

Truth For the Final Generation

Midday Message

“Love’s Self-Sacrifice”

Opening Hymn: 225 NH “God is Working His Purpose Out”

Scripture Reading: Romans 5:8-11

Introduction:

Last time we saw that God created His intelligent creatures free. God always wanted to share His love and that meant that He would create creatures with the ability to respond spontaneously to His love. That freedom in creation meant that there would be a risk of apostacy and rebellion. Despite this fact, God the glorious results would be that the universe would be forever cured from anything like it ever occurring again.

⁹What do ye imagine against the Lord? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time. Nahum 1:9

¹⁴And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed [restored]. Daniel 8:14

God’s First Step

When Adam sinned, he was held captive to satan and would have remained so had not God sought for him. God took the initiative to reclaim His wayward and wondering children!

⁹And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

¹⁵And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Genesis 3:9, 15 KJV

The New Covenant Promise

All the Plan of Salvation was comprehended in the promise given in Genesis 3:15. The bruising of the heel of the woman’s seed meant that there would be a temporary set back. Apostacy and rebellion were not to bear sway indefinitely. It would come to an end. Moreover, In the bruising of the head of the serpent was predicted the final overthrow of all evil and the triumph of Christ and the redeemed.

In fact, When God called Abraham He made the Abrahamic Covenant with him where He promised that Abraham would be a father of many nations and that all nations would be blessed by his seed (*Genesis 12:3, 15:5, 22:18*).

¹⁶Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

¹⁷ And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. Galatians 3:16, 17 KJV

The Bruised Heel

God saw from all eternity that it would require the “lamb slain” in order to offer mankind a second chance and bring many sons to glory. He also saw that in man’s condition he was powerless to free himself from the pit in which he had fallen and so the Promised Seed would perform a threefold work:

1. Save mankind at any cost to Himself
2. Satisfy the demand of the broken law:
 - a. live a perfect life,
 - b. die in man’s place.
3. Reveal the character of God that mankind could be won back to faith and trust.

The Wonders of God’s Love

¹⁰ Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

⁹ In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

¹⁹ We love him, because he first loved us. 1 John 4:10, 9, 19 KJV

The meaning of Propitiation

The Greek word ἱλαστήριον (*hilastērion*) is translated as propitiation in some verses and it has the meaning of a sacrifice that turns removes wrath or turns aside divine judgement. It can also mean a place of atonement or “mercy seat” Let’s look at some scriptures:

²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

*²⁵ Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (*hilastērion*) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; Romans 3:24, 25*

*⁵ And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat (*hilastērion*); of which we cannot now speak particularly. Hebrews 9:5*

In the Septuagint (Greek OT), *hilastērion* is the word used to translate the Hebrew כַּפֹּרֶת (*kapporet*), which refers to the mercy seat (see Exodus 25:17-22). So when Paul says that Jesus is our propitiation he is saying that He both turns aside divine wrath caused by sin and He also is the “place” where we receive mercy! God’s justice and mercy meet in Christ!

A Sacrifice Freely Given

As we said before, man could not save himself so it required a power above and outside of himself to rescue him. Herein is the Love of God.

⁸ *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

⁹ *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

¹⁰ *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

¹¹ *And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Romans 5:8-11 KJV*

God was In Christ

¹⁴ *For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:*

¹⁹ *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:14, 19*

Christ Offered Himself a Willing Sacrifice

It was to redeem us that Jesus lived and suffered and died. He became "a Man of Sorrows," that we might be made partakers of everlasting joy. God permitted His beloved Son, full of grace and truth, to come from a world of indescribable glory, to a world marred and blighted with sin, darkened

with the shadow of death and the curse. He permitted Him to leave the bosom of His love, the adoration of the angels, to suffer shame, insult, humiliation, hatred, and death. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5. Behold Him in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, upon the cross! The spotless Son of God took upon Himself the burden of sin. He who had been one with God, felt in His soul the awful separation that sin makes between God and man. This wrung from His lips the anguished cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Matthew 27:46. It was the burden of sin, the sense of its terrible enormity, of its separation of the soul from God—it was this that broke the heart of the Son of God. SC 13.1

But this great sacrifice was not made in order to create in the Father's heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no! "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." John 3:16. The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but He provided the propitiation because He loves us. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption. SC 13.2

Appeal

God is the freest being in all the universe. With many options spread before Him He chose to give Himself a ransom for many. God gave Himself freely in His Son that ultimately the promise

might be sure. Our only hope is in looking constantly to the cross of calvary.

... Our only hope is perfect trust in the blood of Him who can save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. Oh, we do not comprehend the value of the atonement! If we did, we would talk more about it. The gift of God in his beloved Son was the expression of an incomprehensible love. It was the utmost that God could do to preserve the honor of his law, and still save the transgressor. Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of his shed blood, and they would be cleansed and saved from sin. ... ST December 30, 1889, par. 4

Yours in Our Master's Service

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