



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

The Suffering Savior, Mark 15: 16-23

"Via Dolorosa II: The Sad Way or Sacrifice,

Substitution and Imprecation, the Idea of

Substitution in the Doctrine of the Atonement"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee again for the word of God, and for the light that it sheds upon our path. We thank Thee for the illumination that comes to our minds through the Scriptures. And we pray that tonight as we study again, the ministry of our Lord Jesus that it may be enlightening to us, and that the issues of our study may be to the glory of Thy name, and we pray that the truths that we discuss and learn may help us in our Christian life, enabling us to understand our Lord Jesus Christ ministry for us in a deeper way. We commit each one present to Thee, and we pray that the hour may be glorifying to him who loved us, and has loosed us from our sins in his own precious blood, and we ask this in his name. Amen.

[Message] Tonight our topic, as we continue our series of studies in the Passion of our Lord is Via Doloras, the Sad Way or Sacrifice, Substitution and Imprecation, the Idea of Substitution in the Doctrine of the Atonement. It's evident to me already that we shall not be able to consider the problem of substitution in the atonement, for tonight. We'll have to reserve that for next Monday night, but it is related to our topic, and what I'm

saying tonight will prepare for that, but we'll deal with sacrifice and substitution. We are really pausing in the midst of our study of the Passion of Christ to deal with some questions that are basic to the understanding of the account.

Most genuine Christians, who have had any instruction in the Bible at all, believe that salvation is the work of God. They may not understand all that is implied in that. They may be semi-Pelegant in their thoughts. They may think that they are justified through non-meritorious faith, as if faith is a kind of work that man does. They may be unclear about the completeness of the work of Jesus Christ. They may think that really when they put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, it's their faith that saves them. They may even think that faith is a condition for salvation. They may even use terms like that, but basically if you asked them the question, are you saved by Jesus Christ alone? They probably would reply, "Yes, I'm saved by Jesus Christ alone." They would not realize that that statement logically implies that faith is not a human work, but rather something that God does for us, that we believe that it is God who initiates the work of faith, and consequently the work is only completely his if that faith is initiated by God, produced by God in our lives.

They may even think that their salvation is due to their own free will. Little realizing that again, by claiming that their salvation is the work of their free will, they have contradicted the essence of the gospel which is grace because if it is true that some men are saved through their free will, and others reject on account of the fact that they did not exercise their free will, it is evident that there is something in the free will of some that is not in the free will of others, and God essentially ultimately must approve it, so that that kind of salvation too, leads in principle to a salvation by works, but if you ask such people, who say they believe in the free will of man but who have acknowledged faith in Jesus Christ, did God save you and save you completely, or did you contribute something to your salvation?

The chances are they would say, "No, I didn't contribute anything to my salvation, I just exercised my free will." Or, "I exercised my faith, not realizing that those things are in contradiction." Further, I think, that genuine Christians would probably acknowledge the fact that the work of God, through which they had been saved, is a work which might be called the expiatory offering of Jesus Christ, which propitiates God's holiness and justice. They would know that their salvation is related to the fact that the Lord Jesus came and shed his blood, for our sins. They would recognize that that was an expiatory offering of the Son of God, and they would, I think, recognize that there was something that he did that satisfied the holiness and righteousness of God. I think they would probably recognize that, and I think they would also recognize that as a result of this, Jesus Christ, in his work, secured for them acceptance with God, so they would recognize that the work of Jesus Christ was a work of God; that is was a expiatory offering which propitiated God's holiness and righteous, and they would recognize the fact that they have acceptance even though guilty because of what Jesus Christ has done. They would also recognize that this acceptance, which Jesus Christ has made available, is secured through the instrumentality of their faith. They may not be clear about it, as I have suggested, but they would know that their faith had something to do with their coming into possession of this acceptance with God, and if you ask them what texts they might supply in support of these doctrines, they might say, "Well, salvation is of the Lord. That proves it's the work of God." They might say, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many." And that would seem to teach that his offering was an expiatory sacrifice, and in order to demonstrate that it was an offering received through faith, they might say to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, "His faith is counted to him for righteous."

Now, this of course is something different from a non-Christian approach to biblical truth. The greatest of the Roman Catholic theologians was Thomas Aquinas. Thomas Aquinas said, "Three things are necessary for the salvation of man. To know

what he ought to believe. Second, to know what he ought to desire, and third, to know what he ought to do." Now, it is evident that Aquinas' prescription here, for things necessary for salvation, fall far short of evangelical understanding of the New Testament. Not all are able to defend the nature of the atonement. It's foundation and sacrifice that is both substitutionary and penal. One of the greatest of the unbelievers in the history of the United States was Thomas Jefferson.

Now, Jefferson was a great unbeliever because he was of course recognized by many to be one of our greater presidents, but Thomas Jefferson was a deist. And he not only was deist, but he was a man who was opposed to Christianity. He is responsible for such statements as, "Jesus Christ came and gave us the finest ethical teaching that any other teacher has been able to do. His moral teachings are on a plane above any other human teacher." But then he said, "His disciples came along, and messed it all up. For they mixed and mingled with the beautiful moral teachings of the Lord Jesus, teachings concerning the deity of Christ, the atonement, the virgin birth," and a long list of other things that Thomas Jefferson found very offensive to him.

Now, one of the things that Jefferson objected to was the doctrine of penal satisfaction. That is that Jesus Christ came and offered a sacrifice directed toward the holiness of God, and that he died under the penalty of sin, in order to secure salvation for believers. Now, how would you defend the Christian truth against Thomas Jefferson's claims? How would you defend your belief, if you have such a belief, in the penal satisfaction theory of the atonement of Jesus Christ?

Now, you must have some theory of the atonement. Whatever you think about the atonement is your theory of the atonement. How would you answer Jefferson? Could you defend the Christian faith against this deist, an unbeliever? Well, that of course is what we're trying to enable you to do in our studies of the Passion of the Lord Jesus and in these times when we stop and talk about theology for a little while.

Now, last time we did not quite finish our subject, but I'm going to move on tonight to Romans 1 because Point A under it will be the completion of our study of last week. Now, our general theme is the Suffering Servant of Jehovah, the Old Testament and the Doctrine of the Atonement, and so tonight, we want to stop for a few moments at the beginning of the hour, and talk about the use of Psalm 69, and the problem of imprecation. In case you don't know what imprecation is, I'll define it for you in a moment. Probably most of you find this a very familiar word, but nevertheless, we will define it in case some do not understand it in a moment.

Remember in our Scripture reading last time, we read Mark chapter 15, verses 16, through 23, and I'm going to read for the Scripture reading tonight verses 22 and 23, and there we read, "And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull. And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not." Mark chapter 15, verses 22 and 23. I want to only notice a couple of points. First, the New Testament context of this reference to Psalms 69, for in verse 23, the statement, "and they gave him drink wine mingled with myrrh" is a reference to Psalm chapter 69 and verse 21, and perhaps it would be wise for me to read Psalm 69, verse 21 right at this point. In that psalm we read, "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." So against the background of that statement in Psalm 69, verse 21, Mark has constructed his account of the passion at this point.

Now, then the wine and the myrrh, it was a very human act on the part of the Jews to give a stupefying drink to sufferers. It may well have been regarded by them, as the fulfillment of a text such as Proverbs chapter 31, in verse 6 where we read, "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that are of heavy hearts." So there is instruction in the book of Proverbs to give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish. It may well have been that a rising out of this instruction in Psalm 31, "There arose this custom of giving a stupefying drink to sufferers." It was the same kind of spirit that leads executioners, firing squads to blind the men that they are going to shoot. It's a

kind of form of human kindness, if you can call it that, to put a blindfold over the man that you are going to execute.

It reminds me of Mark Twain's incident of Huck's warming the water before he drowns the cat, in order to give it a very nice kind of death, but any way, at any rate, this is what happened here. "They gave him drink, wine mingled with myrrh," but the text surprisingly says, "But he received it not." Why did our Lord not partake of the wine mingled with myrrh?

Now, myrrh was a form of narcotic, and so this is the kind of drink that they offered him. Why did he not partake? Well, now will you turn back to Mark chapter 14, in verse 25 for a moment? There remember in the institution of the Lord's Supper, he had said to them, "This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many." And he takes the wine in his hand as he says that. "Verily, I say unto to you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God." That may well have been one of the reasons that our Lord refused to wine mingled with myrrh. He had already promised that the next time that he drank wine, would be the time when the kingdom of God would be in existence upon the earth. We can look forward to the fact that our Lord Jesus will drink wine in the kingdom, which he shall institute at his Second Advent. That may be one reason.

There is also another reason, perhaps, why the Lord Jesus did not drink the wine mingled with myrrh. He would not die with his senses dulled. He will endure with full consciousness the sufferings appointed for him. For if our Lord had taken the wine mingled with myrrh, it may have acted as a narcotic, so that he would not have felt the sufferings of the cross as he should have felt them as the sacrifice for our sins.

I am inclined to think that these two reasons together explain why Jesus Christ did not take the wine mingled with myrrh. He knew that he had made that promise, and he was going to keep his promise, but he also wanted to endure to the full, the sufferings for

our sins. It could not be said of him that he did not endure to the last dreg, the suffering that the Father intended for him, and so he suffered to the bitter end.

That's the New Testament context of the passage, but this is a reference to the Old Testament, so let me say a few words now, about the use of Psalm 69 here. Psalm 69 is a psalm that is closely related to the 40th Psalm and the 22nd Psalm. Remember the 22nd Psalm is the psalm in which the Lord Jesus or in which the psalmist says in the opening verse, "My God, my God, why has Thou forsaken me?" It is a Messianic psalm. Psalm 40 is the psalm that is cited in the New Testament in Hebrews chapter 10. It too is a Messianic psalm. Psalm 69 is a Messianic psalm. It has been described as the prayer of a man suffering because of his zeal for the Lord's house, and you may remember that when the Lord Jesus went into the temple in the early part of his ministry, reference was made to the fact that the zeal of the Father's house had consumed him. That's a reference to Psalm 69, so it's not surprising then, that over and over and over again, in the New Testament we have references to Psalms 69 because it is a Messianic psalm. Next to Psalm 22 and Psalm 110, Psalms 69 is most frequently cited in the New Testament. It is a psalm of David in which he describes in the suffering experiences that he had. It is not a prophecy directly of the Lord Jesus. It is rather a typical prophecy of the Lord Jesus.

Now, there are prophecies in the Old Testament that are directly prophecies of the New Testament events. They do not have any local reference to the situation out of which they arose to any great extent. The psalmist acts as a prophet predicting something.

Now, these are predictive prophecies concerning the Lord Jesus. There are psalms like that such as Psalm 110, perhaps even Psalm 2, but at least psalm 110. It is a pure prophecy of the future. Then there are psalms that are typical psalms. These are psalms that describe the experiences of typical characters like prophets, priests or kings, and I'm speaking now broadly, broader than psalms, prophecies and psalms in which reference is made to the actions of typical characters. Prophets, priests, kings, and they have certain

experiences, which are adumbrations, which are foreshadowing of the experiences that the Lord Jesus will have. When the righteous suffer as a result of the circumstances in which they are placed, that is illustrative of the experiences that our Lord Jesus will have to the fullest extent.

Now, these psalms are psalms in which the psalmist or the prophet speaks of his own time, his own experience, of his own circumstances, but the language may go beyond them, or he may be simply a typical figure, if the language goes beyond him, and cannot be fully understood of him. It's a kind of typical prophetic psalm in which you have the typical, but you also have the prophetic. If its language that is fully understood of him, but his experiences are like the experiences of the Lord Jesus, it is simply a typical psalm.

Now, when you turn to the New Testament, you discover that the New Testament writers do not make any distinction between these psalms. I'm doing it. I'm saying that this is what the New Testament writers do because they don't make this distinction. They just say, "This has to do with Jesus Christ." Well, when you look at the context in the Old Testament, it seems to have to do with David, and so then you must analyze and come up with some understanding of that text, which they must have had. They regarded typical psalms or typical prophecies, typical prophetic psalms or prophecies. Prophetic psalms or prophecies, and then there are a couple of more types I won't burden your mind with now, they regarded all of them, as being simply ways in which the Scriptures speak of Jesus Christ.

Now, the reason that they did not have to distinguish between the typical and the prophetic, the pure prophecy, and the typical prophetic, is because they had a philosophy of history which we must remember is biblical. It is this. All the experiences of men are the experiences, which are designated within the eternal decree of God, and so consequently every experience that a man has is an experience in which God has the final say. Remember the text, "He works all things according to the counsel of his own will."

And so when they looked back and read the Old Testament, they didn't say, "Now, did this occur because God intended it to occur, or is this something that just happened?" They didn't make that distinction. Everything was something that God intended should happen, so it doesn't make any difference whether it's typical prophetic or typical or prophetic, it all is under the sovereign control of God, and that's why they could say that it might be fulfilled of something that was prophetic, that it might be fulfilled of something that was typical, that it might be fulfilled of something that typical or prophetic.

Now, if you and I have the philosophy of history that they had, we won't have any stumbling over this either. The reason that some interpreters of the bible have difficulty with things like this is because they read in the New Testament that a certain text in applied to the Lord Jesus in the New Testament, and when they go back to the Old Testament, they discover that the text didn't have to do with the Lord Jesus at all. Apparently it has to do with David, and so they say, "Well, how can the interpreters of the New Testament take a passage that referred to David and refer it to Christ, and so without trying to work out any kind of philosophy of history without trying to really study the Scriptures, because there are few people that'll have studied the Scriptures in 1974, they just say, eventide tally they just followed the Hermeneutical methodology of the 1st century, and they believed you could do things like that, but we are wiser and we don't believe you can do things like that, or else they just say, as most interpreters do, "They were just wrong. They didn't understand that Old Testament passage as well as we did."

Now, I want to say this. I just want to go on record for saying that in my opinion the apostles were better interpreters of the Old Testament than modern commentators are, and it doesn't take a great deal of courage to make a statement like that. I assure you. They were the most meticulous students of the Old Testament, and you can be sure that when they take a text and refer it to Jesus Christ there is a reason for it, and ultimately you will find, I think. I think you will find that I'm right, that the reason they do it, is

because they saw all of the events of the Old Testament as illustrations of spiritual truth. That's the meaning of the word type, by the way, and you know in 1 Corinthians chapter 10, when Paul describes a great number of events through which Israel passed, he said, "Now, all these things happened unto them for types." That's not a technical term. *Toupas* does not mean something special as over against another kind of illustration. It means simply an illustration. All of these things are illustrations of the spiritual truth of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Now, then that's the introduction to Psalm 69. I want you now to look at that text. Psalm 69, verse 21 with me, and I'm going to just simply make a statement, but then I want to look at the imprecatory character of this psalm and try to make something else known to us that I think is here. In verse 21 we read, "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

Now, this psalm is a typical psalm. This psalm is not a direct prophecy of the future. It is a typical psalm. It is a psalm in which the psalmist speaks of his own experiences, and the psalmist is David, and since David is the king of Israel he is, as you well know, an illustration of the Messianic king, the Lord Jesus. And so the experiences that he has are adumbrations or foreshadowing of the Lord Jesus Christ and his experiences.

Now, there are some things that are said in this psalm that are rather startling. Let me read a few verses beginning with verse 16.

"Hear me, O LORD; for Thy loving kindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies. And hide not Thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily. Draw near unto my soul, and redeem it:" (Now, you can see from that, that this psalmist is not speaking as our Lord, but only as an illustration. There are some things here that do not apply to our Lord.) "Deliver me because of mine enemies. Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonor: mine

adversaries are all before Thee. Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my food; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not;" (Now the psalmist is saying some rather terrible words about his adversaries.) "Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not and make their loins continually to shake. Pour out Thine indignation upon them, and let Thy wrathful anger take hold of them. Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents. For they persecute him whom Thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom Thou hast wounded. Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into Thy righteousness. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous."

Now, have you ever prayed a prayer like that? Most of us in the 20th century would think it was rather out of place to even consider praying a prayer like that. Now, if you think that it is out of place for you to pray a prayer like that then to that degree you are out of sympathy with the Scriptures, for this a biblical prayer.

Now, I'm going to stop right here because this text happens to be quoted in a very interesting place in the New Testament. This passage Psalm 69, I lost my place for a moment. I'll have to look back, but let's notice verse 25, "Let their habitation be desolate and let none dwell in their tents."

Now, let's turn over the New Testament to the book of Acts chapter 1. Acts chapter 1, there are only eleven of the apostles now because one of them has, as a result of his sin, hung himself. His name was Judas. Now, we read in verse 15 of Acts chapter 1,

"And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spoke before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus." (Now, I want you to notice Peter says that this Scripture had to do with Judas. He said,) "The Holy Spirit spoke it by the mouth of David concerning Judas who was guide to them that took Jesus, for he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. For" (Now, here is the Scripture.) "For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take."

Two passages from the Psalm are put together, one from Psalm 109, the other from Psalm 69. Now, Peter has told us that this text of Scripture has to do with Judas. Now, some people say that it's a little wild to find Jesus in the Old Testament, and if that is true then that is wilder to find Judas in the Old Testament, but it is not only Peter, it is also our Lord, who found Judas in the Old Testament. For over in John chapter 13, he cites Psalm 41, and he says, that text had to do with Judas, so the Old testament is a book that not only speaks of Jesus Christ, but it also speaks of Judas. Now, that is a strange thing.

Now, the reason for it again, is very simple to understand if we understand the nature of the Bible. If it is true that a passage in the Old Testament, which refers to David or some other Messianic figure as an illustration of the Lord Jesus. If we can grant that, if we can grant the God is able to sovereignly control history so that the events and the record of them, may be precisely what he intends for the record to be and the events to

be, if we can grant that then we can grant that it is possible for God to so control history that events in the Old Testament will look forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Now, if it is true that the Old Testament Messianic figures are figures that are illustrations of the New Testament Messiah, the Lord Jesus, then it is a simple deduction. Even an elder in a local church, could make this judgment and deduction.

Now, Mr. Prior's excluded of course because he is the greatest elder that I know. If it is true, if it is true that we can have a type of the Messiah in the Old Testament, and the reality in the New Testament, it is a simple deduction to reason that the adversary of the typical character in the Old Testament is typical of the adversary of the type or the reality of the New Testament.

Now, doesn't that make sense? In other words, if David is an illustration of our Lord Jesus, then the enemy of David is an illustration of Judas, who was the enemy of the Messiah. Now, that is why in the Old Testament of course the enemy of the Lord Jesus was Ahithopel. You remember him, Ahithopel? By the way do you remember what happened to Ahithopel? It was just an accident of course. It was just an accident, but what happened to Ahithopel? Anyone remember? He hung himself. Just an accident that the enemy of David in the Old testament, should have the same kind of end that enemy of the Lord Jesus in the New Testament had, so that when he speaks in Psalm 41 about his own familiar friend having lifted up his heel against him, it's natural for the Lord Jesus in John 13, to say, "That text has been fulfilled in the betrayal of me by Judas."

Now, when you learn to read the Bible with understanding like, you are advancing from elementary school, into high school in the study of the Scriptures, but now there is another problem with Psalm 69, and that problem is the problem of this terrible prayer that David prayed. And that brings us to the problem of imprecation. To imprecate, now to make it very simple for you, that comes from the Latin word, imprecari, which [laughter] I was kidding. Imprecari comes from the Latin word in plus the verb precari, which means to pray, so imprecari is to pray down something upon someone, so

to imprecate is to invoke a curse. So here we have in the Old Testament, Psalm 69 as well as Psalm 109 in which Old Testament characters pray down curses on their enemies. It's though by modern theologians that this is unworthy of a God who is love.

Now, if that true, if it is really true that it is impossible for us to pray a prayer of imprecation, then the logical end of that kind of theology is universalism. Every body is going to be saved ultimately, so who it's not surprising, that people who say, "You cannot pray a prayer like that. It is unworthy of a God of love." Are also people who teach us that everybody is going to be saved ultimately. Let me read you the theological statement of one of our modern theologians. This was written just twenty-five years ago in 1949. I know that the young people will think this is ancient history, but for some of us, this happened in middle age, and we are still here.

Now, in connection with a passage that this to do with just such a thing as we're going to talk about the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus as a penal satisfaction sacrifice. Thomas Howell Hughes, a British theologian has this to say, "Whatever this passage may mean," Oh, I should refer you to the passage he is talking about specifically. It's 1 Peter chapter 3, and it's verse 18 through verse 20, and specifically in this passage, Peter is talking about the fact that the Lord Jesus preached to the spirits in prison, who at one time were disobedient when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing in which few, that is eight souls, were saved by water. He's talking about the fact that the Lord Jesus preached to the spirits in prison.

Now, he has not noticed the fact that in the Greek text the word for preaching here is not the word for preaching the gospel *euangelizesthai* but the word *christou*, which means simply to make a proclamation. In other words, the kind of proclamation that Jesus made to the spirits in prison is not stated specifically, and we are not to infer that it was any preaching of a message of hope. As a matter of fact, the context of this passage, as well as other passages, would seem to indicate that it was a message of judgment in which he went to the spirits in prison who were disobedient in the days of

Noah, and pointed out to them, that their disobedience in the days of Noah, was a disobedience that God has now finally, once for all annulled in the saving work of the Lord Jesus in their attempt to prevent the coming of the incarnation, he announces to them a note of victory as a result of what he has accomplished, and that they are justly held in prison awaiting the judgment of the great day, but anyway Thomas Hughes says in the light of this passage, he says, "Whatever this passage may mean, and some strange meanings have been read into it," you perhaps would think of my meaning that I have just read into it, as a strange meaning, "it at least implies that Christ is active on behalf of men in the other world, and we may take it as axiomatic that his work there is in line with and a continuation of his work on earth."

In other words, what he is saying is that this passage teaches that the Lord Jesus is still preaching beyond his ministry on this earth, and the kind of ministry he is preaching is the same kind of ministry that he preached when he is here in the flesh, but he doesn't stop with that. I could infer from that that he was a Universalist and that would be right, but he goes on to say, "We can surely believe that the love of God does not change toward those who have passed into the spirit world, even though they have done so as unbelievers and unrepentant. The one unthinkable conclusion here is that God's love will be frustrated and defeated, and this is what would happen if any one soul were finally lost or were allowed to suffer endless punishment."

Now, you can see from this that, Mr. Hughes, a respected Anglican clergyman is a Universalist. He believes that everybody is going to be saved, and if that were true, then I could, and perhaps a great number of you would be happy over it, at least this part of it. I could close my Bible and say, now that is the last of the preaching that I will do. I will go back to the insurance business, and try to make a living in the insurance business because there is no need to worry because we are going to be in heaven some day, so why be disturbed about the preaching of the gospel or about Christianity or anything else? Why be disturbed about our sins?

Now, such a view is untenable of course for the logical reason that if sin were to go unpunished, sin would be then be treated as if it were not sin. If it is really true that sin goes unpunished then there is no such thing about sin, really. Anselm, the theologian to whom we've referred a long time ago in this series, who lived in the 12th century, Anselm said precisely that, when he argued that Jesus Christ must come an offer a satisfaction to the holiness of God. He argued that if satisfaction is not necessary then sin is as if it were not, and then for the scriptural fact, this is an untenable view, since the Bible does teach that there is such a thing as atonement. It says that God is just, in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament, and it links his justice with the saving work of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah, chapter 45 in verse 21, Isaiah refers to God as a just God and a savior.

Now, modern theologians would have to say, "He's a just God, or he's a savior, but not a just God," or they might even say, "He's a just God, but yet he saves everybody." Which is contradictory, but the Bible says, "He's a just God, and a savior" because it is he who provides the satisfaction for his justice.

Now, in the New Testament the same thing is said. For Paul, in the great passage, in Romans 3 to which we have referred more than once, at the conclusion of it, says, that the whole purpose of the propitiatory work of Jesus Christ is that God may be just, and the justifier of him, who is of the faith of Jesus, the first reason for the coming of Jesus Christ is not your salvation. The first reason for the coming of Jesus Christ is that men may not be allowed to gain the impression that sin is not ultimately punished. You might think that. For hundreds of years, men sinned, and sinned apparently without the punishment that the Bible says was punishment for sin, judgment and eternal judgment, but when Christ came and cried out, "My God, my God why has Thou forsaken me?" And bore eternal judgment. That was God's way of answering the complaint down through the years, "Where is the wages of sin?" There we learn what sin is like in the sight of God. It requires the death of a God man.

Now, I know that some people immediately say, as Mr. Hughes would say, "Well, your God is a just God, but he's not a loving God." That Mr. Hughes, I deny because you see it is the God of love who has provided the way by which his justice may be satisfied. There is mercy in permitting another person to do for the sinner what the sinner is bound to do for himself. If I am required to present God with a perfect obedience, and I am required to do that, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and thy neighbor as thyself." Do you think you can present God with a righteousness like that? Do you think that coming into this earth, from the first time you draw a breath to the last breath you ever draw that you never break the commandment or the law of God? Do you think that you love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with every breath you ever draw, and your neighbor as yourself from beginning to end? That's the kind of righteousness you must present God, if you hope to get heaven on the basis of your own righteousness.

It's not a question of attending church. Offering a few prayers, being a nice citizen in the community, undergoing the right of baptism, and sitting at the Lord's Table, even Sunday after Sunday. It's not a question of witnessing every now and then. It's not a question of having some nice thoughts about other people. In order to be acceptable to God, we must present him with a perfect righteousness, absolutely perfect.

Now, then if God should judge me because I have not provided him with this, he is absolutely righteous. He's absolutely righteous if no one is ever saved. Absolutely righteous, but if he should provide a way whereby another person can do for me, what I'm required to do, else I perish, then I have a God who is not only a just God, but who is also a merciful God. He's a loving God, but further if this God not only permits another person to do for the sinner, what the sinner must do for himself, but rather provides that person himself, not only permits another person, but provides that person himself, then I have further reason to think that this God, who is just is also loving., and if he not only permits another person to do for me what I cannot do for myself, and provides that

person, and on top of it all becomes that person, greater mercy still, and that is precisely what God has done. He has, through the second person of the Trinity, become the person who provides the satisfaction that his own justice requires, and so I say, Mr. Hughes, my God is a just God, but he is a loving God, as well, and his law is law, and I appreciate his law because he doesn't let it fall to the ground, and sin becomes something and his government is a moral government and a government that I can respect, and he's a God whom I can respect and whom I can love.

Now, the problem of sacrifice, I want to raise an important problem. Is Christ's death a penal sacrifice? Perhaps you answer immediately, "Oh yes, it's a penal sacrifice." Because I have been ringing the changes on this for a number of times in our meetings. I want to ask you what kind of a sacrifice he is, for there are other kinds of sacrifice? When I say penal sacrifice, I mean a sacrifice who bears the penalty of sin. Poena is the Greek word for penalty and penal, our English word, comes from it of course, so that a penal sacrifice, is a sacrifice that bears the penalty for sin. Would you think that a modern theologian who does not like the idea that God is a just God and punishes sin, would you think that you might find a modern theologian who will admit that Jesus Christ is a sacrifice, but would deny that the sacrifice is a penal sacrifice? Well, if you suppose that you would find such an animal, you are absolutely correct. There are many modern theologians who are attached to organizations that honor, in word at least, the Bible, and so they have to find, generally speaking, the truths that they teach in the Scripture, to some extent, they must have some Scriptural justification. As a result of this, they must explain the sacrifice of Jesus Christ from Scripture. There have been many modern theories of sacrifice.

Now, I think it's safe for us to begin with the assumption that the New Testament sets forth Christ's death as a sacrifice. As Professor Warfield, has said, "They, the apostles, not only expressly state that Christ was offered as a sacrifice, they work out the correspondence between his death and the different forms of Old Testament sacrifice.

Whatever sacrifice is," Warfield has said, "that Christ's work is," but I ask you, what kind of sacrifice is meant, when we say, "Jesus Christ is a sacrifice for our sins."

Now, let me illustrate what I mean by this, so that you can understand that we do have a problem. It's not enough for us to say, "Jesus Christ died as my sacrifice for sin." I wish that one of you had said that to me because then I would like to reply to you, "What kind of sacrifice? Like Cain's?" Well, if you know much about the Bible, you'd say immediately, "Oh, no, no not like Cain's." Well, then you do have a theory of sacrifice after all. Let's just think about Cain and Able for a moment, "and Adam knew Eve his wife and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord, and she again bore his brother Able, and Able was a keeper of the sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time, it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord," (Very natural because he was a husband,) "and Able he also brought of the first lings of the flock and of the fat thereof." (Very natural because he was a cattleman. Why shouldn't they bring that with which they were most familiar?) "And the Lord had respect unto Able and to his offering." (Why?) "But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect, and Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell." And I can imagine him saying, "I brought of my produce and offering, and Able has brought of his for an offering, and you have had respect to Able's offering, and you have not had respect to mine. You are a partial God."

Now, there are those who say that the difference, the whole difference in the acceptability to Jehovah of the two offerings of Cain and Able hangs on the different characters of the offerers. Cain was a wicked man, and Able was a Godly man, and as a result when Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, he was not accepted to because he was a wicked man, and Able when he came, he was accepted because he was a good man. That's the common view in interpreting that passage. We are told, however in the Bible, that he had respect not only unto Able, but also unto his offering. That's what the Bible says, "And the Lord had respect unto Able and to his offering." Those four words

are very important. Then in the next sentence, "But unto Cain," and the four words again, "And to his offering he had not respect."

What appears apparently on first glance is that these offering then are the expressions of these individuals. They express what was in the heart of Cain, and they express what was in the heart of Able, and the truth of the matter is that they had differing conceptions about the doctrine of sacrifice. That's precisely wherein the difference lies. There is no apparent reason why God should prefer a lamb to a sheaf of wheat. Gunkel, the famous German interpreter of the Old Testament, he said, "It's easy to understand, God was a God of the nomads, and so naturally he like cattle better than he did the first fruits of the flock."

Now, Gunkel is a very learned man, but you are laughing at him because you have a little simple faith, and you have a little more understanding than the wise because you have made the Lord's testimonies your meditation, as David said.

Now, the difference surely goes deeper than simply God preferred a lamb to a sheaf of wheat. It is said in the New Testament it was by faith that Able brought a more excellent sacrifice. It is evident then that he had been instructed by God. For we read in the Bible, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." So evidentially those two young men had been instructed with regard to the kind of sacrifice that they were to bring and Able brought the right sacrifice out of the condition of faith, that existed in his heart. The state of faith in his heart, and Cain was an unbeliever in the message of God, and he brought of the fruit of the ground in rebellion against God.

Why did Cain bring an offering at all? What was in his mind? Well, he came with his offering as an act of mere homage. He acknowledged God. He was not an unbeliever in God. He was a believer in God. He even believed in a personal God. He probably believed in a God who judged. He had a great many orthodox views about God, but his doctrine of sacrifice was wrong. He came with the doctrine of sacrifice that says that sacrifice is simply an offering of homage to God. That was his doctrine of

sacrifice. He was the modern, the first follower of the modern theory of symbolical theories of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that the worshiper gives expression to his religious feelings when he brings the offering. That's what he's doing, just expressing the feeling of his heart, that he had before God, but you'll notice there is no concept of sin in his offering. For when you bring first fruits, what you have produced with your own hands, as an expression of homage to God, there is no possible way for there to be any concept of sin, but in Able's case he brought an animal that had been slain, and so he came with a penal satisfaction theory of sacrifice, and as a result of that there was not only acceptance with God, but there is a recognition in Able's offering of the fact that his life has been forfeited by sin.

Now, he may not have understood all of this, I have a hunch that if he were sitting tonight in this audience, not knowing anything more than he knew when he brought that sacrifice, he might come up to me and say, "You know, Lewis, you have gotten more out of those text than I ever realized was there." But he had essentially that attitude of trust. He believed the word of God, and he brought the offering that God demanded and as a result of that, he was accepted by God because out of it he recognized that there was something proper in the slaying of animal because it expressed something that was deep down in his heart that there was down there a cry for sucker a plea for pardon, from the sense of sin that he had. So in a word, Cain came to the Lord, with an offering in his hand, and the homage theory of sacrifice in his mind. Able with an offering in his hand and the expiatory theory of sacrifice in his heart, and it was therefore, and for that reason that Jehovah had respect unto the offering of Able, and had not respect unto the offering of Cain, so I ask you, what kind of a theory of sacrifice do you have? Don't say to me, "Jesus is just my sacrifice." What kind of sacrifice? What kind? Well, next week we'll continue our study. Let's close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we are grateful to Thee for the Scriptures, and for the depths of them. Help us, oh God, to think Thy thoughts after Thee. For Christ's sake. Amen.