The Lord's high priestly prayer, within the Upper Room discourse, was for the sanctification of those who believe in Him (17:19-20). He anticipated "those also who believe . . . that they may all be one," that is, be "perfected in unity" (17:20-21, 23). He did not pray "on behalf of the world" (17:9). His desire "that the world may believe that You sent Me" and "that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them" does not envisage the salvation of the world; rather, His prayer is for His "friends" to be vindicated in the estimation of the world. Jesus did indeed lay "down His life for the sheep," yet the Gospel of John does not indicate that He died specifically for the sins of either His sheep (believers) or unbelievers (the world). Throughout the Gospel of John, the death of Jesus is "for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it" (11:4; cf. 12:16, 23; 13:31-32; 17:1, 5). Furthermore, "the Son of Man [must] be lifted up" (3:14), that is, He must be exalted (8:28; 12:32-34). The death of Jesus is not said to be a sacrifice for sin within the Gospel of John; rather, the Lord said it would be His return to "Him who sent Me" (7:33; cf. 8:21; 13:1, 33; 14:19; 16:16).

[4] Kruse, *Letters of John*, 6-7.

The true assertion that Jesus would lay "down His life for the sheep" (and "for his friends") does not mean more than that "Jesus the shepherd will risk his life, even give his life, to protect and save them."[5] Jesus died for the sheep to demonstrate His love, in the same manner as a soldier may risk or surrender his life for love of country. Consequently, the terminology for Christ's death within the Gospel of John is different—*not contradictory*—from statements in other New Testament books (cf. Rom 4:25; 1 Cor 15:3; Gal 1:4; 1 Pet 2:24; 3:18; Heb 9:28; Rev 1:5). Dissimilar to the Gospel of Mark, wherein Jesus said that He "did not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (2:17; cf. Matt 9:12-13; Luke 5:31-32), the Gospel of John does not portray Jesus as calling individuals as sinners in need of repentance. For example, Nathaniel came to Jesus not as an unrepentant sinner, but as "an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit" (John 1:47). When the Lord healed the man born blind, He refuted the disciples' notion that either the sin of the "man or his parents" was the reason for his blindness; rather, "Jesus answered, '*It was* neither *that* this man sinned, nor his parents; but *it was* so that the works of God might be displayed in him" (9:3). Contrariwise, the healed man appeared before the Pharisees, who accused him of being "born entirely in sins" (9:34).

Nicodemus needed to be "born again" (3:3, 5, 7), yet there is no mention of any sins for which he needed to repent. Contrariwise, the conclusion of Jesus' words to Nicodemus indicated that everyone who "comes to the Light" are those who "practice the truth" and whose "deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God" (3:20-21). The woman of Samaria differed from the other examples in that Jesus indicated that He knew she was living sinfully, yet her response was that the Lord told her "all the things" that she had practiced (4:16-18; 29, 39). Jesus did not condemn the woman nor did He indicate that He forgave her. Michaels remarked, "They [her sinful actions] are no more directly relevant to the story than are the

---

[5] J. Ramsey Michaels, *John* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011) §29; cf. D. A. Carson, *For the Love of God*, 2 vols. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006) 1:20; Robert H. Mounce, *Jesus, in His Own Words* (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2010) 171; Gail R. O'Day and Susan E. Hylen, *John* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006) 107; Joseph F. Ryan, *That You May Believe: New Life in the Son* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003) 235

particulars of what Nathanael may have been doing or thinking 'under the fig tree' before Jesus called him (1.48);" in other words, the emphasis is upon Jesus' omniscience.[6] The Gospel of John never specifically indicates that Jesus forgave anyone. Even in the healing at Bethesda, the Lord simply warned the impotent man to "not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you" (5:14), but there is no call to repentance or forgiveness, and the man's actions in informing "the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well" (5:15) does not indicate any trust in the Lord on his part. Even the *pericope de adultera*, which "is generally regarded as a later insertion, not belonging to the original Gospel,"[7] does not indicate an explicit forgiveness of the woman's sins; rather, Jesus merely told her, "I do not condemn you . . . sin no more" (8:11). Subsequent to this account, Jesus indicated that some sins would not be removed; rather, He said to certain Jews: "you will die in your sins" (8:21, 24). Similarly, the Lord told the Pharisees: "your sin remains" (9:41); and, the world hates the disciples because they have sin (15:22). Subsequent to the resurrection of Jesus, the Lord did announce that sins could be forgiven in relation to the ministry of the disciples: "And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 'If you forgive the sins of any, *their sins* have been forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they have been retained" (20:22-23). The footwashing in John 13 can be interpreted in a similar manner as this post-resurrection statement, that is, mutual forgiveness of sins among fellow Christians. Even the statement at the conclusion of the episode indicates that the footwashing is a demonstration of mutual love among those who "are clean" (13:10) as opposed to involving Jesus' forgiveness of their sins.[8]

---

[6] J. Ramsey Michaels, "By Water and Blood: Sin and Purification in John and First John," in *Dimensions of Baptism: Biblical and Theological Studies*, eds. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002) 150.

[7] Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John*, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 285; cf. Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 187-89.

[8] John Christopher Thomas, *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991) 155-72; cf. Fernando F. Segovia, *Love Relationships in the Johannine Tradition* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982); Daniel R. Street, "They Went Out from Us:" The Identity of the Opponents in First John (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008); 393-94.

Nowhere in the Gospel of John can one find a specific statement that Jesus forgave someone of their sins; rather, He called "an Israelite indeed" (1:47), who could be regarded as chosen (6:70; 13:18; 15:16, 19) because he (and others) were given to Jesus by the Father (6:37, 39; 17:2, 6, 9, 24) and drawn to Jesus by the Father (6:44, 65). Consequently, the emphasis of the Gospel of John was not upon the forgiveness of the believer's sins because the notion of sinners in need of repentance is characteristic of the world. Therefore, the granting of eternal life is not the consequence of either forgiveness or repentance. Whereas the Gospel of John does not express an explicit doctrine of the atonement, the First Epistle of John does indeed address the sins of believers, in addition to the extent and nature of the Lord's death.

The message of First John is "that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all" (1:5). Nevertheless, the immediate consequence is "the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1:7). First John began with what appears to be an authoritative reference to apostolic authority, as indicated by the threefold use of "we" (cf. ἡμεῖς in 1:4) in the introduction: "we have heard . . . we have seen . . . what we have looked at and touched . . . we have seen and testify and proclaim . . . what we have seen and heard we proclaim" (1:1-3). The "us" (ἡμῶν) in verse 3 is noteworthy. John also identified himself with his readers, when he wrote with regard to their sinfulness, in addition to his own. "If we say [ἐὰν εἴπωμεν] that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess [ἐὰν ὁμολογῶμεν] our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say [ἐὰν εἴπωμεν] that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us" (1:8-10).

The Gospel of John is noted for its clear antithesis between light and darkness, life and death, belief and unbelief; however, there is not much emphasis upon the sin[9] of those who are "in the Light."[10] Subsequent to a brief introduction of

[9] The fact that sin exists is indicative of a corresponding standard of truth against which that darkness is contrasted. The immutable nature of God is the ultimate basis for all truth claims. The fact that God has communicated truth to humanity indicates the centrality of the Bible. Although mankind is created in the image of God, and the Fall devastated the

four verses, First John, by contrast, begins immediately by addressing the sins of those who truly have fellowship with God. Any believer who claims to have no sin is deceived (1:8), which indicates that Christians are still sinners by nature, and therefore, need to confess their sins (1:9). Consequently, it is the relationship with "our sins" (ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν) (i.e. the sin of believers) that necessitates the theology with regard to Christ's role as παράκλητος and ἱλασμός.

Of course, the popular terminology of the Johannine Gospel, which is that Jesus "lays down His life for the sheep" (John 10:11; cf. 15:13-16), could adequately express the role of Christ in relation to believers. Nevertheless, the Apostle John determined that such terminology would not be sufficient in reference to the sin of believers and Christ's role, therefore, as παράκλητος and ἱλασμός. The only manner in which John will use the terminology of Christ laying down His life is to express the love of God, and to thus exhort fellow believers to follow the example of Christ by loving one another (1 John 3:13-17). With regard to the death of Christ, the Apostle preferred the more definite language of ἱλασμός (2:2; 4:10). The reason for the more explicit terminology appears to be the consequence of some believers who said, or were saying, that they did not have any sin whatsoever. To assert such a proposition would indicate that one is deceived, and would make God a liar and would indicate that His truth was not within that individual.

The terminology of sacrifice provides an important description with regard to the death of the Lord Jesus. "Since sacrifice was the universal language of worship in the ancient world, it was natural that the significance of Jesus' death should be

---

direct oneness and intimate fellowship that humanity had with the Creator, the Bible communicates the truth that God used general and special revelation to communicate to mankind. Whereas the general revelation reminds mankind that God exists, special revelation is God's disclosure of specific truth. Since God has communicated truth to humanity, this indicates that humanity is responsible to live in accordance with revealed truth. For example, John 5:24-29 communicates that choices made in the present will culminate in everlasting destinies. Mankind will either receive the "light" or remain in "darkness." The fact that there is no intermediate response emphasizes the magnitude of the biblical revelation.

[10] Merrill C. Tenney, *John: The Gospel of Belief* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948; reprint, 1989) 31-33.

interpreted in those terms."[11] However, there are only eight occurrences of four words from the ἱλάσκομαι word group in the New Testament, which is not a considerable number of occurrences from this word group and only four of the eight occurrences have direct reference to the death of Jesus Christ (Rom 3:25; Heb 2:17; 1 John 2:2; 4:10). Nevertheless, when used, the ἱλάσκομαι word group provides an important expression of sacrificial language. Both "expiation" and "propitiation" are attested as possible meanings of ἱλασμός in both the Septuagint and the New Testament. The language of propitiation with regard to the death of Christ would have been familiar for centuries as a consequence of the King James Version of the Bible.

Propitiation is an offering that averts the wrath of God, which is directed righteously against sin. When most individuals hear the word "propitiation," they have images of pagan sacrificial rituals. Questions arise with regard to whether God can become angry, and if He can, can sacrificial offerings and rituals remove His divine wrath. Certainly, it is understandable when primitive animists believe it essential to placate the wrath of gods or even the spirits of the deceased. With regard to the death of Christ, the question is whether the death of Jesus truly propitiated the wrath of the Father, which induced Him to remove His divine wrath and to look with favor upon those for whom Christ is παράκλητος and ἱλασμός.

Certainly, any notion wherein God's wrath is regarded as arbitrary, capricious, cantankerous, or conceited is to be rejected. The expression of God's wrath is not infantile, malicious, resentful, or sinful. Scripture reveals a holy doctrine of God's wrath wherein any pagan crudeness is entirely absent. For instance, God provided a loving self-sacrifice in Christ Jesus, which was His own initiative to remove His own anger. God's wrath is His holy response to sin, and to the evil and wickedness exhibited by fallen humanity in opposition to Him. Propitiation is the removal of God's wrath. Consequently, the doctrines of propitiation and wrath are inseparable. If one believes that any notion of the wrath

[11] Everett Ferguson, "Spiritual Sacrifice in Early Christianity and its Environment," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, eds. Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980) 1163.

of God should be rejected, then one will also reject any concept of propitiation. For example, Hanson wrote, "Nothing could show more clearly that if you think of the wrath as an attitude of God you cannot avoid some theory of propitiation. But the wrath in the New Testament is never spoken of as being propitiated, because it is not conceived of as being an attitude of God."[12]

The notion that wrath is not an attitude of God has generally meant that commentators and translators will render ἱλασμός as expiation. The term propitiation is often rejected because it seems to imply that the expression of God's wrath is arbitrary and capricious. Therefore, those who render ἱλασμός as expiation provide several explanations against the concept of propitiation. Believing that the teaching of Jesus emphasized "limitless forgiveness," Dodd wrote, "anger as an attitude of God to men disappears, and His love and mercy become all-embracing."[13] Consequently, when Dodd rendered ἱλασμός as expiation, he intended to exclude any notion of propitiation. Even within the New Testament, the phrase "wrath of God" is frequent (John 3:36; Rom 1:18; 3:5; 9:22; Eph 5:6; Col 3:6; Rev 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19; 19:15), thus divine wrath continues to be a biblical concept subsequent to the teaching of Jesus.

Dodd's perspective has resulted in much debate, and it is difficult to find any work in the English language that does not refer to him when discussing the wrath of God. (Dodd "is regarded as one of the leading British New Testament scholars of the twentieth century." His work consisted "mainly of essays and monographs aimed at fellow specialists."[14]) Hanson, who was cited earlier, argued his monograph in much the same manner as Dodd. The wrath of God is a discussion in which theologians have passionate convictions, yet there is not always the accuracy of communication and thought that should be attained.

Anyone who discusses the wrath of God must recognize that such language is anthropopathic. God may be described with human terminology, yet such terms are

---

[12] Hanson, *Wrath of the Lamb*, 192.

[13] C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1932) 23.

[14] Patrick Gray, "Charles Harold Dodd," in *The Encyclopedia of Christian Literature*, 2 vols., ed. George Thomas Kurian (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2010) 1:293.

only true by analogy, that is, they are not univocal. Dodd affirmed the love of God to the exclusion of His wrath, yet such practice is a failure to strive for accuracy with regard to analogical language. For example, discussion with regard to God's love is anthropopathic, just as is argument with regard to His wrath. The temptation for Dodd (and those who argue similarly) would be to speak univocally with regard to the love of God and the love of human beings, since the latter is implicitly imperfect and to equate it with divine love would certainly lead to profound theological error. For instance, Stählin correctly asserted that the love of God and the wrath of God are "mutually inclusive, not exclusive."

> Objections are continually raised against the thesis that the ὀργή θεοῦ is an integral part of biblical proclamation. They are chiefly based on belief in God's love. If God is truly love, He cannot be angry. . . .
>
> The Enlightenment called such ideas "the crude anthropopathisms of an uncultured age" . . . but they are no more anthropopathic than what the Bible says about the fatherly love of God ; like this they belong inalienably to the biblical concept of the personal God.[15]

To discuss the wrath of God as anthropopathic does not mean, however, that the phrase does not correspond to reality.

To reiterate, the objection to the biblical doctrine of wrath has been the impetus for some commentators and theologians to reexamine the biblical vocabulary to argue for the exclusivity of expiation as opposed to propitiation. The translation of ἱλασμός as either expiation or propitiation does not need to be mutually exclusive, but inclusive. To clarify, ἱλασμός can be understood as expiation and propitiation, as opposed to demanding one or the other.

One could also argue that expiation has the effect of propitiation. For instance, if all terms of the ἱλάσκομαι word group were given the meaning of expiation, this would not adequately explain why expiation is needed, nor would it answer what would occur if there were no expiation. One certainly cannot deny that Scripture teaches that all humanity will die in their sin. Therefore, if one were to deny the concept of propitiation as unbiblical or unworthy of God, one would have

[15] Stählin, "ὀργή," in *Theological Dictionary*, 5:425.

to assume that universalism is true without any regard for a person's relationship with Christ by faith, which would certainly be contrary to Scripture.[16]

IV.A.1. The Ἱλάσκομαι Word Group

The biblical vocabulary that has been reexamined is a particular word group that has been translated in the King James Version of the Bible with propitiatory terminology. The verses are as follows:

> And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful [ἱλάσθητί] to me a sinner (Luke 18:13);
>
> Whom God hath set forth *to be* propitiation [ἱλαστήριον] through in his blood, to declare the righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forebearance of God (Rom 3:25);
>
> Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation [ἱλάσκεσθαι] for the sins of the people (Heb 2:17);
>
> FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL [ἵλεως] TO THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR INIQUITIES WILL I REMEMBER NO MORE (8:12);
>
> And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat [ἱλαστήριον]; of which we cannot now speak particularly (9:5);
>
> And he is the propitiation [ἱλασμός] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world (1 John 2:2); and,
>
> Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation [ἱλασμόν] for our sins (4:10).

The primary question is whether the object of the atoning (propitiatory) action is divine or human. If the object were divine, then the correct translation would be propitiation, that is, God is appeased. However, if the object were human (or if God

[16] Paul King Jewett, "Propitiation," in *Encyclopedia of the Bible,* 4:904-05.

was the subject, and sin was the object), then the correct translation would be expiation, that is, the means for covering sin or removing guilt.[17]

As already mentioned, Dodd was the primary motivation for the reexamination of the biblical vocabulary. With regard to Luke 18:13, he agreed with the translation of the King James, that is, the meaning is not propitiation, but "be merciful to me" or "forgive me." Hebrews 2:17 is a reference to Christ "performing an act whereby men are delivered from the guilt of their sin, not whereby God is propitiated." Hebrews 8:12 conveys the sense of forgiveness. Dodd agreed with the King James rendering of ἱλαστήριον as "mercyseat." With regard to Romans 3:25, he concluded, "the meaning conveyed . . . is that of expiation, not propitiation. Most translators and commentators are wrong." Similarly, with regard to 1 John 2:2 and 4:10, he disagreed with the King James as an "illegitimate" rendering.[18] Dodd's common assertion is that the commentators and translators were wrong to translate any of the ἱλάσκομαι word group as propitiation.

In May 1946, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland received an overture from the Presbytery of Stirling and Dunblane, which recommended a translation of the Bible in the contemporary language, now known as the New English Bible. At the time of the work, Dodd was professor emeritus of Cambridge University, and he served as convener of the New Testament panel, in addition to his responsibility as general director of the entire project.[19] The rendering of the ἱλάσκομαι word group in accordance with Dodd's perspective is not surprising when one considers his role in the project. For instance, Romans 3:25 in the New

---

[17] C. F. D. Moule, *Essays in New Testament Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) 288-89.

[18] Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 94-95. See also, idem, *The Johannine Epistles* (New York: Harper & Row, 1946) 25-26.

[19] F. F. Bruce, *The English Bible* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1961; reprint, Norwich: Fletcher & Son, 1963) 225-26; Bruce M. Metzger, *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001) 132. With regard to the translation, it was "very experimental, producing renderings never before printed in an English version and adopting certain readings from Hebrew and Greek manuscripts never before adopted. As a result, *The New English Bible* was both highly praised for its ingenuity and severely criticized for its liberty" (Philip W. Comfort and Walter A. Elwell, eds., *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* [Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2001] 208).

English Bible reads, "God designed him to be the means of expiating sin by his sacrificial death" (cf. REB). The Johannine verses (2:2; 4:10) read respectively: "we have one to plead our cause with the Father, Jesus Christ and he is just. He is himself the remedy for the defilement of our sins;" and, "in sending his Son as the remedy for the defilement of our sins." The Revised Standard Version, which was published a few years prior to the New English Bible, also has the translation "expiation" in Romans 3:25 and the Johannine verses.

Dodd's research was emphatically linguistic. He acknowledged that the common meaning of the verb ἱλάσκομαι in classical Greek was "to pacify," "to placate" or "to propitiate" an offended person, especially an offended deity. Dodd, however, believed such a rendering was inaccurate based upon its meaning in Hellenistic Judaism, as reflected in the Septuagint, or upon that basis, in the New Testament. "Thus Hellenistic Judaism, as represented by the LXX, does not regard the cultus as a means of pacifying the displeasure of the Deity, but as a means of delivering man from sin, and it looks in the last resort to God himself to perform that deliverance, thus evolving a meaning of *ἱλάσκεσθαι* strange to non-biblical Greek."[20] Dodd asserted that the Hebrew verb כָּפַר, which he rendered as "to atone" or "make atonement," was occasionally translated in the Septuagint by words which meant "to cancel" or "to purify," as opposed to an exclusive usage of ἱλάσκομαι. Within the Septuagint, ἱλάσκομαι was occasionally used to translate words which meant "to cleanse" or "to forgive," as opposed to always being the translation of כָּפַר. When ἱλάσκομαι was used to translate כָּפַר, the meaning was "expiation," that is, to remove defilement. He concluded, "The verb, however, has another meaning, rarer in pagan writers—namely, to perform an act by which defilement (ritual or moral) is removed; to 'expiate.' The sense that evil doing brings with it a kind of taint is natural and general. . . . In antiquity it was universally believed that the performance of prescribed rituals (which might or might not include the ritual slaughter of animals) had the value, so to speak, of a powerful disinfectant."[21] Dodd's assessment

[20] Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 93.
[21] Ibid. 25-26.

was that the New Testament usage of the ἱλάσκομαι word group should be interpreted similarly. Consequently, according to such an interpretation, the death of the Lord Jesus expiated sins, as opposed to propitiating God.

The majority of Dodd's contemporaries and successors accepted his thesis. Nevertheless, there were others who subjected Dodd's research to a rigorous assessment, in particular Leon Morris[22] and Roger Nicole.[23] Morris and Nicole both demonstrated that Dodd's conclusions were based upon either incomplete evidence (or incompletely used evidence) or questionable conclusions (i.e. beyond evidence actually adduced). For example, Dodd did not make any mention of Josephus or Philo, despite the fact that they were extremely important representatives of Hellenistic Judaism.[24] Büchsel referenced the writings of both Josephus and Philo, and concluded that especially with regard to the latter, the predominant meaning of the ἱλάσκομαι word group is "to placate." The only meaning that Büchsel cited from Josephus was the meaning "to propitiate."[25]

With regard to the New Testament understanding of the ἱλάσκομαι word group, Dodd also neglected to mention two texts that were cited by Büchsel.[26] Clement's *First Epistle* (7:7) (written late first century) and the Shepherd of Hermas (*Visions* I.2.1) (who wrote first century)[27] used ἱλάσκεσθαι with God as the object (note the accusative, τὸν θεόν). "In the Apostolic Fathers, ἱλάσκεσθαι means 'to propitiate', without any stigma attached to the procedure!"[28]

Furthermore, Dodd's research did not make any reference to any text from the books of the Maccabees, which is peculiar since most copies of the Septuagint

---

[22] Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 125-85; idem, "Meaning of ἱλαστήριον," 33-43.

[23] Nicole, "Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 117-57.

[24] Ibid. 131.

[25] Büchsel and Herrmann, "ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός," in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:314-16; Nicole's statement is noteworthy: "This testimony is the more impressive since Büchsel, being in several respects in agreement with Dodd, can certainly be trusted to be unbiased in this particular instance" ("Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 131-32).

[26] Büchsel and Herrmann, "ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός," in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:314.

[27] For dates and summaries of their writings, see Ron J. Bigalke Jr., "Clement of Alexandria," in *Encyclopedia of Christian Literature*, 1:254-55; and, David Brian Warner, "Hermes," in ibid. 2:362-63.

[28] Nicole, "Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 132.

include the Apocrypha, and there are texts that communicate a propitiatory and substitutionary offering that averted the wrath of God from the nation of Israel (cf. 2 Macc 3:33; 7:32-38; 4 Macc 6:28; 9:24; 12:18; 17:22).[29] The only manner in which Dodd's proposition could be correct with regard to the Septuagint and the New Testament usage of the ἱλάσκομαι word group would be to maintain that they "form a sort of linguistic island with little precedent in former times, little confirmation from the contemporaries, and no following in after six years!"[30]

There are numerous examples, where כָּפַר is used within the Hebrew Old Testament and ἱλάσκομαι is used within the Septuagint, which indicate that the anger of an individual or even the anger of God was propitiated. Genesis 32:20, for example, refers to Jacob appeasing Esau with gifts. Proverbs 16:14 refers to a wise man pacifying the wrath of a king.[31] Aaron and Phinehas averted God's anger from the Israelites (Numb 16:41-50; 25:11-13).

Dodd argued that only four passages in the Septuagint could have a meaning contrary to his proposition: Psalm 106:30; Zechariah 7:2; 8:22; and, Malachi 1:9.[32] With regard to the two passages in Zechariah and the one passage in Malachi, he asserted, "we meet for the first time with unmistakable examples of the ordinary classical and Hellenistic sense *of ἐξιλάσκεσθαι* = 'to propitiate'."[33] Ἐξιλάσκεσθαι was used to translate חָלָה, and only in the three passages referenced by Dodd. One may wonder if Dodd was correct when he asserted that there was something "exceptional" with regard to the usage of ἐξιλάσκεσθαι in those three passages. Dodd affirmed that there is "a distinct tone of contempt" toward those who would think that God could be placated by pagan practices. However, there does not

[29] Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 140-41; Nicole, "Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 133.

[30] Nicole, "Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 132.

[31] Dodd referenced Genesis 32:20 and Proverbs 16:14, and acknowledged that the meaning is "to appease," "placate," yet considered this irrelevant since the object is a human being as opposed to God (*Bible and the Greeks*, 92). In response, however, this would certainly indicate that the Septuagint translators were familiar with such meaning and usage.

[32] Ibid. 86, 93.

[33] Ibid. 86.

appear to be any "tone of contempt" in other passages where חִלָּה is used (e.g. Exod 32:11; 1 Kgs 13:6; 2 Kgs 13:4; 2 Chron 33:12; Ps 119:58; Dan 9:13). Moreover, since ἐξιλάσκεσθαι was used in the "ordinary classical and Hellenistic sense," which is "unmistakable," it would seem best not to presume upon the intent of the translators of the Septuagint; rather, it would best to examine the literary context. For instance, in Zechariah 8:22, the prophet anticipates a future conversion of the Gentiles, which would hardly indicate a "tone of contempt." Moreover, חִלָּה is used within the immediate context in verse 21, and there it is translated δέομαι without any notion of contempt. The usage of ἐξιλάσκεσθαι to translate חִלָּה may seem exceptional, yet it is consistent with classical and Koine Greek usage, apocryphal usage, in addition to that of Josephus, Philo, and Apostolic Fathers;[34] throughout such literature, the predominant meaning is "propitiation," even when another meaning is thought to be better.[35]

Furthermore, in passages where the normal translation of כָּפַר is "atonement," the context often contains an explicit reference with regard to the wrath of God (e.g. Exod 32:10, 30; Numb 16:46-47; 25:13; Deut 21:1-9; 1 Sam 3:14; 26:19; 2 Sam 21:3), which would certainly imply that the sin of human beings can only receive atonement when the anger of God is placated or propitiated. Indeed, ἐξιλάσκεσθαι is a complex word in the Septuagint, yet "the averting of anger seems to represent a stubborn substratum of meaning from which all the usages can be naturally explained."[36]

With regard to the New Testament occurrences, the description of Jesus Christ as the ἱλασμός for the sins of others (1 John 2:2; 4:10) could be understood to mean that He merely removed the guilt of those who have fellowship with Him. However, the use of παράκλητος to also describe the Lord Jesus indicates that there is displeasure of the Father toward sinners; therefore, the Lord Jesus gives support to believers for whom He is sure to plead.

---

[34] Nicole, "Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 133-34.

[35] Leon Morris, *The Cross in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965) 349.

[36] Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 154-55.

With regard to Romans 3:25, the literary context should have precedence to determine the meaning. The immediately preceding context is Romans 1:18—3:20 wherein the universal guilt of humanity, and the consequential wrath of God against sin, is so aptly described. The remedy for universal human guilt under God's wrath is the Lord Jesus who was displayed publicly by God. Christ Jesus is described specifically as ἱλαστήριον, which could be translated as either the means of propitiation (i.e. a propitiatory sacrifice) or the place of propitiation (i.e. the mercy seat, as in Hebrews 9:5). Based upon the context of Romans 3, the most natural meaning of ἱλαστήριον in verse 25 would be the concept of propitiation. The previous chapters systematically described God's universal wrath and judgment against sin; therefore, if anyone will experience redemption, that wrath must be averted somehow. Certainly, other salvific expressions can be found in verses 21-26, which reveal the remedy for universal judgment, yet there is no other word than ἱλαστήριον that can adequately explain how the universal wrath is averted. Wrath has been a primary component in the argument of Romans 1:18—3:20 that one would even expect an expression that would indicate the cessation of the divine wrath, which will culminate in salvation for the one who has faith in Jesus.[37]

The term ἱλάσκομαι is transitive in Hebrews 2:17, which would mean "the sins of the people" is the object. Consequently, it could be translated "expiate" (NEB) or "make atonement" (NIV). The marginal note in New International Version reads, "that he might turn aside God's wrath, taking away," which indicates that the translators recognized that the concept of wrath being averted is inherent in the word ("to make propitiation" in the NASB). The frequent references to the wrath of God and the averting of divine wrath within the contexts of the ἱλάσκομαι word group would indicate that the concept of propitiation belongs to those terms. Of course, there are some who believe there is no justification for the translation "make atonement" or the (NIV) marginal note. For example, Attridge wrote, "In Hebrews, Christ's sacrifice is always directed at removing sin and its effects, not at

[37] Ibid. 169.

propitiating God."[38] Montefiore wrote similarly, "To expiate . . . is to make amends for sins, and the verb takes as its object the sin to be amended. Propitiation is not a biblical concept, but expiation is the motive underlying atonement sacrifice."[39] The Lord Jesus did truly remove sins by means of His sacrificial death. Moreover, the Lord did make expiation for the sins of His people and truly reconciled them to God, which was necessary because the universal sin of humanity severed that relationship. However, to exclude any notion of propitiation from expiation is unjustifiable because it is God who is offended by the universal guilt of humanity, which is evident in His wrath against sin, which is precisely the wrath that Jesus averted through His death on Calvary's cross.[40]

The best manner in which to translate the ἱλάσκομαι word group would be to regard expiation and propitiation as mutually inclusive, not exclusive (i.e. the concepts exist together). With regard to the biblical text, to deny the concept of propitiation from that of expiation is a linguistic argument that is not accurate. Moreover, the precedence upon the linguistic argument is misguided since the emphasis should be upon the literary context, that is, the meaning of ἱλασμός in First John 2:2 and 4:10.

The emphasis of the literary context is "we" (ἡμεῖς) and "us" (ἡμῶν), that is, the "sins" of those who "have fellowship" with the Lord Jesus. With tender words of affection, John wrote to fellow believers as his "little children." His concern was for them to not only know that they had a παράκλητος with the Father, but also ἱλασμός for their sins. To state that Jesus Christ the righteous is a παράκλητος with the Father indicates that God is the object of the reconciliation that is being described, which would certainly favor interpreting ἱλασμός as "propitiation." Dodd even conceded this interpretation: "This view might find some support in the context of ii. 2, where Jesus Christ is not only *ἱλασμός* but also *παράκλητος πρὸς*

[38] Harold W. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, trans. Helmet Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989) 96.

[39] Hugh Montefiore, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964) 68.

[40] Simon J. Kistemaker, "Atonement in Hebrews," in *Glory of the Atonement*, 165.

τὸν Πατέρα."[41] Dodd regarded the validity of such an interpretation as illegitimate, yet he did so without any substantive reasons why this should be. The literary context favors the interpretation "propitiation" because Jesus Christ is a παράκλητος on the basis of His ἱλασμός . . . περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν.

First John 2:1 depicts Jesus as giving support to those believers who assert their need for cleansing. The work of the παράκλητος is not on behalf of those without guilt, nor is He declaring them innocent; rather, He is supporting their plea because they are confessing their sins. Marshall noted, "In order that forgiveness may be granted, there is an action in respect of the sins which has the effect of rendering God favorable to the sinner." The sins seem to be removed by the action of the ἱλασμός, which means it "has the double effect of expiating the sin and thereby propitiating God."[42]

To state that God loved fallen sinners, and sent His Son to be the ἱλασμός for those sinners, indicates that He is the subject. First John 4:10 emphasizes expiation, yet not without the concept of propitiation from 2:2 (and elsewhere in Scripture). The common emphasis between 2:2 and 4:10 is the phrase, περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. Consequently, the priority of the ἀγγελία is the sins of those who are believers, as opposed to "*those of* the whole world," and this emphasis is the reason for employing sacrificial (atoning) language.

The motivation for the ἱλασμός is consistent with Romans 3:25. In both Romans 3:25 and 1 John 4:10, it is God the Father who took the initiative to accomplish reconciliation. Jesus is truly a παράκλητος on behalf of sinners, yet this action is not the emphasis of 1 John 4:10. Moreover, the emphasis of 4:10 is not upon averting the wrath of God; rather, the primary notion is that the guilt of sin has been removed as a consequence of the ἱλασμός. Brown was correct with regard to 4:10, when he wrote, "it favors expiation" because wrath is not mentioned in the context, and the fact that God sent His Son indicates a reverse action than if He were

[41] Dodd, *Bible and the Greeks*, 94-95.
[42] Marshall, *Epistles of John*, 118.

propitiating God.[43] There is no need to make expiation and propitiation mutually exclusive, which is what Nicole termed "distinction with separation," that is, the terms can be "viewed as complementary, not as competitive, and certainly not as mutually exclusive."[44] Smalley reasoned similarly:

> Possibly these two interpretations of the term ἱλασμός, one in which God is the subject of the action of sin offering and one in which he is the object, need not be regarded as mutually exclusive. . . . Theologically it is in any case true God is the *initiator* of the Jewish principle and pattern of sacrifice for sin, as he is of the surrounding framework of the law (cf. Lev 16). But he also *receives* that sacrifice, so that atonement may be made. . . .[45]

God is the one "initiates" the offering (Rom 3:25; 1 John 4:10), yet He is also the one who "receives" the offering (Rom 3:26; 1 John 2:1-2). God initiated the means for making atonement, and because there is propitiation, sin can then be expiated.

Nevertheless, one is still obliged to identify the means by which to communicate the reality of God's wrath, and the absolute necessity for averting His anger. Of course, the reason for this care in communication is that the doctrine of propitiation is easy to caricature in a manner that prevents one from rightly dividing the Word of God. For example, Chalke considered John 3:16 and asked, "How, then, have we come to believe that at the cross this God of love suddenly decides to vent his anger and wrath on his own Son?" He asserted that the doctrine of God's wrath is a "twisted version of events," "morally dubious," and "a huge barrier to faith." Specifically rejecting the doctrine of penal substitution, Chalke claimed, "The fact is that the cross isn't a form of cosmic child abuse – a vengeful Father, punishing his Son for an offence he has not even committed."[46]

---

[43] Brown, *Epistles of John*, 220.

[44] Nicole, "Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation," 119.

[45] Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John*, 37.

[46] Steve Chalke, with Alan Mann, *The Lost Message of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003) 182. Of course, there are individuals who believed the doctrine of penal substitution was invented by medieval theologians, which was a belief consistent with the "gruesome forms of prolonged torture" of that time (cf. Aaron Milavec, *Salvation Is from the Jews (John 4:22): Saving Grace in Judaism and Messianic Hope in Christianity* [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007] 63).

Of course, such statements are surely misguided and do not accurately depict the biblical revelation, nor of the doctrine of propitiation (or substitutionary atonement) in particular. Moreover, it is doubtful that any Christian has understood the doctrine of God's wrath in such a crudely literal manner. The description that Chalke provided is more akin to pagan notions of propitiation with only the appearance of representing biblical truth. The need to develop a truly biblical doctrine of propitiation necessitates that Bible communicators distinguish the wrath of God from the wrath of human beings. In particular, it is necessary to clarify the doctrine in a twofold manner: (1) the necessity for propitiation; and, (2) the motivation for propitiation.

IV.A.2. The Necessity for ἱλασμός

Expiation is not a sufficient word to explain the ἱλάσκομαι word group because it does not answer why sin should be expiated, nor does it answer what would occur without expiation for sin.[47] The reality that sin aroused the righteous wrath of God means that the guilty are doomed to experience His judgment.[48] God's wrath is entirely distinct from human anger.[49] Hence, even the message of Jesus included wrath in addition to mercy. Throughout the New Testament, the wrath of God is not regarded as inconsistent with the Old Testament, in the sense that God's wrath only belonged to the latter revelation, and references to the love of God belonged to the New Testament revelation. Contrary to this assertion are those who affirm that God

---

[47] Jewett, "Propitiation," in *Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 4:904-05.

[48] I. Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004) 433; Colin M. Kerr, "Propitiation (Introductory and Biblical)," in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, 10:397.

[49] "Human anger and wrath are always spoken of in a negative sense (cf. James 1:20), with the exception of those occasions where anger is aroused because the holiness of God has been offended (cf. Moses in Exod. 32:19; David in 2 Sam. 12:5; Jesus in Mark 3:5; all believers in Eph. 4:26)" (G. Harry Leafe, "Wrath," in *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, gen. ed. Mal Couch [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996] 425). Stählin noted that the Septuagint translators "deliberately avoided" certain terms [κότος, χόλος, μῆνις] that they deemed as "unsuitable when they wished to speak of the wrath of the biblical God" (Stählin, "ὀργή," in *Theological Dictionary*, 5:411).

in the New Testament "is never the object of propitiation because he is already on the side of people."[50]

The fact that God may be described as "longsuffering" is a consequence of propitiation. For instance, the phrase אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם literally means "slow of angers," which may be rendered as "longsuffering." The term μακροθυμία may also be translated as "longsuffering" (i.e. slowness of anger). If there are instances in which God is the subject of the phrase אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם in the Old Testament or μακροθυμία in the New Testament, one cannot say with integrity that God "is never the object of propitiation" because it is a surety otherwise. Indeed, there are sixteen instances in the Old Testament where the phrase אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם is used wherein God is the subject (Exod 34:6; Numb 14:18; Neh 9:17; Ps 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Prov 14:29; 15:18; 16:32; 19:11; 25:15; Isa 48:9; Jer 15:15; Joel 2:13; Jon 4:2; Nah 1:3). There are four instances in the New Testament where the term μακροθυμία is used wherein God is the subject (Rom 2:4; 9:22; 1 Tim 1:16; 2 Pet 3:15). The attitude of God wherein it is said that He is longsuffering is consistent in both the Old and New Testaments; therefore, one cannot exclude God as the object of propitiation. The fact that the phrase, ὀργὴ θεοῦ, is genitive indicates that God is personal and His anger is aroused against sin. Moreover, the term "longsuffering" also expresses the attitude of a personal God, as opposed to being relegated to "the sphere of the purely mysterious."[51] Consequently, the phrases אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם and ὀργὴ θεοῦ, in addition to the term μακροθυμία indicate that one cannot separate the divine attitude of longsuffering or wrath when the era of the New Testament arrived. The concept of longsuffering indicates the averting of wrath. Therefore, the primary issue is not whether God's anger is abated; rather, the issue is why God is slow to anger.

The evidence is that the Old Testament proclaims both the love and mercy of God, "just as impressively as His wrath," and the New Testament proclaims God's wrath in addition to His mercy.[52] However, the wrath of God is never an "enigmatic"

---

[50] Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 2:504.

[51] Dodd, *Romans*, 22.

[52] The love of God could be regarded as his *opus proprium* (proper work), which is distinguished from his *opus alienum* (alien work). According to 1 John 4:8, "God is love," yet

or "irrational" outburst.[53] "Unlike human anger, God's wrath is not irrational or fitful; it is not vindictive or malicious."[54] One could also add that God's wrath is not unpredictable: "divine wrath is, and always has been, totally consistent and predictable;" it is aroused by sin and only by sin.[55] Propitiation is necessary because sin arouses the wrath of God, and provokes His judgment.

Not all affirm the statement that sin arouses God's wrath and provokes His judgment. For instance, Baker and Green understood "human acts of wickedness," in addition to the consequences that are intrinsic to them, as God's judgment upon fallen humanity; therefore, the negative consequences are the expression of God's wrath. Romans 1:18-32 is regarded as demonstrating

> the progression from the human refusal to honor god, with its consequent denial of the human vocation to live in relation to God, to God's giving humanity over to its own desires—giving humanity, as it were, the life it sought apart from God—and from this to human acts of wickedness, which do not arouse the wrath of God but are themselves already the consequences of its active presence.[56]

Scripture never states that God is wrath. Love is an eternal attribute of God, whereas His wrath is His response to sin. See the discussion in Alister E. McGrath, *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther's Theological Breakthrough* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985) 154-56.

[53] Stählin, "ὀργή," in *Theological Dictionary*, 5:422-23.

[54] Leafe, "Wrath," in *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, 425.

[55] George R. Knight, *The Cross of Christ: God's Work for Us* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing, 2008) 37. Knight continued, "The pagans worshipped capricious gods, and their worshippers could not guess what their deities would do next. They were never sure when their gods would be angry and annoyed with them." By contrast, the Old Testament does not have any "such difficulty in predicting the wrath of Yahweh. Only one thing aroused His wrath—*SIN*" (ibid.).

[56] Mark D. Baker and Joel B. Green, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament and Contemporary Contexts*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011) 79. The influence of Dodd is apparent in this volume for he also believed that Romans 1:18 was not indicating a personal attitude that God has toward individuals; rather, the "wrath" is "taken out of the sphere of the purely mysterious, and brought into the sphere of cause and effect : sin is the cause, disaster the effect" (*Romans*, 21-23, 82-83). See also, Fiddes, *Past Event and Present Salvation*, 92-93 ("God's wrath is his active consent to the working out of . . . sins into its inevitable results." God's judgment is "a natural consequence flowing from the sin itself. . . ."). Fiddes differs from Baker and Green in that he emphasized that God consents to the natural consequences "in an *active* and personal way;" nevertheless, it is this consent that "can truly be called the 'wrath' of God against sin which spoils his work" (ibid. 93).

God does certainly use the natural consequences of sin as judgment against human sin. However, to assert that humanity's "sinful acts do not invite God's wrath but prove that God's wrath is already active"[57] is contrary to other Scriptures, such as Colossians 3:5-6.

> Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come.

The very sins that are named in the Colossians passage, *which arouse the wrath of God*, are those same "degrading passions" that are described in Romans 1, which "God gave them over to." Similar to the doctrine of expiation and the concept of propitiation that it is often demanded to exclude, the problem with Baker and Green's statement is not what it affirms but what it excludes. For instance, the practice of "degrading passions" is an expression of God's wrath as He removes restraints and allows the negative consequences of those rebellious actions that are contrary to His will; nevertheless, it is also true that those offenses arouse God's wrath even more.[58] For this very reason, Romans 2:5 reads, "But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Scripture prophesies that a future day of wrath and revelation will be an expression of the righteous judgment of God (cf. 2 Pet 3:4-10).

---

[57] Baker and Green, *Recovering the Scandal*, 79.

[58] The prophet Habakkuk struggled with this very issue. He asked, "Why dost Thou make me see iniquity, and cause *me* to look on wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; strife exists and contention arises" (1:3). Habakkuk was grieved with what he perceived as God's apparent failure to make His will known and to uphold justice for the righteous (1:4). God answered the prophet's protest by affirming that He will judge the wicked in a future day (2:2-20). God agreed with Habakkuk that to allow sinful humanity to continue in its sinful offenses—and the negative consequences therein—is not a sufficient response to those sins. Baker and Green did not explicitly deny that God would judge the wicked in a future day; rather, they recognize that wrath "is being worked out as divine action in the present world" (*Recovering the Scandal*, 80).

IV.A.3. The Motivation for ‘Ιλασμός

Within a pagan context, propitiatory rites were always an human attempt to appease the anger of a deity (or even the deceased).[59] Pagan sacrificial rituals were attempts to avert the anger of a capricious and vindictive deity who would inflict punishment upon those who do not bribe them with their gifts and offerings. The appeasement was never regarded within a moral context, that is, the need for propitiation was not an ethical consideration. Furthermore, in some propitiatory rites, the offerings were entirely immoral.

As already stated, the wrath of God is aroused by sin and only by sin. Moreover, the motivation for propitiation in pagan rites is that of the human beings who desire to alleviate the wrath of the gods (or others). The contrast with Christianity could not be more apparent because fallen humanity has no means of their own for removing God’s anger. The teaching of the gospel is that righteousness is by faith “apart from works” (Rom 3:21—4:25). For this reason, God’s presented Christ Jesus publicly as a propitiating sacrifice. Propitiation is not some act that human beings accomplish to appease God; rather, it is something that God did on behalf of fallen humanity.[60] God revealed that even in the Old Testament sacrifices, “the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls” (Lev 17:11). Atonement is never a human work; rather, it is the gift of God.

---

[59] See the interesting discussion by George Stanley Faber, *The Origin of Pagan Idolatry*, 3 vols. (London: Rivington, 1816) 1:474-79.

[60] John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Romans: God’s Good news for the World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994) 114-15. Thomas F. Torrance wrote similarly, “The Christian doctrine of salvation is no pagan doctrine of placation or propitiation. Man cannot propitiate God or in any way make amends for the sin he has committed against the infinite Majesty of God” (*The Doctrine of Jesus Christ* [Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002] 146).

IV.B. Indicated by Three Parallel Prepositional Phrases (Περί)

The preposition περί is used thrice in First John 2:2. Jesus is said to be propitiation περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν ("for our sins"), and not περὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων ("for ours only"), but also περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κὸσμου ("for *those of* the whole world"). The repetition of περί is generally understood as having the same meaning for each of the three phrases, or as having a distinct meaning between the first and second phrases and the final prepositional phrase. The single meaning would tend to indicate some manner of actuality, whereas the latter view would tend to indicate some manner of potentiality for the final prepositional phrase.

IV.B.1. The Meaning of Περί

The preposition περί is ambiguous with regard to the manner in which Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the entire world. The preposition simply means "for" and is thus not specific enough to indicate either actuality or potentiality. For instance, John's assertion "may simply be understood to mean that Christ is the atoning sacrifice that the gospel now *makes available for* the sins of everyone in the world."[61] Therefore, the propitiation of Jesus was atoning not only for the sins of believers but also for the sins of those who would not believe in Him. If the purpose for the repetition of περί were to communicate a single meaning, then there would be no need to contrast an actual benefit for "our sins" (i.e. believers) with a potential benefit for "the whole world" (who may or may not believe). Several grammatical occurrences in 2:2 indicate a single meaning understanding for περί. The *first* is the late occurrence of the particle δέ. The *second* is the occurrence of ἀλλά within the last prepositional phrase. The *third* is the lack of τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν in the last prepositional phrase.

The clause that is introduced by δέ is not an additional thought; rather, it is used as somewhat of a corrective to the preceding assertion. Consequently, δέ

[61] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1994) 598.

delineates "the clause as guarding against error, not merely adding a new thought."[62] John's purpose "was no other than to make this benefit common to the whole Church. Then under the word *all* or whole, he does not include the reprobate, but designates those who should believe as well as those who were then scattered through various parts of the world."[63] The efficacy of Christ's advocacy and propitiation is not limited only to John's readers; rather, it is extended to all peoples throughout the world. As already mentioned in the lexical and syntactical analysis, δέ is unusually late in the clause δὲ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου, which indicates that the initial two περί phrases are narrowly related in meaning, and therefore, it would be unnatural to the text if one were to assert a different meaning from one use of περί to the subsequent occurrences, or that that the intent of Christ's propitiation was actual with regard to those mentioned in the former instances, yet potential in its intent with regard to those mentioned in the final prepositional clause.

The term τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν is not present in the second περί clause because it is obvious from the context and structure.[64] Therefore, it would be irregular to understand the intent of Christ's propitiation to be stated with regard to unbelievers in the final prepositional clause because it would also fail to explain the late usage of the particle δέ. John's meaning for ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου is evident from the context, and his omission of τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν was stylistic and not a means of introducing a change in meaning, as if John's intent with the final phrase was to assert that the relationship of one group to Christ's propitiation is different than that of ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου. The thrice repeated περί indicates "that the *sins* of the world are the concern" with regard to the propitiation by Jesus, as opposed to the unbelieving world in general.[65]

---

[62] Westcott, *Epistles of St. John*, 44.

[63] John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, trans. John Owen (Edinburgh: T. Constable, 1855) 173.

[64] Blass and DeBrunner, *Greek Grammar*, 253-54; Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 6:209-10.

[65] Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John*, 38.

Although it is possible to argue that the occurrence of ἀλλά within the last prepositional clause must indicate a distinction between the referents of the first and second phrases, this is not necessary for it would be an argument based upon an incomplete understanding of the conjunction. The occurrence of ἀλλά would be best understood as affirmative, as opposed to adversative, especially when one consider the grammatical relationship of ἀλλά with both μόνον and καί.[66] Within the Johannine literature, there is a similar occurrence of ἀλλά in John 17:20, which reads, "οὐ περὶ τούτων δὲ ἐργτῶ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ τῶν πιστευόντων." Jesus distinguished between two groups, "for these alone" and "for those also who believe," yet there is an evident unity between them. The first group referenced is Jesus' disciples who were present with Him in the Upper Room. Although the second group may appear distinct from the disciples, there is a fundamental unity between the two groups as indicated by the οὐ περὶ τούτων δὲ ἐργτῶ μόνον clause. Consequently, there is no reason to assert a fundamental distinction between the two beneficiaries of Christ's propitiation in First John 2:2. The assertion that John made is that Christ's advocacy and propitiation is the unifying factor for all believers. Similar to the relationship between the phrase περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, which emphasizes the sins of believers, and the next phrase οὐ περὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων, which serves as a corrective by emphasizing that the sins truly are those of the believers (i.e. "our sins"), the last prepositional phrase περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κὸσμου is not somehow disconnected in thought from the previous two phrases so as to introduce an entirely unique group (i.e. believer's sin and also unbeliever's sins).

IV.B.2. The Context and Structure

The emphasis of First John 1:5—2:2 is the concept of sin. John addressed the false propositions with regard to sin, and then explained the nature of sin in the life of the believer. John wrote for the purpose of his readers not sinning; however, if the believer does sin, the Christian has "an Advocate with the Father" who is the

[66] Bauer et al., *Greek-English Lexicon*, 2nd ed., 38.

ἱλασμός for sin. First John 2:3-11 resumes the φῶς and σκοτία motif from the previous unit. The statements of 2:1-2 assert the advocacy and propitiation of Christ for the benefit of the believer. Therefore, it would be unnatural to the context and structure to introduce the notion of a potential group of individuals. Determining the meaning of the word κόσμος will confirm that John was not indicating the potentiality of Christ's propitiation.

IV.C. Indicated by the Word Κόσμος

The interpretation of ἱλασμός and the three parallel prepositional phrases (περί) indicate that John wrote with regard to individuals who were actual beneficiaries of Christ's advocacy and propitiation. The immediate reference was to the Johannine community and then secondly to all other Christian communities. Consequently, one may understand the address to those who are in fellowship with God, as opposed to a potential group who may or may not believe. The reason why John should mention ὅλου τοῦ κὸσμου is the false perception that his readers might have of themselves as compared to Christians worldwide. First John 2:2 is explicit, therefore, that Jesus is the propitiation both περὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων and περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κὸσμου.

The reason for the mention of ὅλου τοῦ κὸσμου is understood by Carson's assertion: "The most striking feature relevant to our subject in these epistles is the absence not only of OT quotations but even of many unambiguous allusions to the OT."[67] Of course, Carson did not intend to assert that there is not any Old Testament influence for indeed there are many Semitisms within the Johannine writings.[68] The grammar and style demonstrate an Old Testament indebtedness, even without direct quotations from the Old Testament. Indeed, the Johannine writings could not be understood without determining the references to Old Testament conceptions of sacrifice.

> In spite of the absence of direct quotations, there can be no doubt that the author of this Epistle is greatly indebted to the Old Testament. If the hand is the hand of a Hellene, it expresses the thought of a Jew. His mind is steeped in the thoughts of the Old Testament. Though he has lived among Greeks and learned to express himself simply in their language, and to some extent has made himself acquainted with Hellenic thought, he is really as much a stranger and a sojourner among them as his fathers were. . . . His views on propitiation therefore, as on all other subjects, must be considered in light of the Old Testament.[69]

---

[67] D. A. Carson, "1—3 John," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007) 1063.

[68] A. J. B. Higgins, "The Words of Jesus According to St. John," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 49 (1967) 374; Köstenberger, *Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*, 132.

[69] Brooke, *Johannine Epistles*, 28.

Scholars may disagree with regard to the reason why John wrote in Greek with such indebtedness to the Old Testament, yet the fact that he wrote with regard to the thoughts and concerns of the Old Testament (despite the lack of direct quotations) cannot be ignored. The absence of direct quotations truly demonstrates a predominantly Jewish readership for First John because only readers who were innately familiar with the Old Testament could understand and appreciate John's thought. If the Johannine community were predominately Gentile, certainly John would have been cognizant that much of his argument would not be entirely appreciated by a reasonable number of his intended readership.

Young indicated that any occurrence of the ἱλάσκομαι word group would "be associated with the Day of Atonement expiation of Israel's sins by any first century Jew."[70] Brown understood the reference to Jesus as δίκαιον "in the Father's presence" to be "a reference to the OT ritual of the Day of Atonement when the high priest brought the blood of a spotless animal into the Holy of Holies to expiate the sins of the people."[71] Not only does the Johannine grammar assume knowledge of the Old Testament sacrificial system, but also the syntactical construction of ἱλασμός is reminiscent of the Septuagint. Büchsel noted that the construction of ἱλασμός ἐστιν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν "corresponds to that used with ἱλάσκεσθαι in the LXX. John is obviously following the OT."[72] The entire corpus of the Johannine writings is structured by the Old Testament sacrificial system, and allusions to it throughout his writings are essential for understanding the Johannine theology. Smeaton noted the importance of discerning the "peculiarity" of the Johannine style: "he attaches himself closely to the Old Testament doctrine of sacrifice in alluding to the blood of Christ (1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5). The greatest mistakes of expositors have arisen from not keeping in view the sacrificial vocabulary, and allusions to the ancient worship occurring in his style."[73] The

---

[70] Norman H. Young, "'Hilaskesthai' and Related Words in the New Testament," *Evangelical Quarterly* 55 (July-September 1983): 170.

[71] Brown, *Epistles of John*, 240.

[72] Büchsel and Herrmann, "ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός," in *Theological Dictionary*, 3:317.

[73] George Smeaton, *The Doctrine of the Atonement According to the Apostles* (1870; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988) 449.

reason why it was necessary to state that Jesus Christ is also the propitiation for ὅλου τοῦ κὸσμου was the possibility that the predominately Jewish readership would think of Christ's sacrifice in an exclusivist manner. Clark explained:

> The rabbis argued as to whether the blessings of the Messiah, when he should come, would extend beyond the Jews to the world. There were many negative votes. Hence there is no reason to deny, and enough support to assert, that when John speaks of the world he means the Gentiles as opposed to the Jews.[74]

Based upon the Abrahamic Covenant, and the expression of that covenant in the Mosaic Law, the Jewish Christians may have regarded the blessings of the Messiah as uniquely and particularly applicable to them alone. Consequently, when John wrote δὲ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου, he do so as a corrective to what he previously stated with regard to Christ's advocacy and propitiation. The sacrifical language that John used belonged to the Jewish cult; therefore, John added the corrective statement that Christ's advocacy and propitiation was not only for Jews but also for ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου.

Contrary to the view stated here, Huther asserted that it is erroneous "to understand by *ἡμεῖς* the Jews, and by *κόσμος* the Gentiles . . . *ἡμεῖς* are rather believers, and *κόσμος* is the whole of believing mankind."[75] Pentecost likewise interpreted ἡμεῖς in reference to believers, and κόσμος in reference to unbelievers.[76] The problem with such assertions is that they ignore the context and the syntax of First John 2:2 by introducing the notion of a potential group of individuals. As opposed to denoting potentiality, the Johannine language relates the actual benefits of Christ's propitiation. The potentiality of Christ's propitiation for the unbeliever, whether elect or non-elect, is not within the context of First John 2:2; rather, the emphasis is upon the unity between the Johannine community and the

---

[74] Gordon H. Clark, *First John: A Commentary* (Jefferson, MD: Trinity Foundation, 1980) 52.

[75] Huther, *General Epistles of James and John*, 309.

[76] J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Joy of Intimacy with God: A Bible Study Guide to 1 John* (Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1995) 33-35; see also, Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 3:203-04; and, Lightner, *Death Christ Died*, 68-70.

worldwide Christian community because of Christ's work, and thus this emphasizes that the nature of His sacrifice is necessarily distinct for believers.

IV.C.1. The Meaning of Κόσμος

First John was written primarily to Jewish readers. Galatians 2:9 reads, "and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, so that we *might go* to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised." The text indicates that John was an Apostle to the Jews. Therefore, the recipients of his Epistle would have been predominantly, if not exclusively, Jewish. His reminder to a Jewish readership is that Christ is not only propitiation for the sins of Hebrews, but also for the sins of Gentiles from every nation and tongue throughout the world.

Griffith noted how important it is not to ignore "Judaism as a potentially stimulating background for interpretation" of First John. In particular, he proposed "that 1 John is the product of continuing debate between Jews and Jewish Christians over whether Jesus was the Messiah at a time when some Jewish-Christians belonging to Johannine Christology had reverted to Judaism. . . . The letter thus represents a sustained effort to prevent further apostasy among Johannine Christians by strengthening their unity and cohesion."[77] First John is thus understood as addressed to a Jewish Christian community that maintained an outreach predominately to Jews in the region of Ephesus. A diversity of Jews visited these early congregations because the margins were rather easy to penetrate initially. Some of these Jews remained for some time, and were even able to become recognized as associated with the Jewish Christian community. Eventually, the beliefs of these Jews (with regard to the person of Jesus Christ) differed significantly and a momentous schism resulted. First John, therefore, demarcates the margins of the community by insisting upon the belief in Jesus as Messiah, Savior, and Son of

[77] Griffith, *Keep Yourself from Idols*, 1; cf. O'Neill, *Puzzle of 1 John*.

God, who died for sinful humanity.[78] Consequently, by understanding the primarily Jewish readership of First John, one may understand the reason why this early congregation would attempt to distinguish between themselves and other Christians throughout the world. First John specifically addresses this false distinction by insisting upon the unity between the propitiation's application to both ἡμετέρων and also to ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου.

Turner noted how "the Johannine style generally teems with Aramaisms, Hebraisms and Semitisms" and that it would be false to assert "that there are no Semitisms in the Johannine Epistles" (and even contains "a certain Christianization of language too").[79] Stevens likewise noted, "In the epistles of John there are no quotations from the Old Testament," yet the work of Christ is based "distinctively upon an Old Testament basis."[80] The very absence of direct Old Testament quotations indicates a predominately Jewish readership for First John because only those who were cognizant of the literature and outlook of the Old Testament could be expected to understand the allusive quotations and fundamental substructure, which is "all the more so in the case of Jewish authors, whose education from childhood was steeped in OT lore."[81] The preponderance of the authoritative, emotional, and perceptive emphasis would not be fully appreciated if the readership of First John were a predominately Gentile community.

Κόσμος is an interesting word because it can have as many as seven different meanings in the New Testament (cf. John 1:29; 12:31; 13:1; 15:18; Acts 17:24; Rom 3:19; 11:12). To determine the meaning of κόσμος in First John 2:2, one must prioritize the context of that passage. Nearly all commentators agree that John was not asserting that the sins of the entire world were effectively propitiated through the death of Jesus Christ in the sense that all will receive eternal life regardless of

---

[78] Witherington, *Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, 409.

[79] James H. Moulton, Wilbert F. Howard, and Nigel Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 4 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908-76) 4:3, 137.

[80] George B. Stevens, *The Johannine Theology*, rev. ed. (1894; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908) 23-24; cf. Lawrence H. Lucas, "Old Testament Substructure and First John" (unpublished Th.M. thesis, Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1981) 70-106.

[81] Robert H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 1967) 3.

their belief or unbelief in Jesus. First John 5:11-13 teaches explicitly that those who have the Son have life and those who do not have the Son do not have life.

Some commentators assert that the meaning of κόσμος in First John 2:2 is with reference to the universal possibility (potential) of Christ's propitiation. Therefore, κόσμος is understood as meaning "all inclusive," thus Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the entire world without exception.[82] The statement of First John 5:12 is then understood to mean that Christ's propitiation was sufficient for the sins of the entire world (all humanity without exception), yet it only becomes efficient when one believes in Jesus (i.e. the propitiation was sufficient for all yet only effective for those who believe).[83] However, such an interpretation is unlikely when one considers John's readership and his desire to promote unity between the Johannine community and the worldwide Christian community on the basis of Christ's work. The better understanding of κόσμος in First John 2:2—based upon the context—is that the word refers to all humanity without distinction.

The application of Jesus' propitiation is not for the Johannine community only (i.e. Jewish believers); rather, the entire world may experience eternal life. The argument in First John 2:2 is certainly consistent with the emphasis in the Fourth Gospel (e.g. 5:21; 6:37, 44, 65, 70; 8:47; 10:26, 29; 12:32; 13:18; 15:16, 19; 17:6, 9, 12, 24). Consequently, the inclusive phrase ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου indicates that Jesus died not only for Jewish believers, but also for all people without distinction. The entire world may be saved through Christ's propitiation, which is an important emphasis when one considers the exclusivist tendencies that were common to the nation of Israel, that is, the notion that God revealed Himself only to them and, thus, if one wanted to become a member of the family of God in the Old Testament, he/she had to become a Jew. If the phrase ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου meant all humanity without exception, the first clause and the words ἀλλὰ καί in the next clause would not have any meaning. If the propitiation of Christ was intended for all without exception, then it would be meaningless to distinguish propitiation περὶ τῶν

[82] Akin, *1, 2, 3 John*, 84; Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John*, 40.

[83] Akin, *1, 2, 3 John*, 84-86; Kruse, *Letters of John*, 74-75. See also, for comparison, Carson, *Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God*, 16-21, 73-79.

ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν from the sins of ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου for John could have simply written, "He is the propitiation for the sins of the entire world" and omitted the words ἀλλὰ καί.

Furthermore, it would be theologically inaccurate to assert that Christ's propitiation was sufficient for the sins of all people, yet it only becomes effective when one believes. If the death of Christ truly propitiated the wrath of God for all people, it would be impossible to regard anyone as ultimately without eternal life. The language of First John 2:2 does not indicate an actual propitiation for the sins of some, and not for theirs only, but also potentially for the sins of the entire world. The term "potential," or even "provisional," is not stated in the text (of course, neither does the text speak with regard to an "actual" propitiation). John did not intend to communicate "the possibility of forgiveness [as] cosmic and universal."[84] The verb ἐστιν indicates certainty as opposed to possibility (which means one does not need to use modifiers, such as "actual" or "possible"). One must consider what is the basis for God's judgment if the guilt of sin has been propitiated for all humanity without exception. Although it is lengthy, John Owen's definitive words are worth quoting in their entirety.

> God imposed his wrath due unto, and Christ underwent the pains of hell for, either all the sins of all men, or all the sins of some men, or some sins of all men. If the last, some sins of all men, then have all men some sins to answer for, and so shall no man be saved; for if God enter into judgment with us, though it were with all mankind for one sin, no flesh should be justified in his sight. . . . If the second, that is it which we affirm, that Christ in their stead and room suffered for all the sins [of some men]. If the first, why, then, are not all freed from the punishment of all their sins? You will say, "Because of their unbelief; they will not believe." But this unbelief, is it a sin, or not? If not, why should they be punished for it? If it be, then Christ underwent the punishment due to it, or not. If so, then why must that hinder them more than their other sins for which he died from partaking of the fruit of his death? If he did not, then did he not die for all their sins. Let them choose which part they will.[85]

Atonement and priesthood may be regarded as coextensive throughout the Old Testament. Christ, therefore, died for those for whom He exercises His

[84] Marshall, *Epistles of John*, 119.

[85] William H. Goold, ed., *The Works of John Owen*, 16 vols. (Edinburgh: Johnstone & Hunter, 1850-53; reprint, London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1967) 10:173-74.

priesthood, and He exercises His priesthood for those of the family of God. Substitution is not effectual if it does not actually substitute, thus, the substitution of a sacrificial victim is always an effectual substitution. However, if Jesus died for individuals who will suffer eternally, His propitiation cannot be regarded as effectual. John communicated an ethnological view that Jesus Christ is propitiation for the sins of Jews and Gentiles wherever they may be. Toplady's hymn "Faith Reviving" expressed such an impossibility: "Payment God cannot twice demand—first at my bleeding Surety's hand, and then again at mine." The doctrine of a vague propitiation does not express certainly, nor does it accomplish any purpose. The propitiation of Christ, however, provides the certainty of the forgiveness of sins for those who have the Son.

IV.C.2. The Parallel Usage

First John 2:2 indicates that the blessings of the Messiah are not uniquely and particularly applicable to Jewish believers. John refuted any such sectarian thinking and demonstrated that Gentiles are also recipients of Christ's propitiation. Jesus was not merely the propitiation for the sins of a small group of believers in Asia Minor, but for the children of God throughout the world.[86] The interpretation herein is confirmed through a comparison of First John 2:2 and John 11:51-52. The context for the comparison with the Gospel of John is Caiaphas' statement "that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish" (11:49). Caiaphas was primarily concerned with regard to the political

[86] Michaels rejected the notion that First John was addressed to "*Jewish* Christians in particular." He asserted that First John was "written to a Christian community without reference to its ethnic background, whether Jewish or Gentile or both." Although the argumentation is different with regard to the recipients, Michaels' conclusion is essentially the same as what had been described herein. He concluded, "There is not one 'propitiation' for us and another for the rest of the world, but Jesus (καὶ αὐτός) is the only sacrifice, and the only way of salvation for all. The point is not that Jesus died for everyone indiscriminately so that everyone in the world is in principle forgiven, but that all those forgiven are forgiven on the basis of Christ's sacrifice and in no other way" ("Atonement in John's Gospel and Epistles," 117).

circumstances. John indicated that Caiaphas did not intend that his words would be inspired prophecy. The parallel with First John 2:2 is unmistakable.

John 11:51-52	**First John 2:2**
he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation	*and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins;*
and not for the nation only,	*and not for ours only,*
but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.	*but also for* those of *the whole world.*

John's teaching would have been a tremendous encouragement to his readers for, at least, two reasons. *First*, it would have reassured them to contemplate the reality that Jesus Christ's death upon the cross entirely propitiated God's wrath against every single sin. *Second*, it would have been helpful as yet another reminder that Christ was not merely the propitiation for a small group who have fellowship with God; rather, they would be comforted by the truth that Jesus Christ was the propitiation for the entire world (without any distinction for ethnicity). On the basis of Christ's advocacy and propitiation, there is a "great multitude of believers all over the world whose sins have been propitiated and who therefore have fellowship with God."[87]

[87] Christopher D. Bass, *That You May Know: Assurance of Salvation in 1 John* (Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2008) 84.

IV.D. The Implications of the Doctrine

Exegesis and interpretation of ἱλασμός in the First Epistle of John has proven to be significant for interpreting the nature and effects of the work of Christ in His death. The implication of the doctrine of propitiation with regard to the death of Christ means that the Lord Jesus truly satisfied the wrath of God against sin. There are theologians who object to the notion that Jesus satisfied God's wrath because the basic assumption is that God is a God of love, and it would be inconsistent with His character to demonstrate wrath against humanity who He created. However, the terminology of sacrifice in the Old Testament, in addition to the analysis of the ἱλάσκομαι word group in Judaism, the Septuagint, and the New Testament, demonstrates that the notion of God's wrath is a biblical doctrine. The macrostructural and microstructural analysis of the use of ἱλασμός in First John (2:2; 4:10) does indicate a sacrifice of propitiation, that is, an atonement that renders God propitious toward fallen humanity. The word would include the concept of expiation; however, to regard the use of ἱλασμός as excluding any concept of propitiation cannot be proven from the biblical text. The terms "propitiation" and "expiation" can be regarded as complementary, as opposed to being contradictory. The consistent meaning of ἱλασμός and its cognates in classical Greek also confirm this meaning. Jesus truly did satisfy God's wrath against sin.

It is important for systematic theologies to communicate the truth of Christ's propitiation because it is a primary aspect of the doctrine of atonement and because it means that there is an eternal and unchangeable requirement, as a consequence of sin, which God who is holy and righteous demands. Prior to having an effect upon the subjective consciousness of fallen humanity, the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ had an effect upon God first and thus His relation to fallen humanity for whom He purposed to provide reconciliation. One cannot represent the absolute necessity of the death of Christ without communicating the propitiatory effect of His atonement. However, caution is certainly necessary because it would be disastrous to the

biblical truth if analogies were made to the experience of Christ Jesus, such as those that sadly sometimes characterize the human experience.

It is proper to regard Christ's death as "penal" in the sense that He endured the penalty for sin. Moreover, as was true for the Levitical offerings, the death of Christ was also a "substitution" in the sense that He died as a substitute for sinners. It would be wrong then for theologians to neglect the notion of God's wrath or the payment of the penalty for sin from any explanations of the death of Christ. Another aspect of Christ's role through His atoning death is that of "vicar," in the sense that He was the representative of sinners when He endured their due penalty for sin.

One of the primary differences between covenant theologians, and other Protestant and Roman Catholic theologians is the understanding of the effect of Christ's death. The primary disagreement is with regard to whether Christ died for the sins of all humanity, or if did He die for the sins of those who would ultimately experience reconciliation with God. There are essentially two views with regard to the extent of the death of Christ: (1) Christ truly died for the sins all people; therefore, the gospel message is extended to all people because reconciliation is actually available for them; or, (2) Christ did not die for the sins of every person because there would not be any penalty remaining for anyone, which would mean that all people will be saved, without exception.

Although the majority of covenant theologians and dispensational theologians agree with regard to the meaning and nature of propitiation, there is significant disagreement with regard to the nature and extent of the death of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, the disagreement is often focused upon theological persuasion as opposed to actual exegesis. For example, one reads, "The normal, unbiased approach to this text evidences the fact that the propitiation was not only 'for our sins' but also 'for the sins of the whole world.'"[88] The assertion is unfortunate since it is *petitio principii*. The point has already been made because no interpreter desires to give a biased text approach to First John 2:2. No interpreter wants to be identified as adopting an abnormal biased approach, thus the assertion

[88] Lightner, *Death Christ Died*, 81.

implies that the normal unbiased approach is that Christ died for all humanity in exactly the same manner.

The interpretation of ἱλασμός as propitiation would indicate that the death of Christ was not substitutionary for the sins of those who will be eternally condemned, which is an issue that dispensational theologians need to address. While it is true that Christ died for believers only, it is also true in some sense that Christ died for all people, which is an issue that covenant theologians need to clarify so that individuals do not think that the proclamation of the gospel is somehow limited. First John 2:1-2 indicates that there is not one propitiation for believers, and another for the remainder of the world. The point is not that Jesus died for the entire world indiscriminately, which would mean that everyone in the world has their sins forgiven (at least, in principle); rather, the emphasis is that reconciliation is on the basis of Christ's atoning death and that there is no other means to receive forgiveness of sins.

First John 2:2 does indicate that Jesus died as the propitiation for all the sins of His people, and this atonement truly accomplished reconciliation for His people. Jesus died for all people without distinction, yet not all without exception, and these peoples include not only Jews but also Gentiles, thus all those for whom He died will experience reconciliation on the basis of Christ's advocacy and propitiation. Nevertheless, theologians must strive for clarification with regard to the assertion that Christ died for His people only because it could be understood to imply that the gospel is only applicable to a chosen few. Conversely, the assertion that Christ died for all people does indicate that reconciliation is available not only to a small group of believers in Asia Minor (or even in the sense of an Old Testament particularism in relation to the Jewish people only), but is also available to all people throughout the world, which is the language used in First John 2:2.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The introduction of this research noted the present need for determining the meaning of ἱλασμός in the First Epistle of John. There was a threefold procedure to meet this need: (1) grammatico-historical analysis of First John; (2) consideration of ἱλασμός within social and historical contexts; and, (3) extended theological analysis of three Greek words (ἱλασμός, περί, and κόσμος).

The goal for the grammatico-historical study was to analyze the text of First John 1:5—2:2 and 4:10 to understanding the meaning of ἱλασμός. Although the grammar and syntax of First John is simple, there does appear to be a rather evident structure, which may even be understood to exhibit a concentric format. For instance, the emphasis in the prologue (1:1-4) is upon the authentic and authoritative proclamation of the gospel message. John's hope was for his readers to appropriate this message for the purpose of fellowship (1:3) and for their joy to be made complete (1:4). Subsequent to the foundational statement of 1:5 ("God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all"), the claims and false propositions between John and his opponents comprise the first primary structural unit (1:5—2:2). The somberness of the assertion in 1:10 (ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι οὐχ ἡμαρτήκαμεν) necessitates the assurance provided to the believer in 2:1-2. The sins of believers are forgiven based upon the advocacy and propitiation of Jesus Christ. First John 2:1-2 argues conclusively that the true believer should admit the reality of sin and avail oneself of the continuing work of Jesus Christ in the presence of the Father on his/her behalf. Jesus Christ pleads the cause of the believer before the Father, and His responsibility as παράκλητον (Supporter or Sponsor) is to assist the Christian by His presence before the Father.

Moreover, as δίκαιον, He can remain in the presence of the Father from whom all sin excludes. The characteristic of Jesus Christ as δίκαιον makes His paracletion both effectual and possible. Jesus Christ is not only qualified as the righteous One to offer the ἱλασμός, but also "He Himself" is the very ἱλασμός that He offered. The intensive αὐτός emphasizes that Jesus is both the offerer and the

offering: both the priest and the sacrifice (cf. Heb 9:14). The concept of propitiation is evident in that Jesus is depicted as both the victim and the priest. First John 2:1 depicted Jesus as the believer's Advocate πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, and the same description is also evident in 2:2. Jesus pleads the case of guilty sinners πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, who is being petitioned to pardon the sinner's acknowledged guilt. The association of ἱλασμός with παράκλητον confirms the concept of propitiation. Both ἱλασμός and παράκλητον convey the notion of gaining the Father's support, who is the one to whom appeal is made and the propitiatory sacrifice is offered.

Fallen humanity is estranged from God as a consequence of sin, thus for any reconciliation to be accomplished with Him, one must have their sins forgiven and to be cleansed from unrighteousness to His satisfaction. The distinct emphasis in Jewish thought, as opposed to Greek thought, is that humanity is estranged from God because of sin. The work of Christ is thus the provision for sin and the means for reconciliation. The noun ἱλασμός is a good word to indicate how reconciliation is possible because ἱλασμός depicts the relationship of one nature to another; it indicates the appeasement of God's wrath, and that reconciliation is possible because ἱλασμός has occurred.

The theological word "atonement" signifies the means by which harmony and peace is achieved between those who are enemies, hence reconciliation. The word "atonement" is a comprehensive term that refers to the work of Christ by which sinners are reconciled to God. The reconciliation, however, is not merely a common reconciliation for it occurs within a specific background of Old Testament doctrine and practice. Under the Mosaic constitution, a sacrificial victim died to achieve atonement for sin. According to Leviticus 17:11, the shedding of blood by the sacrificial victim was evidence of its death. Biblical atonement is a specific reconciliation that was effected by the death of Jesus Christ. Therefore, this definite atonement must be understood with terminology that communicates its specific background and reality, as opposed to thinking of the atonement of Christ with terminology of a general conception. In the ancient Near East, for instance, an offering of atonement enabled two enemies to be "at one," that is, reconciled. Not

only were the people of Israel cognizant of their need for atonement with God, but also other peoples of the ancient Near East affirmed the common notion to placate a deity. However, it is only the Old Testament that the need for an offering of atonement is identifiable within the context of an authentic, covenant relationship between God and humanity.

Biblical atonement cannot be defined in terms of the general concept of the ancient Near East. Biblical atonement is not only unique with regard to the covenantal relationship, but also with regard to the initiative. In the Old Testament, atonement is indeed intricately related to sacrifice. However, the offering of atonement is not dependent upon human initiative. In the Old Testament, God reveals His character and will, and instructs fallen sinners as to how they may approach Him. God, therefore, takes the initiative in making provision for reconciliation. The message of the New Testament was fundamentally distinct from the traditional concepts of atonement in classical Greek.

First John is also distinct in its description of Jesus Christ as παράκλητον and ἱλασμός. The nature of the Lord Jesus Christ as both παράκλητος with the Father, in addition to being the ἱλασμός for sinners, depicts an human relationship with God that does not exist in pre-Christian Greek literature. Examination of the usage of ἱλασμός in pre-Christian and extra-Christian literatures was essential for demonstrating that the differences with the biblical usage are fundamentally profound. Consequently, it is valid to conclude that the Apostle John did not rely upon classical Greek literature for his usage of the term ἱλασμός with regard to the forgiveness of sins. Both Josephus and Philo used the ἱλάσκομαι word group with the normal meaning of propitiate. The sentiment that God's anger is aroused by sin was evident in many of the passages in which the translators of the Septuagint used words from the ἱλάσκομαι group.

The Old Testament sacrifices typified the ἱλασμός that was yet to be manifested in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Levitical offerings communicated—in a vivid and perpetual manner—the necessity for an innocent life to be given in exchange for the life of the guilty. The shed blood revealed

unambiguously that sin results in death. God used the Levitical offerings to demonstrate His holiness and His wrath against sin. The Levitical offerings must be contrasted with ancient, pagan sacrifices because biblical sacrifices were not given necessarily by the grateful as by the guilty, and the offerings were not made by the ignorant as by the instructed.

Furthermore, the wrath of God is a fundamental component to the theology of the Old Testament, and the concept of propitiation is also fundamental to the biblical sacrificial rite. The verb כִּפֶּר expresses the worshipper's cognizance of the divine displeasure against sin, and thus, the term conveyed a fundamental propitiatory connotation, even though the grammatical construction may vary. The non-cultic usage of כִּפֶּר is confirmation of the propitiatory meaning (cf. Gen 32:21; Prov 16:14). Furthermore, the phrase "a soothing aroma" to the Lord (רֵיחַ־נִיחוֹחַ) indicates a sacrifice offered in faith, which resulted in the resting of God's anger. The expression applies to the wrath of God against sin, which the offerer appeases through the offering. The sacrifice moved God to be favorably disposed to the worshipper.

The biblical sacrificial rites indicate the identity of reconciliation. Reconciliation is the removal of God's anger against sin. When a sinner experiences reconciliation, it is because the attitude of God has changed. The sinfulness of humanity deserves God's wrath; however, in reconciliation, God adopts a favorable attitude toward the sinner, and the consequence is a personal and living relationship with Him. Consequently, reconciliation is Godward, that is, it is not the removal of the sinner's enmity toward God; rather, reconciliation is the removal of God's wrath toward sinners. The only reason why the sanguinary sacrifices were propitiatory is that they typified the substitutionary sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, and thus mediated the effects of His final substitution for sin.

John developed his theology for the readers by asserting how it is that God manifests His love, namely by sent His only begotten Son into the world *to be* the ἱλασμός for sin (4:10). Although the meaning of ἱλασμός was defined by its context in 2:2, it would be wrong to conclude that the absence of those concepts that are so

prevalent in 2:2 are somehow negated from the meaning of ἱλασμός in 4:10. The emphasis in 4:10 is upon the fact that the Son was sent from God, and "propitiation" in 4:10 would make the text more readily understandable since God was already referenced as the object of Christ's advocacy in 2:1. According to John, the reason why the Father sent His Son was for Him to be the ἱλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. The reason for the ἱλασμός is that sin estranges humanity from God, and this disharmony and estrangement remains until Christ intervenes to provide reconciliation. When God was appeased by the death of His Son, it was then that His love could be outpoured to sinners through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The unique role of remitting the sins of the world, and thereby removing the disharmony and estrangement between God and sinners belongs to Christ alone.

The nature and extent of Christ's atonement cannot be separated from each other, and certainly not in the First Epistle of John. With regard to the death of Christ, the question is whether the death of Jesus truly propitiated the wrath of the Father, which induced Him to remove His divine wrath and to look with favor upon those for whom Christ is παράκλητος and ἱλασμός. The literary context favors the interpretation "propitiation" because Jesus Christ is a παράκλητος on the basis of His ἱλασμός . . . περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. The common emphasis between 2:2 and 4:10 is the phrase, περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. Consequently, the priority of the ἀγγελία is the sins of those who are believers, as opposed to "*those of* the whole world," and this emphasis is the reason for employing sacrificial (atoning) language. The assertion that John made is that Christ's advocacy and propitiation is the unifying factor for all believers.

The meaning of ἱλασμός in the First Epistle of John 2:2 (cf. 4:10) does not need to be mutually exclusive, as either expiation or propitiation; rather, these terms should be understand in an inclusive manner. The noun ἱλασμός can be understood as expiation and propitiation, as opposed to demanding one or the other. The best manner in which to translate the ἱλάσκομαι word group would be to regard expiation and propitiation as mutually inclusive, not exclusive (i.e. the concepts exist together). With regard to the biblical text, to deny the concept of

propitiation from that of expiation is a linguistic argument that is not accurate. Both the linguistic and literary context demonstrate that the best rendering of ἱλασμός in First John 2:2 and 4:10 is propitiation.

The occurrence of ἱλασμός in the First Epistle of John indicates that the death of Christ was not a potential substitution; rather, when Christ died it was an actual substitution for sinners. The Lord Jesus actually (as opposed to potentially) exhausted the wrath of God on behalf of His people.[1] Jesus surely died for His own in a manner that He did not for everyone because otherwise the anger of God against every sinner would be completely appeased, and then His wrath would no longer be directed toward anyone. If God requires a dual outpouring of His wrath against the same sins—first against the Lord Jesus, and then against the unbelieving and unrepentant sinner—than none could be reconciled to Him.

Scripture, however, indicates that at the judgment of the unrighteous, the wicked will be judged according to their ἔργα (cf. Rev. 20:12-13), as opposed to the single sin (deed) of unbelief (cf. Matt 16:27; Mark 12:38-40; Rom 2:5; Col 3:5-6). However, the death of Christ did truly propitiate God, which means that He was not the propitiation for all humanity for then everyone would be saved because Christ's propitiation would have effectively exhausted God's wrath on behalf of all humanity. Consequently, the effectiveness of the death of Christ is unlimited, yet the extent is limited. As evident from the consideration of ἱλασμός within social and historical contexts, the concept of propitiation is distinctively Jewish, as evident in the terminology of sacrifice within the Old Testament. Throughout the Johannine writings, there was emphasis upon the salvific intent toward the world, not just Jewish believers. However, the fact that κόσμος can be referenced in a negative and oppositional manner indicated there was a true hazard that an exclusiveness could develop among John's reader. For this reason, John clarified, καὶ αὐτὸς ἱλασμός ἐστιν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, οὐ περὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων δὲ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ ὅλου τοῦ κὸσμου. As an Apostle to the Jews (cf. Gal 2:9) and with a letter addressed

[1] "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep" (John 10:14-15).

to Jewish believers, John desired to explain that the benefits of Christ's advocacy and propitiation are effective for all His people.

Related forms of the noun ἱλασμός are found in Romans 3:25 and Hebrews 2:17. Nearly every commentator agrees that Hebrews was addressed to a Jewish audience. Romans, however, is certainly more inclusive in readership, yet Jewish readers are addressed several times in the beginning chapters, particularly within the verses that provide the context for Paul's reference in 3:25 (cf. 2:1-3, 17-29; 3:9; 4:1). The form of ἱλασμός in Romans 3:25 is an unequivocal Jewish term, which indicates that the occurrence of ἱλασμός in the First Epistle of John was similarly addressed to Jewish believers. His reminder to a Jewish readership is that Jesus Christ is not only propitiation for the sins of Hebrews, but also for the sins of Gentiles from every nation and tongue throughout the world.[2] John wrote similarly in Revelation 5:9, with regard to the Lord Jesus, who is worthy to be praised because with His blood He "purchased [sinners] for God . . . from every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

Theologians will do well to communicate that the Lord Jesus truly satisfied the wrath of God against sin. The terminology of sacrifice in the Old Testament, in addition to the analysis of the ἱλάσκομαι word group in Judaism, the Septuagint, and the New Testament, demonstrates that the notion of God's wrath is a biblical doctrine. The macrostructural and microstructural analysis of the use of ἱλασμός in First John (2:2; 4:10) does indicate a sacrifice of propitiation, that is, an atonement that renders God propitious toward fallen humanity. The word would also include the concept of expiation as complementary to the meaning of propitiation (however, the latter is preferred because expiation does not convey the meaning of the Greek as does "propitiation," that is, the language indicates religious sacrifice, which denotes the placating of the anger of God). It is important for systematic theologies to communicate the truth of Christ's propitiation because it is a primary aspect of the doctrine of atonement and because it means that there is an eternal and

[2] The Apostle Paul used a parallel expression when He referred to "vessels of mercy, which [God] prepared beforehand for glory, *even* us, whom He also called not from Jews only, but also from among Gentiles" (Rom 9:23-24).

unchangeable requirement, as a consequence of sin, which God who is holy and righteous demands. However, caution is certainly necessary because it would be disastrous to the biblical truth if analogies were made to the experience of Christ Jesus, such as those that sadly sometimes characterize the human experience (or that are representative of pagan notions of sacrifice). Jesus died for all people without distinction, including not only Jews but also Gentiles; therefore, all those for whom the Lord Jesus Christ died will experience reconciliation on the basis of Christ's advocacy and propitiation, and this should promote love for God and one another as evidence that one is walking in the Light.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Abbott, Edwin A. *Johannine Grammar*. London: Black, 1906.

Akin, Daniel L. *1, 2, 3 John*. Nashville: Broadman, 2001.

Albright, William Foxwell. *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, 5th ed. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1968; reprint, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.

Alexander, Neil. *The Epistles of John*. London: SCM Press, 1962.

Alexandrini, Philonis. *Opera Qvae Svpersvnt*, 5 vols., eds. Leopold Cohn and Paul Wendland. Berolini: Georgii Reimerii, 1896-1906.

Alford, Henry. *The Greek Testament*, 4 vols. London: Rivingtons, 1861.

Anderson, David R. *Maximum Joy: First John—Relationship or Fellowship?* Irving, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 2005.

Anderson, Gary A. *Sacrifices and Offerings in Ancient Israel: Studies in Their Social and Political Importance*. Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1987.

_____ and Saul M. Olyan (eds). *Priesthood and Cult in Ancient Israel*. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.

Anderson, John L. *An Exegetical Summary of 1, 2, & 3 John*. Dallas: SIL International, 1992.

Anderson, Paul N., Felix Just, and Tom Thatcher (eds). *John, Jesus, and History*, 2 vols. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007.

Anselm, St. *Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo*, trans. Stanley Norton Deane. Chicago: Open Court, 1903; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2003.

Athenaeus. *The Deipnosophists*, 3 vols., trans. C. D. Yonge. London: Henry G. Bohn, 1854.

Attridge, Harold W. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, trans. Helmet Koester. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989.

Aulén, Gustaf. *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Ideas of the Atonement*, trans. A. G. Hebert. London: S P C K, 1931.

Aune, David E. *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987.

Baarda, Tjitze et al. *Text and Testimony: Essays on New Testament and Apocryphal Literature in Honour of A. F. J. Klijn*. Kampen: Kok, 1988.

Baker, Mark D. and Joel B. Green. *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross: Atonement in New Testament and Contemporary Contexts*, 2nd ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011.

Balz, Horst Robert and Gerhard Schneider, eds. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

Barclay, William. *The Letters of John and Jude*, rev. ed. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976.

Barr, James. *The Semantics of Biblical Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961.

Barrett, Charles K. *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. New York: Harper & Row, 1957.

Barry, Frank R. *The Atonement*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1968.

Barth, Markus. *Was Christ's Death A Sacrifice?* Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1961.

Bartlett, Anthony W. *Cross Purposes: The Violent Grammar of Christian Atonement*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001.

Bass, Christopher D. *That You May Know: Assurance of Salvation in 1 John*. Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2008.

Bateman IV, Herbert W. *A Workbook for Intermediate Greek: Grammar, Exegesis, and Commentary on 1—3 John*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008.

Bauckham, Richard (ed). *The Gospel for All Christians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

Bauer, Walter, Frederick Danker, William Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Bauer, Walter F., William F. Arndt, and Frederick W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2nd ed., rev. F. W. Gingrich and F. W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.

Baumgartner, Walter and Johann Jakob Stamm. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 5 vols., trans. M. E. J. Richardson. Leiden: Brill, 1995.

Beale, Gregory K. and Donald A. Carson (eds). *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.

Beasley-Murray, George R. *Gospel of Life: Theology in the Fourth Gospel*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991.

_____. *John*, 2nd ed. Waco, TX: Word, 1999.

Beckwith, Roger T. and Martin J. Selman (eds). *Sacrifice in the Bible*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 1995.

Beeke, Joel. *The Epistles of John*. Webster, NY: Evangelical Press, 2006.

Beekman, Gary, Richard Beal, and Gregory McMahon (eds). *Hittite Studies in Honor of Harry A. Hoffner Jr.* Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003.

Beekman, John, John Callow, and Michael Kopesec. *The Semantic Structure of Written Communication*, 5th rev. ed. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1981.

Beilby, James and Paul R. Eddy (eds). *The Nature of the Atonement: Four Views*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.

Bethune-Baker, James F. *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine to the Time of the Council of Chalcedon*. London: Methuen & Co., 1903.

Beutler, Johannes and Robert T. Fortna (eds). *The Shepherd Discourse of John 10 and Its Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Black, David Alan. *Linguistics, Biblical Semantics, and Bible Translation: An Annotated Bibliography of Periodical Literature from 1961*. La Mirada, CA: Biola University, 1984.

_____ (ed). *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Discourse Analysis*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992.

_____. *Linguistics for Students of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995.

_____ and David S. Dockery. *New Testament Criticism and Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991.

Blass, Friedrich and Albert DeBrunner. *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and rev. Robert W. Funk. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1961.

Blomberg, Craig. *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001.

Boda, Mark J., Daniel K. Falk, and Rodney A. Werline (eds). *Seeking the Favor of God, Volume 1: The Origins of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006.

Bock, Darrell L. and Buist M. Fanning (eds). *Interpreting the New Testament: Introduction to the Art and Science of Exegesis*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006.

Boice, James Montgomery. *The Epistles of John*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.

Bonnefoy, Yves (ed). *Greek and Egyptian Mythologies*, trans. Wendy Doniger. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Botterweck, G. Johannes, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry (eds). *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 15 vols., trans. John T. Willis, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and David E. Green. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974-2006.

Braune, Karl F. C. *The Epistles General of John*, trans. J. Isidor Mombert. New York: Scribner, 1869; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007.

Breytenbach, Cilliers. "Reconciliation: Shifts in Christian Soteriology." Pp. 1-25 in *Reconciliation and Construction: Creative Options for a Rapidly Changing South Africa*, ed. W. S. Vorster. Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1986.

_____. *Versöhnung: Eine Studie zur paulinischen Soteriologie*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1989.

_____. "Using Exegesis: On 'Reconciliation' and 'Forgiveness' in the Aftermath of the TRC." Pp. 245-56 in *Theology in Dialogue: The Impact of the Arts, Humanities in Science on Contemporary Religious Thought*, eds. John W. De Gruchy, Lyn Holness, and Ralf K. Wüstenberg. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Bromiley, Geoffrey W. (ed). *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979-88.

Brooke, Alan England. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Johannine Epistles*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912.

Brown, Colin (ed). *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975-86.

Brown, Craig R. *The Five Dilemmas of Calvinism*. Orlando: Ligonier Ministries, 2007.

Brown, Francis, Samuel R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1906; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005.

Brown, Raymond E. *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1979.

_____. *The Epistles of John*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982.

_____. *New Testament Essays*. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1965; reprint, New York: Random House, 2010.

_____, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy (eds). *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990.

Bruce, Frederick F. *The English Bible*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1961; reprint, Norwich: Fletcher & Son, 1963.

_____. *The Epistles of John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970.

Brunner, Emil. *The Mediator: A Study of the Central Doctrine of the Christian Faith*, trans. Olive Wyon. Cambridge, UK: Lutterworth Press, 1934.

Bryan, Christopher. *The Resurrection of the Messiah*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Bultmann, Rudolf. *Existence and Faith*, trans. S. M. Ogden. New York: World, 1960.

_____. *The Johannine Epistles*, trans. R. Philip O'Hara et al., ed. Robert W. Funk. Philadelphia: Hermeneia, 1973.

Burdick, Donald W. *The Epistles of John*. Chicago: Moody, 1970.

Burge, Gary M. *The Letters of John*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Burkert, Walter. *Greek Religion*, trans. John Raffan. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985.

Buschart, W. David. *Exploring Protestant Traditions: An Invitation to Theological Hospitality*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.

Buttrick, George A. (ed). *The Interpreter's Bible*, 12 vols. New York: Abingdon, 1957.

Callahan, Allen D. *A Love Supreme: A History of the Johannine Tradition*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.

Callow, Kathleen. *Man and Message: A Guide to Meaning-Based Text Analysis*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1998.

Calvin, John. *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, trans. John Owen. Edinburgh: T. Constable, 1855.

_____. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960.

Candlish, Robert S. *The First Epistle of John*, 3rd ed. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1877.

Carson, Donald A. *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000.

_____. *For the Love of God*, 2 vols. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006.

_____, Douglas J. Moo, and Leon L. Morris. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.

Casciaro, José María (gen. ed). *The Navarre Bible: The Catholic Letters*. New York: Scepter Publishers, 1999.

Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Systematic Theology*, 8 vols. in 4. Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947-48; reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1993.

Chaine, Joseph. *Les Epitres Catholiques*. Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1927.

Chalke, Steve with Alan Mann. *The Lost Message of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.

Charlesworth, James H. *John and Qumran*. London: Geoffrey Chapman Publishers, 1972.

_____ (ed). *John and the Dead Sea Scrolls*. New York: Crossroad, 1990.

_____ (ed). *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983.

Chennattu, Rekha A. *Johannine Discipleship as a Covenant Relationship*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006.

Cheyne, Thomas K. and J. Sutherland Black (eds). *Encyclopædia Biblica*, 4 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1903.

Chomsky, Noam. *Rules and Representations*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980.

Clark, Gordon Haddon. *First John*. Jefferson, MD: Trinity Foundation, 1980.

Coldiron, Jim. *Expository Messages in the Epistle of 1 John*. Bloomington, IN: CrossBooks, 2010.

Comfort, Philip W. and Walter A. Elwell (eds). *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2001.

Conner, Walter Thomas. *The Epistles of John*. New York: Revell, 1929.

Coogan, Michael David. *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Cook, W. Robert. *The Theology of John*. Chicago: Moody, 1979.

Cotterell, Peter and Max Turner. *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1989.

Couch, Mal (ed). *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996.

Coulthard, Malcolm. *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis*. London: Longman, 1985.

Cranfield, Charles E. B. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols. 1975; reprint, New York: T&T Clark, 2004.

Cremer, Hermann. *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek*, trans. William Urwick. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1878.

Cullman, Oscar. *The Johannine Circle*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976.

Culpepper, R. Alan. *The Johannine School*. Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1975.

Dana, Harvey E. and Julius R. Mantey. *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*. New York: Macmillan, 1927.

Davidson, Benjamin. *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, 2nd ed. London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, 1850; reprint, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.

Deissman, G. Adolf. *Bible Studies*. Edinburgh: Clark, 1901.

_____. *Light from the Ancient Near East*, rev. ed. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1927.

Denney, James. *The Death of Christ*, ed. R. V. G. Tasker. London: Tyndale Press, 1951; reprint, 1961.

deSilva, David A. *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

De Vaux, Roland. *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961; reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1997.

Dever, Mark. *The Message of the Old Testament: Promises Made*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2006.

Dillmann, August. *Die Bücher Exodus und Leviticus*. Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel, 1880.

Dodd, Charles H. *Benefits of His Passion*. London: Lutterworth, 1947.

_____. *The Bible and the Greeks*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1935.

_____. *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1932.

_____. *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958.

_____. *The Johannine Epistles*. New York: Harper & Row, 1946.

Dressler, Wolfgang U. (ed). *Current Trends in Textlinguistics*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1978.

D'Souza, John. *The Lamb of God in the Johannine Writings*. Allahabad, India: St. Paul Publications, 1968.

Edwards, Ruth B. *The Johannine Epistles*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996; reprint, 2001.

Egger, Wilhelm. *How to Read the New Testament: An Introduction to Linguistic and Historical-Critical Methodology*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996.

Ehrman, Bart D. *The New Testament*, 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

_____. *Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Elwell, Walter A. (ed). *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.

Erickson, Richard J. *A Beginner's Guide to New Testament Exegesis: Taking the Fear out of Critical Method*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005.

Faber, George Stanley. *The Origin of Pagan Idolatry*, 3 vols. London: Rivington, 1816.

Fagan, Patricia and John Russon (eds). *Reexamining Socrates in the* Apology. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2009.

Feder, Yitzhaq. *Blood Expiation in Hittite and Biblical Ritual: Origins, Context, and Meaning*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011.

Fee, Gordon D. *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*, 3rd ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002.

_____. *To What End Exegesis: Essays Textual, Exegetical, and Theological*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

Feuillet, André. *Johannine Studies*, trans. Thomas E. Crane. Staten Island, NY: Alba House, 1965.

Fiddes, Paul S. *Past Event and Present Salvation: A Study in the Christian Doctrine of Atonement*. Atlanta: Westminster John Knox, 1989.

Fitzgerald, John T., Fika J. van Rensburg, and Herrie F. van Rooy (eds). *Animosity, the Bible, and Us*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009.

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament*. London: Chapman, 1971.

Frajzyngier, Zygmunt, Adam Hodges, and David S. Rood (eds). *Linguistic Diversity and Language Theories*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2005.

Freedman, David Noel (ed). *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Friedrich, Gerhard. *Die Verkündigung des Todes Jesu im Neuen Testament*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1982.

Füglister, Notker. "Sühne durch Blut — Zur Bedeutung von Leviticus 17,11." Pp. 143-64 in *Studien zum Pentateuch: Walter Kornfeld zum 60,* ed. Georg Braulik. Vienna: Herder, 1977.

Gaebelein, Frank E. (ed). *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 12 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.

Gane, Roy. *Ritual Dynamic Structure*. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2004.

Gerstenberger, Erhard S. *Leviticus: A Commentary*, trans. Douglas W. Stott. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.

Gilders, William K. *Blood Ritual in the Hebrew Bible: Meaning and Power*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2004.

Gillet, Lev. *Communion in the Messiah: Studies in the Relationship between Judaism and Christianity*. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1942; reprint, 2002.

Girard, René. *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, trans. James G. Williams. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001.

_____. *The Scapegoat*, trans. Yvonne Freccero. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989.

_____. *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1979.

Goldingay, John (ed). *Atonement Today*. London: SPCK, 1995.

Goold, William H. (ed). *The Works of John Owen*, 16 vols. Edinburgh: Johnstone & Hunter, 1850-53; reprint, London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1967.

Gordon, Cyrus H. *Ugaritic Literature*. Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1949.

Grant, Robert M. *Gnosticism and Early Christianity*. New York: Harper & Row, 1959.

Grayston, Kenneth. *The Johannine Epistles*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984.

Green, Joel B. *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

Grenfell, Bernard P., Arthur S. Hunt, and David G. Hogarth. *Fayûm Towns and Their Papyri*. London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1900.

Griffith, Terry. *Keep Yourselves from Idols: A New Look at 1 John*. London: Sheffield, 2002.

Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1994.

Gundry, Robert H. *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel*. Leiden: Brill, 1967.

Gurney, Oliver R. *The Hittites*, rev. ed. London: Penguin, 1990.

Guthrie, Donald. *New Testament Introduction*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1978.

Guthrie, George H. *The Structure of Hebrews: A Text-Linguistic Analysis*. Leiden: Brill, 1994.

Haas, Cornelis, Marinus de Jonge, and J. L. Swellengrebel. *A Translator's Handbook on the Letters of John*. London: United Bible Societies, 1972.

Hagle, D. Brendan and Stanley M. Burstein. *The Ancient World: Readings in Social and Cultural History*, 4th ed. New York: Prentice Hall, 2010.

Hamerton-Kelly, Robert. *Sacred Violence: Paul's Hermeneutic of the Cross*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.

Hamilton Jr., James M. *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.

Hanson, Anthony T. *The Wrath of the Lamb*. London: SPCK, 1957.

Harnack, Adolf et al. *Theologische Abhandlungen*. Freiburg I. B.: J. C. B. Mohr, 1892.

Harris, Stephen L. *Understanding the Bible*, 2nd ed. Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield, 1985.

Harrison, Jane Ellen. *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908.

Harrison, Roland K. *Leviticus*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1980.

Hartley, John E. *Leviticus*. Dallas: Word, 1992.

Hastings, James (ed). *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, 13 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908-26.

Haupt, Erich. *The First Epistle of St. John*, trans. W. B. Pope. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1893.

Heidel, Alexander. *The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of the Creation*, 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951.

_____. *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949.

Heim, S. Mark. *Saved from Sacrifice: A Theology of the Cross*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.

Hendricks, William L. *The Letters of John*. Nashville: Convention Press, 1970.

Hengel, Martin. *The Atonement: The Origins of the Doctrine in the New Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007.

_____. *Die Johanneische Frage*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1993.

_____. *The Johannine Question*. London: SCM Press, 1989.

Heraclitus. *Fragments*, trans. T. M. Robinson. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.

Hiebert, D. Edmond. *The Epistles of John*. Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1991.

Hill, Charles E. *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

_____ and Frank A. James III, eds. *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Theological & Practical Perspectives*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004.

Hill, David. *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2000.

Hills, Julian V. "A Genre for 1 John." Pages 367-77 in the *Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester*, ed. Birger A. Pearson. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

Hirsch Jr., Eric D. *Validity in Interpretation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967.

Hobbs, Herschel H. *The Epistles of John*. Nashville: Nelson, 1983.

Hodges, Zane C. *The Epistles of John*. Irving, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 1999.

Hofius, Otfried (ed). *Paulusstudien*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989.

Hoftijzer, Jacob and K. Jongeling (eds). *Dictionary of North-West Semitic Inscriptions*, 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1995.

Homer. *The Iliad*, trans. E. V. Rieu. New York: Penguin, 1950.

_____. *The Odyssey*, rev. ed., trans. E. V. Rieu. New York: Penguin, 1991.

Horton, Michael S. *Lord and Servant: A Covenant Christology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005.

Houlden, James L. *A Commentary on the Johannine Epistles*. New York: Harper & Row, 1973.

Howard, Fred. D. *Bible Book Study Commentary: 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, Jude*. Nashville: Convention Press, 1984.

Howard, Wilbert Francis. *Christianity according to St. John*. London: Duckworth, 1947.

Hughes, Dennis D. *Human Sacrifice in Ancient Greece*. London: Routledge, 1991.

Hultgren, Arland J. *Paul's Gospel and Mission: The Outlook from His Letter to the Romans*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.

Huther, Johann Eduard. *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the General Epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude*, 3rd ed., trans. Paton J. Gloag and Clarke H. Irwin. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1887.

Ironside, Harry A. *Epistles of John & Jude*, rev. ed. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 2001.

Janowski, Bernd. *Sühne als Heilsgeschehen: Traditions- und religionsgeschichtliche Studien zur Sühnetheologie der Priesterschrift*, 2nd ed. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2000.

Jelf, William Edward. *A Commentary on the First Epistle of St. John*. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1877.

Jersak, Brad and Michael Hardin, eds. *Sticken by God? Nonviolent Identification and the Victory of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.

Johnson, Elliott E. *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*, rev. ed. Fortress Press.

Johnston, J. William. *The Use of Πᾶς in the New Testament*. New York: Peter Lang, 2004.

Johnstone, Barbara. *Discourse Analysis*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2002.

Judaei, Philonis. *Opera Omnia*, 3 vols. Lipsiae: E. B. Schwickerti, 1828-30.

Kaiser Jr., Walter C. *Toward an Exegetical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

Käsemann, Ernst. *Commentary on Romans*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.

_____. *Perspectives on Paul*. London: SCM Press, 1971.

Keck, Leander E. et al. *The New Interpreter's Bible*, 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002.

Keil, Carl Freidrich and Franz Delitzsch. *Commentary on the Old Testament*, 10 vols. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1866-91; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996.

Kellum, L. Scott. *The Unity of the Farewell Discourse: The Literary Integrity of John 13.31—16.33*. New York: T & T Clark, 2004.

Kelly, John Norman Davidson. *Early Christian Doctrines*, 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960.

Kennedy, James. *The Propitiation of Our Lord in Its Bearing on Ethics*. London: Alexander and Shepheard, 1892.

Kertelge, Karl. *"Rechtfertigung" bei Paulus*, 2nd ed. Munster: Aschendorff, 1971.

Kistemaker, Simon J. *Exposition of the Epistle of James and the Epistles of John*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986.

Kittel, Gerhard and Gerhard Friedrich (eds). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 10 vols., trans. and ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76.

Klauck, Hans-Josef. *Ancient Letters and the New Testament: A Guide to Context and Exegesis*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006.

Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard Jr. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Dallas: Word, 1993.

Koehler, Ludwig and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Knight, George R. *The Cross of Christ: God's Work for Us*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing, 2008.

Köstenberger, Andreas J. *A Theology of John's Gospel and Letters*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

_____, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown*. Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2009.

Koester, Helmut. *Introduction to the New Testament*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000.

Kress, Eric E. *Notes for the Study & Exposition of 1st John*. The Woodlands, TX: Kress Christian Publications, 2002.

Kruse, Colin G. *The Letters of John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Kuiper, Rienk Bouke. *For Whom Did Christ Die? A Study of the Divine Design of the Atonement*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959; reprint, Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2003.

Kümmel, Werner G. "Paresis und Endeixis." Pp. 1:260-70 in *Heilsgeschehen und Geschichte*, 2 vols. Marburg: Elwert, 1965-78.

Kurian, George Thomas (ed). *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization*, 4 vols. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

_____ (ed). *The Encyclopedia of Christian Literature*, 2 vols. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2010.

Kysar, Robert. *I, II, III John*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986.

_____. *Voyages with John: Charting the Fourth Gospel*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2005.

Laertius, Diogenes. *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 2 vols., trans. R. D. Hicks. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970.

Law, Robert. *The Tests of Life: A Study of the First Epistle of St. John*. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909.

Lawson, Steven J. *Absolutely Sure*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1999.

Laymon, Charles M. (ed). *The Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971.

Lee, Steve Jooyoung. *The Believer Does Not and Can Not Sin*. 1984.

Lehmann, Winfred P. *Descriptive Linguistics: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. New York: Random House, 1976.

Leibowitz, Nehama. *Studies in Vayikra (Leviticus)*, trans. Aryeh Newman. Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization, 1980.

Lenski, Richard C. H. *The Interpretation of I and II Epistles of Peter, the Three Epistles of John, and the Epistle of Jude*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1961; reprint, 2008.

Leonhardt, Jutta. *Jewish Worship in Philo of Alexandria*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001.

Levine, Baruch A. *In the Presence of the Lord: A Study of Cult and Some Cultic Terms in Ancient Israel*. Leiden: Brill, 1974.

Levinsohn, Stephen H. *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek*, 2nd ed. Dallas: SIL International, 2000.

Lewis, E. Ridley. *The Johannine Writings and Other Epistles*. London: James Clarke & Company, 1964.

Liddell, Henry George and Robert Scott (comps). *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. with rev. sup. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

Lieu, Judith. *I, II, & III John*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008.

_____. *The Theology of the Johannine Epistles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Lightner, Robert P. *The Death Christ Died: A Biblical Case for Unlimited Atonement*, 2nd rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998.

_____. *The Epistles of First, Second, & Third John & Jude*. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2003.

Lindars, Barnabas, Ruth B. Edwards, and John M. Court. The Johannine Literature. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

Lloyd-Jones, Martyn. *The Love of God: Studies in 1 John*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1994.

Loader, William. *The Johannine Epistles*. London: Epworth Press, 1992.

Lohse, Eduard. *Märtyrer und Gottesknecht*, 2nd ed. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963.

Longacre, Robert E. *The Grammar of Discourse*, 2nd ed. New York: Springer, 1996.

_____ (ed). *Theory and Application in Processing Texts in Non-Indoeuropean Languages*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1984.

Longman III, Tremper and Raymond B. Dillard. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.

Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene A. Nida (eds). *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989.

Lyonnet, Stanislas and Léopold Sabourin. *Sin, Redemption, and Sacrifice: A Biblical and Patristic Study*. Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1998.

MacArthur, John. *1—3 John*. Chicago: Moody, 2007.

_____. *The Love of God*. Dallas: Word, 1996.

Mackintosh, Charles H. *Notes on the Book of Exodus*, 3rd ed. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1880.

Maclaren, Alexander. *Ephesians, Epistles of St. Peter and St. John*. Nashville: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 19—.

Maier, Gerhard. *Biblical Hermeneutics*, trans. Robert W. Yarbrough. Wheaton: Crossway, 1994.

Malatesta, Edward. *The Epistles of John: Greek Text and English Translation Schematically Arranged*. Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University, 1973.

_____. *Interiority and Covenant*. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978.

Malina, Bruce J. *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1981.

Marshall, I. Howard. *The Epistles of John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.

_____. "Johannine Epistles," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin Vanhoozer. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

_____. "The Meaning of 'Reconciliation'." Pp. 117-32 in *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology: Essays in Honor of George E. Ladd*, ed. Robert Guelich. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978.

_____. *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004.

Martin, Ralph P. and Peter H. Davids (eds). *Dictionary of the Later New Testament & Its Developments*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997.

Martyn, James L. *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1968.

Marx, Alfred. *Les Offrandes Végétales dans l'Ancien Testament: Du Tribut d'Hommage au Repas Eschatologique*. Leiden: Brill, 1994.

_____. *Les Systèmes Sacrificiels de l'Ancien Testament: Formes et Fonctions du Culte Sacrificiel à Yhwh*. Leiden: Brill, 2005.

Mays, James L. *The Book of Leviticus, The Book of Numbers*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1963.

Mburu, Elizabeth W. *Qumran and the Origins of Johannine Language and Symbolism*. New York: T&T Clark, 2010.

McCarthy, Michael. *Spoken Language and Applied Linguistics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

McDonald, Hugh Dermot. *The Atonement of the Death of Christ in Faith, Revelation, and History*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985.

McGrath, Alister E. *Luther's Theology of the Cross: Martin Luther's Theological Breakthrough*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1985.

Metzger, Bruce M. *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.

_____. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994.

Michaels, J. Ramsey. "By Water and Blood: Sin and Purification in John and First John." Pp. 149-62 in *Dimensions of Baptism: Biblical and Theological Studies*, eds. Stanley E. Porter and Anthony R. Cross. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.

_____. *John*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.

Mickelsen, A. Berkeley. *Interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.

Milavec, Aaron. *Salvation Is from the Jews (John 4:22): Saving Grace in Judaism and Messianic Hope in Christianity*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007.

Milgrom, Jacob. *Cult and Conscience: The* Asham *and the Priestly Doctrine of Repentance*. Leiden: Brill, 1976.

_____. *Leviticus: A Book of Ritual and Ethics.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004.

_____. *Leviticus 1-16*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1991.

_____. *Studies in Cultic Theology and Terminology*. Leiden: Brill, 1983.

Montefiore, Hugh. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. New York: Harper & Row, 1964.

Moody, Dale. *The Letters of John*. Waco, TX: Word, 1970.

Morford, Mark P. O. and Robert J. Lenardon. *Classical Mythology*, 6th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Morris, Leon. *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*. London: Tyndale Press, 1955.

_____. *The Atonement: Its Meaning and Significance*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1983.

_____. *The Cross in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965.

Moule, Charles Francis Digby. *Essays in New Testament Interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Moulton, James H. and George Milligan. *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources*. 1930.

_____, Wilbert F. Howard, and Nigel Turner. *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 4 vols. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908-76.

Mounce, Robert H. *Jesus, in His Own Words*. Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2010.

Murray, John. *The Epistle to the Romans*, 2 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

_____. *For Whom Did Christ Die?: The Extent of the Atonement*. Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, n.d.

_____. *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955.

_____. *The Works of John Murray*, 4 vols. Banner of Truth.

Nicoll, W. Robertson (ed). *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, 5 vols. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.

Nilsson, Martin P. *A History of Greek Religion*, 2nd ed., trans. F. J. Fielden. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949.

O'Day, Gail R. and Susan E. Hylen. *John*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.

O'Neill, John C. *The Puzzle of 1 John: A New Examination of Origins*. London: SPCK, 1966.

Oropeza, B. J. *Paul and Apostasy: Eschatology, Perseverance, and Falling Away in the Corinthian Congregation*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000.

Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991.

Packer, James I. and Merrill C. Tenney (eds). *Illustrated Manners and Customs of the Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1980.

Painter, John. *1, 2, and 3 John*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002.

Palmer, Earl F. *1, 2, 3 John, Revelation*. Waco, TX: Word, 1982.

Paul, Robert S. *The Atonement and the Sacraments: The Relation of the Atonement to the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper*. New York: Abingdon, 1960.

Pelikan, Jaroslav. *Jesus through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999.

Pentecost, J. Dwight. *The Joy of Intimacy with God: A Bible Study Guide to 1 John*. Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1995.

Pepper, Elizabeth and John Wilcock. *Magical and Mystical Sites: Europe and the British Isles*. Grand Rapids: Phanes Press, 2000.

Perkins, Pheme. *The Johannine Epistles*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1979.

Peterson, David (ed). *Where Wrath and Mercy Meet*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001.

Pfeiffer, Charles F., Howard F. Vos, and John Rea (eds). *Wycliffe Bible Dictionary*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998.

Plato. *The Laws*, trans. Trevor J. Saunders. 1970; reprint, New York: Penguin, 2004.

_____. *Platonis Opera*, ed. John Burnet. New York: Oxford University Press, 1903.

Plummer, Alfred. *The Epistles of S. John*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1886; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1980.

Plutarch. *Lives*, 4 vols., ed. Arthur High Clough. London: Folio, 2010.

_____. *Moralia*, 15 vols., trans. Harold Cherniss and William C. Helmbold. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957.

_____. *Plutarch's Lives*, 10 vols., trans. Bernadotte Perrin. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914-21.

_____. *Plutarch's Moralia*, 15 vols., trans. Phillip H. De Lacy and Benedict Einarson. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Pollard, Thomas E. *Johannine Christology and the Early Church*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Porter, Stanley E. *A Handbook to the Exegesis of the New Testament*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

_____. *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994; reprint, London: Continuum, 1999.

_____ and Donald A. Carson (eds). *Linguistics and the New Testament: Critical Junctures*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.

_____ and Jeffrey T. Reed (eds). *Discourse Analysis and the New Testament: Approaches and Results*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.

Powers, Daniel G. *Salvation through Participation: An Examination of the Notion of the Believer's Corporate Unity with Christ in Early Christian Soteriology.* Leuven: Peeters, 2001.

Pritchard, James B. (ed). *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958.

_____ (ed). *Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd. ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969.

_____. *Archaeology and the Old Testament*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958.

Ramm, Bernard. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970.

Rashdall, Hastings. *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*. London: Macmillan, 1919.

Rawlinson, George. *The History of Herodotus*, 4 vols. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1889.

Rensberger, David. *The Epistles of John*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.

Ridderbos, Herman. *The Gospel of John*, trans. John Vriend. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

Roberts, Alexander and James Donaldson (eds). *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 10 vols. 1885; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995.

Robertson, Archibald T. *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*. Nashville: Broadman, 1934.

_____. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, 6 vols. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1930-33; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, n.d.

Rowley, Harold H. *The Faith of Israel: Aspects of Old Testament Thought*. London: SCM Press, 1956.

Runge, Steven E. *Discourse Grammar of the Greek New Testament*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010.

Ryan, Joseph F. *That You May Believe: New Life in the Son*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003.

Ryken, Philip Graham. *City on a Hill: Reclaiming the Biblical Pattern for the Church*. Chicago: Moody, 2003.

Sadananda, Daniel Rathnakara. *The Johannine Exegesis of God: An Expression into the Johannine Understanding of God*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004.

Salkie, Raphael. *Text and Discourse Analysis*. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Sanders, John (ed). *Atonement and Violence: A Theological Consideration*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006.

Saucy, Robert. *Scripture: Its Authority, Power, and Relevance*. Nashville: Word Publishing, 2001.

Schaff, Philip and Henry Wace (eds). *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 2nd ser., trans. Charles Gordon Browne and James Edward Swallow. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.

Schein, Seth L. (ed). *Reading the Odyssey: Selected Interpretative Essays*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Schnelle, Udo. *The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings*, trans. M. Eugene Boring. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1998.

_____. *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. M. Eugene Boring. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009.

Schiffrin, Deborah, Deborah Tannen, and Heidi E. Hamilton (eds). *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001.

Schlatter, Adolf. *The Theology of the Apostles*, trans. Andreas J. Köstenberger. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.

_____. *Do We Know Jesus?*, trans. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Robert W. Yarbrough. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005.

Schlier, Heinrich. *Der Römerbrief*. Freiburg: Herder, 1977.

Schnackenburg, Rudolf. *The Johannine Epistles*, trans. Reginald Fuller and Ilse Fuller. New York: Crossroad, 1992.

Schreiner, Thomas R. *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.

Schultz, Hermann. *Old Testament Theology: The Religion of Revelation in Its Pre-Christian Stage of Development*, 4th ed., 2 vols., trans. J. A. Paterson. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1892.

Segovia, Fernando F. *Love Relationships in the Johannine Tradition: Agage/Agapan in I John and the Fourth Gospel*. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982.

Sherman, Grace E. and John C. Tuggy. *A Semantic and Structural Analysis of the Johannine Epistles*. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1994.

Silva, Moisés. *Biblical Words and Their Meanings: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983.

_____. *God, Language and Scripture: Reading the Bible in Light of General Linguistics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.

Smalley, Stephen S. *1, 2, 3 John*. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1984.

Smeaton, George. *The Doctrine of the Atonement According to the Apostles*. 1870; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988.

Smith, Charles R. *Did Christ Dies Only for the Elect?* Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1975.

Smith, D. Moody. *First, Second and Third John*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991.

Smith, Robert E. and John Beekman. *A Literary-Semantic Analysis of Second Timothy*. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1981.

Smith, William, William Wayte, and George E. Marindin (eds). *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, 3rd. rev. ed., 2 vols. London: John Murray, 1901.

Soulen, Richard N. and R. Kendall Soulen. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, 3rd ed., revised and expanded. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001.

Spencer, Duane Edward. *Word Keys which Unlock Scripture*. San Antonio: Grace Bible Press, 1970.

Stevens, George B. *The Johannine Theology: A Study of the Doctrinal Contents of the Gospels and Epistles of the Apostle John*, rev. ed. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908.

Stibbs, Alan M. *The Meaning of the Word "Blood" in Scripture.* London: Tyndale Press, 1947.

Stökl ben Ezra, Daniel. *The Impact of Yom Kippur on Early Christianity: The Day of Atonement from Second Temple Judaism to the Fifth Century*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003.

Stott, John R. W. *The Cross of Christ*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1986.

_____. *The Epistles of John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.

_____. *The Letters of John*, 2nd ed. Leicester: InterVarsity, 1988.

_____. *The Message of Romans: God's Good news for the World*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994.

Strauss, Lehman. *The Epistles of John*. New York: Loizeaux, 1962.

Strecker, Georg. *The Johannine Letters: A Commentary on 1, 2, and 3 John*, trans. Linda M. Maloney. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996.

Stubbs, Michael. *Discourse Analysis: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Natural Language*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Stuhlmacher, Peter. *Jesus of Nazareth, Christ of Faith*, trans. Siegfried Schatzmann. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993.

Talbert, Charles H. *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles*. New York: Crossroad, 1992.

Tasker, Randolph Vincent Greenwood. *The Biblical Doctrine of the Wrath of God*. London: Tyndale Press, 1951.

Taylor, Vincent. *The Atonement in New Testament Teaching*. London: Epworth, 1945.

Temporini, Hildegard and Wolfgang Haase (eds). *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980.

Tenney, Merrill C. *New Testament Survey*, rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985.

_____ (ed). *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975-76.

Terry, Milton S. *Biblical Hermeneutics*. Reprint, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1883.

Thayer, Joseph Henry. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, rev. and enlarged. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1889.

Thiselton, Anthony C. *The Hermeneutics of Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.

_____. *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan 1997.

Thomas, John Christopher. *1 John, 2 John, 3 John*. New York: T&T Clark, 2004.

_____. *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991.

Thomas, Robert L. *Evangelical Hermeneutics: The New Versus the Old*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003.

Thomas, W. H. Griffith. *The Apostle John: Outline Studies on His Life and Writings*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1984.

Thompson, Marianne Meye. *1—3 John*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992.

Thucydides. *History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Richard Crawley. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1914.

Torrance, Thomas. *The Doctrine of Jesus Christ*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002.

Trench, Richard Chenevix. *Synonyms of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000.

Thüsing, Wilhelm. *The Three Epistles of St. John*, trans. Alois Stöger. London: Sheed & Ward, 1971.

Titscher, Stefan, Michael Meyer, Ruth Wodak, and Eva Vetter. *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis: In Search of Meaning*. London: Sage, 2000.

Van Dam, Cornelius. *The Urim and Thummim: A Means of Revelation in Ancient Israel*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997.

Van der Merwe, Dirk G. "Salvation in the Johannine Epistles." Pp. 437-64 in *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology*, ed. Jan G. van der Watt. Leiden: Brill, 2005.

Van der Veen, Jan E. *The Significant and the Insignificant: Five Studies in Herodotus' View of History*. Amsterdam: Gieben, 1996.

Van der Watt, Jan Gabriel. *An Introduction to the Johannine Gospel and Letters*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2008.

_____ (ed). *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology.* Leiden: Brill, 2005.

VanGemeren, Willem A. (ed). *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. (ed). *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.

_____. *Is There Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.

Van Oyen, Geert and Tom Shepherd (eds). *The Trial and Death of Jesus: Essays on the Passion Narrative in Mark*. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.

Vedder, Henry C. *The Johannine Writings and the Johannine Problem*. Philadelphia: Griffith and Rowland, 1917.

Vincent, Marvin R. *Word Studies in the New Testament*, 4 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, n.d.

Virkler, Henry A. *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981.

Von Soden, Hermann Freiherr. *Die Schriften des neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt hergestellt auf Grund ihrer Textgeschichte*, 3 vols. Berlin: Alexander Duncker, 1902-10.

_____. *Urchristliche Literaturgeschichte (die Schriften des Neuen Testaments)*. Berlin: Alexander Duncker, 1905.

Von Soden, Wolfram. *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*, 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965-81.

Von Wahlde, Urban C. *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.

_____. *The Johannine Commandments: 1 John and the Struggle for the Johannine Tradition*. New York: Paulist Press, 1990.

Wallace, A. J. and R. D. Rusk, *Moral Transformation: The Original Christian Paradigm of Salvation*. New Zealand: Bridgehead Publishing, 2011.

Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Walton, John H. (ed). *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament*, 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

Warfield, Benjamin B. *The Plan of Salvation*, rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.

Warrior, Valerie M. *Roman Religion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Weaver, J. Denny. *The Nonviolent Atonement*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

Weinfeld, Moshe. "Social and Cultic Institutions in the Priestly Source Against Their Ancient Near Eastern Background." Pp. 95-129 in *Proceedings of the Eighth World Congress of Jewish Studies*. Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1983.

Wengst, Klaus. *Das Johannesevangelium*, 2 vols. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2000.

_____. *Häresie und Orthodoxie im Spiegel des ersten Johannesbriefe*. Gütersloh: Verlag, 1976.

Wenham, Gordon J. *The Book of Leviticus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.

Westcott, Brooke Foss. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 3rd ed. London: Macmillan, 1903.

_____. *The Epistles of St. John*. Cambridge: Macmillan, 1892.

Westermann, Claus. *The Praise of God in the Psalms*, trans. Keith R. Crim. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1965.

Whiston, William (trans). *The Works of Josephus*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987.

Widdowson, Henry G. *Text, Context, and Pretext: Critical Issues in Discourse Analysis*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.

Wilder, Amos N. *The First, Second, and Third Epistles of John*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1957.

Wilder, Terry, J. Daryl Charles, and Kendell Easley. *Faithful to the End*. Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2007.

Williams, Ronald Ralph. *The Letters of John and James: Commentary on the Three Letters of John and the Letter of James*. Cambridge: University Press, 1965.

Williams, Sam K. *Jesus' Death as Saving Event: The Background and Origin of a Concept*. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975.

Wink, Walter. *The Human Being: Jesus and the Enigma of the Son of the Man*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.

Witherington III, Ben. *The Indelible Image: The Theological and Ethical Thought World of the New Testament*, 2 vols. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009.

_____. *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy, and 1-3 John*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.

Wright, David P. *Ritual in Narrative: The Dynamics of Feasting, Mourning, and Retaliation Rites in the Ugaritic Tale of Aqhat*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000.

Wright, G. Ernest. *The Old Testament Against its Environment*. London: SCM Press, 1950.

Wuest, Kenneth S. *The New Testament: An Expanded Translation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961; reprint, 2002.

_____. *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*, 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973; reprint, 2002.

Yarbrough, Robert W. *1—3 John*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.

Yonge, Charles Duke. (trans). *The Works of Philo*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993.

Young, Francis M. *Sacrifice and the Death of Christ*. London: SPCK, 1975.

Young, Richard A. *Intermediate New Testament Greek: A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994.

Zammuner, Vanda L. *Speech Production: Strategies in Discourse Planning: A Theoretical and Empirical Enquiry*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske, 1981.

Zerwick, Maximilian and Mary Grosvenor, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament*, 2 vols. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1974, 1979.

Zuck, Roy B. (ed). *A Biblical Theology of the New Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1994.

_____ (ed). *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1991.

Journals

Anderson, John L. and Joy Anderson, "Cataphora in 1 John," *Notes on Translation* 7 (1993): 41-46.

Baylis, Charles P. "The Meaning of Walking 'in the Darkness' (1 John 1:6)," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (April-June 1992): 214-22.

Bell, Richard H. "Sacrifice and Christology in Paul." *Journal of Theological Studies* 53 (April 2002): 1-27.

Bergen, Robert D. "Text as a Guide to Authorial Intention: An Introduction to Discourse Criticism." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 30 (September 1987): 327-36.

Bigalke Jr., Ron J. "Christ as the 'Mercy Seat': Understanding the Shed Blood of Christ." *Chafer Theological Seminary Journal* 2 (April-June 2002): 50-53.

_____. "The Error of Divine and Mystical Attributions with Regard to the Blood of Christ." *Journal of Dispensational Theology* 13 (August 2009): 39-58.

_____. "The Theory of Sacrifice in the Mass." *The Conservative Theological Journal* 10 (May-June 2006): 49-74.

Blocher, Henri. "Biblical Metaphors and the Doctrine of the Atonement." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47 (December 2004): 629-45.

Bogaert, Maurice. "Structure et message de la Première Épître de saint Jean." *Bible et Vie Chritienne* 83 (1968): 33-45.

Breytenbach, Cilliers. "On Reconciliation: An Exegetical Response." *Journal of Theology of South Africa* 70 (1989): 64-68.

Clavier, Henri. "Notes sur un Mot-clef du Johannisme et de la Soteriologie Biblique: &ILASMOS." *Novum Testamentum* 10 (1968): 287-304.

Clifford, Richard and Khaled Anatolios. "Christian Salvation: Biblical and Theological Perspectives." *Theological Studies* 66 (2005): 739-69.

"Death in Classical Antiquity." *The Edinburgh Review* 180 (July 1894): 131-57.

Dodd, Charles H. "῾Ιλάσκεσθαι, Its Cognates, Derivatives and Synonyms in the Septuagint." *Journal of Theological Studies* 32 (1931): 352-60.

Du Rand, Jan A. "A Discourse Analysis of 1 John." *Neotestamentica* 13 (1979): 1-42.

Garnet, Paul. "Atonement Constructions in the Old Testament and the Qumran Scrolls." *Evangelical Quarterly* 46 (July—September 1974): 131-63.

Grayston, Kenneth. "The Meaning of PARAKLÊTOS." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 13 (1981): 67-82.

Hansford, Keir L. "The Underlying Poetic Structure of 1 John." *Journal of Translation and Textlinguistics* 5 (1992): 126-74.

Heller, Jan. "Die Symbolik des Fettes im AT." *Vetus Testamentum* 20 (1970): 106-08.

Higgins, Angus John Brockhurst. "The Words of Jesus According to St. John." *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 49 (1967): 363-86.

Hodges, Zane C. "Fellowship and Confession in 1 John 1:5-10," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 129 (January-March 1972): 48-60.

Hoskins, Paul M. "Deliverance from Death by the True Passover Lamb: A Significant Aspect of the Fulfillment of the Passover in the Gospel of John." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 52 (June 2009): 285-99.

Jones, P. R. "A Structural Analysis of 1 John." *Review and Expositor* 67 (1970): 433-44.

Käsemann, Ernst. "The Pauline Theology of the Cross." *Interpretation* 24 (April 1970): 151-77.

Koester, Craig R. "'The Savior of the World' (John 4:42)." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109 (Winter 1990): 665-80.

Köstenberger, Andreas J. "Jesus the Good Shepherd Who Will Also Bring Other Sheep (John 10:16): The Old Testament Background of a Familiar Metaphor." *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 12 (2002): 67-96.

Larsen, Iver. "Boundary Features in the Greek New Testament." *Notes on Translation* 5 (1991): 48-54.

_____. “Notes on the Function of γάρ, οὖν, μέν, δέ, καί, and τέ in the Greek New Testament.” *Notes on Translation* 5 (1991): 35-47.

Lieu, Judith M. “What Was from the Beginning: Scripture and Tradition in the Johannine Epistles.” *New Testament Studies* 39 (July 1993): 458-77.

Longacre, Robert E. “Exhortation and Mitigation in First John.” *Selected Technical Articles Related to Translation* 9 (1983): 3-44.

Louw, Johannes P. "Discourse Analysis and the Greek New Testament." *Technical Papers for the Bible Translator* 24 (January 1973): 101-18.

MacGregor, George Hogarth Carnaby. “The Concept of the Wrath of God in the New Testament.” *New Testament Studies* 7 (1960-61): 101-09.

Manson, Thomas W. “῾ιλαστήριον.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 46 (1945): 1-10.

McCabe, Robert V. “The Meaning of ‘Born of Water and the Spirit’ in John 3:5.” *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 4 (Fall 1999): 85-107.

McCarthy, Dennis J. “The Symbolism of Blood and Sacrifice.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (June 1969): 166-76.

McLean, Bradley H. “The Absence of An Atoning Sacrifice in Paul’s Soteriology.” *New Testament Studies* 38 (October 1992): 531-53.

Milgrom, Jacob. “A Prolegomenon to Leviticus 17:11.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 90 (June 1971): 149-56.

Morris, Leon. “The Meaning of ἱλαστήριον in Romans iii. 25.” *New Testament Studies* 2 (1955-56): 33-43.

Moule, Charles Francis Digby. “The Meaning of ‘Life’ in the Gospels and Epistles of St John.” *Theology* 78 (1975): 114-25.

“The New Testament Terms ‘Propitiatory’ and ‘Propitiation’.” *The Biblical World* 22 (November 1903): 396-98.

Nicole, Roger. “C. H. Dodd and the Doctrine of Propitiation.” *Westminster Theological Journal* 17 (1954-55): 117-57.

Nordell, Philip A. “Old Testament Word-Studies: 7. Sacrifice and Worship.” *The Old Testament Student* 8 (March 1889): 257-61.

Olsson, Birger. "A Decade of Text-Linguistic Analyses of Biblical Texts at Uppsala." *Studia Theologica* 39 (1985): 107-26.

Perkins, Pheme. "*Koinonia* in 1 John 1:3-7: The Social Context of Division in the Johannine Letters." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 45 (1983): 631-41.

Petöfi, János S. (ed). *Text vs Sentence: Basic Questions of Text Linguistics*. Hamburg: Helmut Buske, 1979.

Proudfit, John. "Homeric Ideas of the Soul and a Future Life." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 15 (October 1858): 754-805.

Reed, Jeffrey T. "Discourse Analysis as New Testament Hermeneutic: A Retrospective and Prospective Appraisal." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 39 (1996): 223-40.

Rogers, Elinor MacDonald. "Vocatives and Boundaries." *Selected Technical Articles Related to Translations* 11 (1984): 24-29.

Salon, A. P. "Some Aspects of the Grammatical Style of I John." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 74 (1955): 96-102.

Sandy, D. Brent. "John the Baptist's 'Lamb of God' Affirmation in Its Canonical and Apocalyptic Milieu." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 34 (December 1991): 447-60.

Sansom, M. C. "Laying On of Hands in the Old Testament." *The Expository Times* 94 (August 1983): 323-26.

Skinner, Christopher W. "Another Look at 'the Lamb of God'." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 161 (January 2004): 89-104.

Smith, D. Moody. "When Did the Gospels Become Scripture*?" Journal of Biblical Literature* 119 (Spring 2000): 3-20.

Snaith, Norman H. "The Sprinkling of the Blood." *Expository Times* 82 (1970): 23-24.

Swalding, Harry C. "Sin and Sinlessness in 1 John." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 35 (1982): 205-11.

Taylor, Vincent. "Greek Texts Considered." *The Expository Times* 50 (1939): 295-300.

Thomas, John Christopher. "The Literary Structure of 1 John." *Novum Testamentum* 40 (1998): 369-81.

Thornton, T. C. G. "Propitiation or Expiation? *Hilasterion* and *Hilasmos* in Romans and 1 John." *Expository Times* 80 (1968): 53-55.

Titrud, Kermit. "The Overlooked KAI in the Greek New Testament." *Notes on Translation* 5 (1991): 1-28.

Turner, Max. "Atonement and the Death of Jesus in John: Some Questions to Bultmann and Forestell." *Evangelical Quarterly* 62 (1990): 99-122.

Van Asselt, Willem J. "Christ's Atonement: A Multi-Dimensional Approach." *Calvin Theological Journal* 38 (April 2003): 52-67.

Van der Watt, Jan. "The Composition of the Prologue of John's Gospel: The Historical Jesus Introducing Divine Grace." *Westminster Theological Journal* 57 (1995): 311-32.

Van Staden, Petrus J. "The Debate on the Structure of 1 John." *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 47 (1991): 487-502.

Wallace, Daniel B. "The Semantics and Exegetical Significance of the Object-Complement Construction in the New Testament." *Grace Theological Journal* 6 (Spring 1985): 91-112.

Watson, Duane F. "Amplification Techniques in 1 John: The Interaction of Rhetorical Style and Invention." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 16 (1993): 99-123.

Williams, James G. Review of *Covenant of Peace* by Willard M. Swartley. *The Bulletin of the Colloquium on Violence & Religion* 29 (October 2006): 18-20.

Wright, David P. "Deuteronomy 21:1-9 as a Rite of Elimination." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 49 (July 1987): 387-403.

Young, Norman H. "'Hilaskesthai' and Related Words in the New Testament." *Evangelical Quarterly* 55 (July-September 1983): 169-76.

Theses/Dissertations

Bryant, Michael L. "An Examination of Prayer in the Johannine Literature." Ph.D. dissertation, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008.

Dixon, Paul S. "The Significance of the Anarthrous Predicate Nominative in John." Th.M. thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1975.

Lucas, Lawrence H. "Old Testament Substructure and First John." Th.M. thesis, Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, 1981.

Miehle, Helen Louise. "Theme in Greek Hortatory Discourse: Van Dijk and Beekman-Callow Approaches Applied to I John." Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Texas at Arlington, 1981.

Rodriquez, Angel Manuel. "Substitution in the Hebrew Cultus and in Cultic-Related Texts." Th.D. dissertation, Andrews University, 1979.

Rodriquez Jr., Armando J. "Life from on High: The Eschatology of the Gospel of John in Light of Its Vertical Dimension. Ph.D. dissertation, Loyola University of Chicago, 2008.

Stockdale, Sharon Joan. "Discourse Analysis of the Second Epistle to Timothy." M.S. thesis, The University of Texas at Arlington, 1976.

Street, Daniel R. "They Went Out from Us:" The Identity of the Opponents in First John. Ph.D. dissertation, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008.

Waltke, Bruce K. "The Theological Significance of ᾽Αντί and ῾Υπέρ in the New Testament." Th.D. dissertation, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1958.

York, Hershael W. "An Analysis and Synthesis of the Exegetical Methods of Rhetorical Criticism and Discourse Analysis as Applied to the Structure of First John." Th.D. dissertation, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 1993.