

The Vicarious Death of Christ?

Part 1

The doctrine of the vicarious death of Jesus has become ingrained in most denominations. But, popularity does not establish truth. The question is: Was the death of Christ a vicarious death? To understand the significance of that question, we must first know what the word means.

Webster says vicarious means to take "the place of another person or thing; to act as a substitute." The Pope of the Catholic Church claims to be the Vicar of Christ on earth. Supposedly, the Pope takes the place of Christ on earth, hence he is said to be the Vicar of Christ. In our present investigation, the doctrine of vicarious death means that Jesus took our place in guilt and in punishment for sin, He took upon Himself the wrath of God against sin and took our place on the cross as a sacrifice for sin - He stood in our place. J. Oliver Buswell explains:

"The most satisfactory single term for designating the scriptural doctrine of the atonement for our generation is, I believe, the word substitution. This term indicates that Christ died for our sins, in our place, as our substitute. The word, vicarious, strictly implies the substitutional view, but the latter term is less likely to be misunderstood. The moral order and the necessity for satisfying its demands, together with the necessity of penalty for the vindication of the moral order, all these considerations are assumed in the substitutionary view."

He is correct in saying that the word substitution is more easily understood than the word vicarious. Please notice that he also says that the essential elements of the doctrine are assumed in the substitutionary view. That is a fatal admission but is also very true. With this doctrine, we are looking at a human philosophy rather than Bible truth.

Substitution is also known as the "penal satisfaction theory." So, the theory is that Jesus took our place on the cross, died in our stead, suffered the guilt and punishment that rightly belongs to us, became a curse in our place; everything was done in our place as our substitute. This became the predominant theory among Protestant churches generally and we can pinpoint the origin of it.

From the second to the eleventh centuries, religious leaders did little more than quote scripture and use Bible terms to express the sacrifice of Jesus. All of that changed in the eleventh century with Anselm.

"Anselm was a godly Italian, who first settled in Normandy, and then in 1093 following the Norman Conquest was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. He has been described as the first representative of medieval 'scholasticism,' which was an attempt to reconcile philosophy and theology, Aristotelian logic and biblical revelation. Although he included in his writings a number of biblical quotations, however, and referred to Holy Scripture as 'a firm foundation,' his overriding concern was to be 'agreeable to reason' (ii.xi)." John R.W. Stott, *The Cross of Christ*, page 118.

Though several of the conclusions of Anselm were later rejected, he set the tone for the Protestant Reformation with his approach of philosophy and logic instead of taking his position strictly from biblical

evidence. Ever since, human philosophy has been as much a part of "modern theology" as scripture has been. This was incorporated in the Protestant Reformation and is why Wiley and Culbertson say about the substitution theory,

"This is the theory generally held by the Reformed Churches, and is frequently known as the Calvinistic theory." Introduction To Christian Theology, page 228.

This should immediately alarm us. Though the seeds of the theory existed long before, it was closely interwoven with Calvinism. William Newton Clarke explains it well:

"Anselm, in the eleventh century, introduced the worthier idea that the ransom or satisfaction was paid by Christ not to Satan but to God. He argued that the enormity of sin required an infinite satisfaction to God if he was to release the sinner; that this satisfaction was due to God from man, and could be justly offered by no other; that nevertheless it could actually be rendered by no one inferior to God himself; and that for this reason God became man, in infinite mercy, in order to enable humanity, in the person of Christ, to satisfy him for its sins. This explanation proceeds upon the analogies of civil law, and views the satisfaction due to God as debt.

At the Reformation, this doctrine was modified by the introduction of the analogies of criminal law. In this view, the satisfaction that was due to God consisted in punishment. It was now held that Christ actually took the place of sinners in the sight of God, and as their substitute suffered the punishment that was due to them, including, as many of the Reformers taught, the sufferings of hell. Upon him fell all the punishment of all the sins of all the men for whom he died; against them, therefore, penal justice could have no further claim." An Outline of Christian Theology, page 319.

Though only Televangelists still maintain that Jesus descended into Hell at His death, the rest of the position formulated by Calvin remains at the heart of the Substitution theory. The theory of substitution is cross connected with the five points of Calvin, standing on the two legs of the imputation of our sins to Christ and the imputation of His righteousness to us. James Buchanan, an avowed Calvinist, explains this:

"Socinians, and others, who deny the substitution of Christ in the room of the guilty, the imputation of their sins to Him, and the vicarious nature of His sufferings and obedience, as a satisfaction to the law and justice of God, are the only parties who can consistently reject the imputation of His righteousness as the ground of their pardon and acceptance; indeed, they must do so, for they sweep away the whole ground on which the doctrine of imputation is based. But those who admit these fundamental truths, cannot consistently refuse this unavoidable inference from this, that what he did, as their substitute and representative, was done for them; and that, to be available for their benefit, it must be, in some way, made over to them, or put down to their account. To this extent, they must all admit the fact of imputation. If they ascribe any efficacy to the work of Christ at all, considered as a vicarious work accomplished by Him on behalf of His people, which merited or procured anything for them, His merit must be reckoned to them, if they are to derive any real benefit from it." The Doctrine of Justification," page 329f.

Thus, the doctrine is that our sins were literally transferred to Christ (our sins imputed to Him and He thus became guilty of our sin) and His righteous obedience is then applied to us, (righteousness imputed to us). However, the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us is no more true than the imputation of our sins to Him. Even David Lipscomb could not escape some of this concept:

"The flesh is weak, and the law of sin reigns in our members; so that we fall short of the perfect standard of divine righteousness; but if we trust God implicitly and faithfully endeavor to do his will, he knows our frame, knows our weakness, and as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities our infirmities and weaknesses, and imputes to us the righteousness of Jesus Christ. So Jesus stands as our justification and our righteousness, and our life is hid with Christ in God." A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles, volume IV, page 206.

The modern theologians, Lewis and Demarest, explain what substitution means in their book. They first say:

"The concept of substitution is essential to all of the biblical analogies - passover sacrifice, ransom, redemption, propitiation, victory over Satan, and reconciliation. In each aspect of what Christ did, sinners united to him by faith cannot do for themselves. The divine substitute fully provided for sinners' liberation, forgiveness, and reconciliation. 'So substitution is not a theory of the atonement. Nor is it even an additional image to take its place as an option alongside the others. It is rather the essence of each image and the heart of the atonement itself.'" Integrative Theology, page 403.

Contrary to what these authors say, substitution is certainly a theory about the death of Christ and several notable authors admit that the terms used, vicarious, substitute, satisfaction, are "not scriptural," yet they insist the idea is there. Even the venerable Thomas Campbell, in the November, 1833, issue of the Millennial Harbinger, admits that the use of such terms is not speaking of "Bible subjects in Bible terms," pp. 549, 551, 553. Yet, Campbell insists that the Bible teaches the doctrine as "also do the old philosophical axioms verify this conclusion." He thus pinpoints the basis of the doctrine, human philosophy and not scripture. And, as with any erroneous doctrine, one must invent a new vocabulary with distinctive definitions in order to use it.

Returning to the quotation above from Lewis and Demarest, the authors explain what is meant by "substitution" on page 402 of their book. They illustrate substitution by: (1) referring to the practice during our American Civil War that allowed one man to volunteer as a substitute for another who was drafted for military service. This was a strict one person substituted for another to fight in battle; the first man didn't have to fight at all, nor serve even a moment in military service because his substitute did it in his place; (2) a young lady was arrested for possession of an unregistered gun. Her boyfriend convinced the judge to let him spend her sentence of three days in jail in her place; she was not forgiven her infraction of law but didn't have to spend a moment of punishment for it because her substitute paid the price and suffered the guilt and punishment in her place; (3) a Catholic monk stepped in to take the place of a Polish sergeant in a WWII Nazi concentration camp and was executed "in his place;" (4) a "substitute" on a football team goes into the game in the place of another player; this "other" player sits on the sidelines and takes no part at all in the game because his substitute is in there doing it "for" him.

These are their illustrations of what substitution means in regard to what Jesus did. Of course, they do not stick with such illustrations because they, and all others who take the substitution theory, know that such a one-for-one substitution cannot be sustained in regard to what Jesus did. On the very next page of their book, Lewis and Demarest admit that what Jesus did was not an equal, exact, substitute for all mankind; for example, Jesus experienced the same "kind" of punishment but not the same quantity or quality. But, I deny that it was even the same "kind" of punishment for sin as sinners will experience in Hell.

In the sense of the substitution theory, if Jesus, when He died on the cross, removed God's wrath against sin, satisfied divine justice, paid all our debt in our place, took our punishment for sin upon Himself, became guilty with our guilt, was cursed in our stead, then Jesus has already done it all in our place. It is just like the substitute soldier, the substitute football player, the boyfriend who went to jail in the place of his girlfriend and the priest who went to the firing squad in the place of another man. Why then should we be charged with anything if Jesus has already done it all? He removed our responsibility and accountability, and He did it nineteen centuries ago. If Jesus has already taken my punishment for my sins upon himself, then I don't have to worry because my punishment was removed nineteen centuries ago. I cannot be held accountable to God for what I have done because my substitute has already taken that on Himself and removed any responsibility from me! The only conclusion that can be reached from the substitution position is universal salvation....or Calvinist limited atonement!

Some will insist that they do not believe in either universal salvation or limited atonement but believe in substitution anyway. But, they don't realize what they are saying. The Bible teaches that we must do something to have our sins removed, Mark 16:15-16, Luke 13:3. We are righteous even as He is righteous if we do righteousness, I John 3:7, and are acceptable with God if we work righteousness, Acts 10:34-35. We can escape the punishment of hell but must obey God to do so, Matthew 25:32-46. We must obey God in order to enter Heaven, Matthew 7:21-27. The very fact that we must do all these things in order to have our sins removed, be righteous and escape punishment for sin demonstrates that the substitution theory is human error and not truth. Some will also say they believe in the necessity of human obedience and substitution as well. Again, they don't know what they are saying. Human obedience and the substitution theory are contradictions. This is why Calvinism virtually removes any such human effort from the process. Limited atonement, irresistible grace, and the impossibility of apostasy of Calvinism are the direct results of the substitution theory. Baptist doctrine demonstrates the same things; God provides the faith and grace, once saved you can't be lost and the number is limited to those to whom God gives the grace. And why not, if Jesus has already done everything in our place? What is there for us to do?

The facts are, Jesus provided the bridge between man and God, Hebrews 4:14-16, I Timothy 2:5-6; He opened the door to reunion with God, Hebrews 6:18:20. We must return to God for pardon and Jesus is the way by which we make that return, John 14:6. Jesus provided the means but was not our substitute. But, let's note just a few of the major arguments used to establish substitution.

A Substitute For Isaac: Genesis 22:12-13 says that God stopped Abraham from offering Isaac as a sacrifice, though God had ordered it, and a ram was offered up "in the stead" of Isaac. Substitution

advocates thus claim that Isaac represents sinners, the altar represents the literal cross of Christ, and the ram that was offered represents Jesus. Thus, Jesus is our substitute as the ram was for Isaac. However, such a comparison is untrue. Let's consider the facts.

It was intended that Isaac be sacrificed on that altar to begin with; it was a specific directive by God concerning these specific individuals! In the place of sacrificing Isaac, the ram was substituted. But, instead of being an illustration and authority for the substitution theory, it is the opposite! The reason? It was never intended that mankind be offered on a cross, or any altar, as a sacrifice in order that Jesus could then be our "substitute." Jesus certainly didn't take my place on the cross, nor your place, nor anyone's.

The Scapegoat: Leviticus 16:20-22 gives instruction for the "scapegoat." The priest laid both hands on the head of the live goat on the Day of Atonement and confessed all of the sins of Israel upon its head and then sent it away into the wilderness. The goat bore all their iniquities. (We will deal with the subject of "bearing" sins in another article). It is thus said that the sins and iniquities of Israel were laid on the goat on the Day of Atonement shows that the Atonement of Jesus was the same. Supposedly the sins of mankind were laid on (imputed to) Jesus, our substitute. However, the error of this should be clearly seen.

First, Jesus is never likened to the scapegoat. The scriptural likeness with Jesus is found in the first goat, the one for Jehovah, the one whose blood was sprinkled in the Most Holy Place. This is what Jesus did as High Priest, offered His own blood in the heavenly holy place, Hebrews 9:1-14, 23-26. In keeping with this, it must be understood that there was no sacrifice for sin by just the death of Jesus on the cross. The offering of His blood before God was as necessary as His death. If Jesus had died only, had not been raised and completed the sacrifice, we would still be in our sins, I Corinthians 15:17, Hebrews 1:3.

Second, the scapegoat appears in the scenario AFTER the offering for atonement in the tabernacle that furnishes the shadow of what Jesus did, Hebrews 9. If one should say that the scapegoat was also chosen to "make atonement" as was the other goat, keep in mind that when the poor offered fine flour for a sin-offering it was also referred to as atonement, Leviticus 5:11-13; no blood was shed in such "atonement." On the Day of Atonement, the scapegoat was not slain, its blood was not shed, so the scapegoat could not be a type of Christ, it could not have portrayed the death of Christ for our sins. Remember, Hebrews 9:22 says that "without shedding of blood there is no remission."

Third, if the scapegoat enters the picture at all in the New Testament order, it would have to be AFTER Jesus ascended into heaven and completed His offering for sin. That means, Jesus could not have corresponded to the scapegoat while on the literal cross. The scapegoat was but a symbol of the removal of sins.

Fourth, as we will see in an article to come, the literal sins of man were not literally placed on Jesus while He was on the literal cross. He did not "bear" our sins in that sense.

The Firstborn Of Egypt: This supposedly teaches that a lamb was substituted for the firstborn of Israel when the death of the firstborn of the Egyptians occurred. Thomas Crawford insists that this is the

meaning, *The Doctrine of the Atonement*, page 97, 501. Like the other arguments, this is highly imaginative but totally false. Though the word "sacrifice" is used in reference to the lamb, the purpose of such a sacrifice is not inherent in the word. An examination of the passages in which *zebach* and *ghahg* are used show the pertinent passages are talking about a feast made of the animal slain.

The instructions about the Passover feast in Exodus gives the purpose of the observance. Some of the blood of the Passover lamb was placed on the door. But, for what purpose? As a substitute, in the sense of the substitution theory? No. This was no substitute for the sins of the Israelite firstborn, no penalty for sin was placed on the lamb that was slain, the lamb did not take the place of anyone. The curse pronounced on the Egyptians included the firstborn of all their animals as well. Exodus 11:5 says,

"And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts."

The firstborn of all the animals of Israel were delivered just as were the firstborn of the Israelites themselves! Was the blood of the Passover lamb a "substitute" sacrifice for the "sins" of animals also? Merely to ask the question is to answer it. The blood on the doorway was for identification and thus protection, not some form of substitution. The Passover was a sacrifice in that it was a feast; indeed it is referred to as the feast of Passover, Exodus 34:25.

To make a leap to Jesus' being the Passover lamb is also faulty. There was no substitution involved in the Passover in Egypt, so no such connection can be made to begin with. Trying to connect I Corinthians 5:7-8 to this theory is to pervert the passage. Jesus is referred to as our passover who was sacrificed for us in that passage. These passages prove that the meaning of passover sacrifice is a "feast." But, these terms are used by Paul as figures, not literally. Just as Israel was to remove all leaven from the household at the time of Passover observance, so Christians are to remove all kinds of wickedness from their midst; in this instance it involved a wicked man who had to be removed from the congregation. The "feast" under discussion is neither the literal Jewish Passover nor the Lord's Supper. It is the union, purity and communion together of the congregation.

Jesus Became Sin: One of the most often referred to texts used as authority for substitution is II Corinthians 5:21. "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him." The very worst "translation" of this passage is in *Living Letters*, the Paraphrased N.T. "For God took the sinless Christ and poured into Him our sins. Then, in exchange, he poured God's goodness into us." That is classic Calvinism and clearly states the substitution theory, showing the cross connection between substitution, imputed sin and imputed righteousness. We will look at the preposition "for" in a future article so will not deal with it here.

I first heard this position from a Baptist preacher when I had only been preaching about a year. He explained that it was at the moment that Jesus said "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me" that the sins of the world were transferred to Jesus and God withdrew His presence from Jesus as He does with any sinner. That's a fanciful theory, but none of it is true.

The understanding of the passage turns on the word "sin" in the phrase, "made to be sin." Does it mean that Jesus actually became sin because all of the sins of humanity were literally laid on him so that all the wrath of God against sin was poured out on Him, that He was cursed of God thereby and the very punishment for sin was suffered by Him? Nonsense! In this passage, it means sin-sacrifice. Even a footnote in the ASV gives sin-sacrifice as the meaning, as do other translations.

The word for "sin" even in the Old Testament may mean several things, including sin-offering. In Leviticus alone, it is rightly translated as sin-offering over 50 times. See Leviticus 6:25, 4:21, 25. Where sin-offering is found in these places, just the word "sin" is in the original text in both Hebrew and Greek Septuagint. This is also true regarding trespass and trespass-offering. Hebrews 10:8 says,

"...saying above, Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein..."

The word "sacrifices" in the phrase "sacrifices for sin" is not in the Greek text, only the word for "sin" is there. Your Bible may have the word in italics to show this. The same is true in Hebrews 10:6 which is a quotation from Psalm 40:6. In the Psalm, the Septuagint also does not have the word "sacrifice" in the text. The word "sin" alone stands for "sacrifice for sin." Romans 8:2-3 says,

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

In the phrase, "and for sin," the word "sin" refers to sin sacrifice, which is identified as such in a footnote in the ASV. Other translations say the same. The passage is saying, "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and by a sin sacrifice, condemned sin in the flesh." See Bauer's Lexicon under *peri*, point i.g. page 644. The Jewish New Testament, translated by David Stern, translates II Corinthians 5:21 as,

"God made this sinless man be a sin offering on our behalf, so that in union with him we might fully share in God's righteousness."

The animal for a sin-offering had to be absolutely pure, without a blemish, completely holy, all of which Jesus was. For Him to have become "sin" in the sense of disobedience to God, He would have become an unholy, blemished sacrifice. Jesus was the lamb slain without blemish and without spot, I Peter 1:18-19. The priests making an offering under the Law also had to be as holy and spotless as the sacrifice they offered. Just so, Jesus as High Priest was "holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heaven ... when he offered up himself," Hebrews 7:26-27.

(Part 2)

Both Old and New Testaments clearly say that Jesus bore our sins. That has never been an issue. What is an issue is the meaning of the word "bear." In what way did Jesus bear our sins? Does it mean that Jesus literally took our sins upon Himself while on the cross, that our sins were transferred to Him? Luther and Calvin insisted that Jesus actually became a sinner in bearing our sins. After all, if Jesus took the sinner's place on the cross in order to bear sins, He had to become a sinner himself, which is the logical consequence of the position. One of the televangelists, Paul Bilheimer, in his book, *Destined for the Throne*, page 83, says,

"Because He was "made sin," impregnated with sin, and became the very essence of sin, on the cross He was banished from God's presence as a loathsome thing. He and sin were made synonymous."

In a little softer tone is the following quotation from an Eerdman's publication, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament, Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians* by Phillip E. Hughes, pages 213-214.

"But God made Him sin: that is to say that God the Father made His innocent, incarnate Son the object of His wrath and judgment, for our sakes, with the result that in Christ on the cross the sin of the world is judged and taken away. In this truth resides the whole logic of reconciliation ... Not for one moment does He cease to be righteous, else the radical exchange envisaged by the Apostle here, whereby our sin is transferred to Him and His righteousness is transferred to us, would be no more than a fiction or an hallucination."

We looked at the specific passage referred to here in the last article, noting that the statement that Jesus was "made to be sin," II Corinthians 5:21, meant that He became a sin-sacrifice. "Bearing sins" is supposed to mean the sinner is guilty and unclean and so his substitute must also be guilty and unclean, whether the substitute is another person or an animal. Thus, Jesus became the object of God's wrath and judgment and our punishment for sin is laid upon Him as well.

It is asserted that the Levitical priesthood is an example of "bearing" the iniquity of the people by which the sins of the people were transferred to the offering or to the priest. One would think this would be true especially in regard to sins requiring capital punishment but there were no sacrifices that could be offered for one guilty of a capital crime. In the second place, the priest and the sacrifice had to be pure and holy and the "transference" of sin to the sacrifice would have made it unclean, and such "transference" of sin to the priest would have made him unfit to offer the sacrifice. In the third place, one other meaning of "bearing the iniquities of the holy things" has simply to do with the physical and emotional burden of carrying out the priestly duties. It was all because of the iniquities of the people that they had to take this burden, hence, the priests bore the iniquities of the holy things in that sense. However, bearing the iniquity of the holy things and of the sanctuary had nothing to do with transferring sin and guilt from the people to the priesthood.

The bearing of sins by Jesus must not be understood literally, but figuratively, though to say it is figurative does not immediately define it. What characteristics of the literal are to be included?

Two Hebrew words that apply are nasa and sabal along with four Greek words, airo, phero, anaphero and bastazo. Among other terms, these are translated as bear, bore, bearing. Nasa and sabal are used both literally and figuratively. Literally, nasa may refer to lifting or holding something up, as the waters did "bear up the ark," or refer to an "armor bearer." Figuratively, it may refer to a cheery countenance or placing confidence in another person. But, we are most interested in passages where it relates to sin. Nasa is translated in our Old Testament as to spare, pardon, forgive, or take away sins. Exodus 32:32 says, as Moses prayed to God, "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin." Exodus 34:7 says, "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Numbers 14:18, "the Lord is longsuffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression." Genesis 50:17, "Forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy fathers." Exodus 10:17, Pharaoh asked Moses, "Now therefore forgive, I pray thee my sin only this once ..." I Samuel 15:25, Saul asked Samuel, "Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin."

Are we to conclude that because God "bore" the sins of His people that their sins were imputed to God? Did their guilt and punishment now rest on God Himself? Were the sins of the people transferred to Joseph, or Moses, or Samuel? Of course not!

We looked at the scapegoat in our last article so will not repeat all of that here. Leviticus 16:22 says the scapegoat will "bear ... unto a land" the sins of the people. This was figurative, meaning to "take away" sins, remove sins as is the likely definition of "azazel." The scapegoat symbolized the removal of sins. This is exactly the meaning to be attached to Jesus' "bearing our sins." Let's look now at three passages, Isaiah 53:4, 11-12.

"Surely he hath borne (nasa) our griefs, and carried (sabal) our sorrows ... for he shall bear (sabal) their iniquities ... and he bare (nasa) the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

Notice that the two words are used interchangeably. The typical substitution position on Isaiah 53:4, 11 may be represented by The Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament by Gesenius, page 578:

"Used figuratively to bear griefs, sins, etc., i.e to receive the penalties which another has deserved, Isa. 53:4,11; Lam 5:7. [It must not be forgotten that when the vicarious sufferings of Christ are spoken of, every figure falls very far short of the full truth; he actually bore our sins.]"

This is a perfect example of theological opinion placed above clear and understandable Bible truth, which we will clearly see. Keep in mind that the explanation in this quotation is only the opinion of Gesenius.

Nasa and sabal are used as synonyms in Isaiah 53:4,11, but one needs no degrees in language nor advanced training to arrive at an understanding of what is meant. We have an inspired explanation in the Bible itself. Matthew 8:16-17 says, and note the context:

"And when even was come, they brought unto him many possessed with demons: and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our diseases."

This is an inspired translation from Hebrew to Greek by the Holy Spirit guided Apostle. What Jesus performed in healing the physical diseases was the fulfillment of Isaiah 53:4, specifically that He bore (nasa) our griefs and carried (sabal) our sorrows. What Jesus did, fulfilled both phrases! But, their diseases were not transferred to Jesus so that He then became a leper. He didn't become demon possessed in casting out the demons. He didn't become blind in restoring their sight. Yet, He "bore" their diseases in fulfillment of Isaiah 53:4. Jesus took away their diseases! That's what it means.

The Greek word for "bare" in Matthew 8:17 is *bastazo*, which, keep in mind, is the inspired translation of *nasa*. *Bastazo* may mean to take up, to transport, to carry, to take away or to remove. In this figurative use, the emphasis is on the taking away, removal. The word for "took" in this passage is *lambano*. It's obvious in Matthew 8:17 that *bastazo* and *lambano* are synonyms and mean to remove. Matthew 3:11 says,

"I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear (*bastazo*)."

In the Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, page 106, by Moulton and Milligan, it says,

"The firmly established vernacular use determines the meaning of Mt 3.11, as 'whose sandals I am not worthy to take off: the phrase is an excellent example of Mt's skilful abbreviation, for one word fully expresses all that Mk 1.7 tells us in four."

We can easily demonstrate the truth of what Moulton and Milligan say here. The statement of John is repeated by Paul in Acts 13:25 with a slight change in words:

"But behold, there cometh one after me the shoes of whose feet I am not worthy to unloose (*luo*).

Putting the two passages together, we can understand that to "bear" in Matthew 3:11 means the same as "unloose" (*luo*) in Acts 13:25, another inspired interpretation. The meaning, of course, was to "take off" or "take away," the shoes, just as Matthew 8:16-17 meant to take away diseases and infirmities. Further use of *bastazo* is found in John 12:6 where the KJV says that Judas "bare what was put" into the bag of money he carried. The ASV says that he "took away" what was in the bag. Judas stole from the bag, removed the money for himself.

Seeing that the Holy Spirit gives us the meaning of *nasa* and *sabal* in Isaiah 53:4, why should we understand these words to mean any differently in Isaiah 53:11-12 when it says He "bare their iniquities" or "bare the sins of many?" This only tells us that He "took away" the sins and iniquities, not that the sins and iniquities were transferred to Him or imputed to Him. Even with the meaning of removal, my sin and punishment were not literally taken away when Jesus died. If they were, then there would have been no need for a resurrection and the priesthood of Jesus and there would be nothing left for me to do. If substitution is true, everything was all done in my place and I am not accountable for my sins because they were obliterated before I ever existed to commit them! The figurative meaning of these passages is that He furnished the basis for taking away sins and iniquities.

The Greek word phero means to take away. Adding the preposition ana to it gives us the word anaphero. It adds the meaning of taking up, and in our subject, to offer up as a sacrifice. Note these passages:

"...who needeth not daily, like those high priests, to offer up (anaphero) sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people: for this he did once for all, when he offered up (anaphero) himself," Hebrews 7:27.

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up (anaphero) Isaac his son upon the altar?" James 2:21.

"Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up (anaphero) spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ," I Peter 2:5.

In all these places, a sacrifice is the point, an offering up. Was Isaac a substitute for someone, perhaps Abraham? No, yet he was offered up. When the Christian "offers up" spiritual sacrifices to God, can he use a substitute in his place? No. Now notice the parallel in the next two passages.

"But now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away (athetesin) sin by the sacrifice of himself," Hebrews 9:26.

Athetesin means "removal," Bauer, page 21. Jesus "removed" sin by the "sacrifice" of Himself. Then verse 28 says,

"So Christ also, having been once offered to bear (anaphero) the sins of many..." Hebrews 9:28.

Verse 28 repeats the subject of verse 26 with a slight change of words. "Put away" in verse 26 becomes "bear" in verse 28. "Sacrifice" in verse 26, becomes "offered" in verse 28. Jesus bore our sins in that He took them away. I Peter 2:24 says,

"...who his own self bare (anaphero) our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed."

In this passage, the "cross" replaces the altar as the place of sacrifice. The body of Jesus was offered up on an altar, an offering to God. The last sentence of this passage is a quotation from Isaiah 53:5, which in context goes with verse 4, as we have seen, meaning to take away.

In Isaiah 53:11-12, both sabal and nasa are translated in the Septuagint by anaphero. He "shall bear (sabal/anaphero) their iniquities" and "he bare (nasa/anaphero) the sin of many." We have seen the meaning of nasa and sabal to be to take away. The same is true in an offering up of a sacrifice. Now, let's look at Isaiah 53:6.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on (paga) him the iniquity of us all."

In its figurative sense, paga has several meanings. Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary, page 93 says,

"come (betwixt), cause to entreat, fall (upon), make intercession, intercessor, entreat, lay, light [upon], meet (together), pray, reach, run."

Paga is found in Isaiah 53:12, "made intercession for the transgressors." So, even in the context of verse 6, the same verb is used to mean "intercession." The Hebrew scholars who translated Isaiah 53:6 into Greek, render it kai kurios paredoken auton tais hamartais hemon, "and the Lord gave him up for our sins." The verb paredoken, from paradidomi, means to deliver up or intercede. Paradidomi is in the following two N.T. passages,

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32.

"...and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell," Ephesians 5:2.

These passages are parallel in subject to Isaiah 53. From the evidence, the immediate text and context, we must conclude that the Septuagint is correct in giving the meaning of Isaiah 53:6 as "the Lord gave him up for our sins."

Keep in mind that for Jesus to bear sins meant that he took them away, removed them, figuratively.

"On the morrow he seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" John 1:29

"...else must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself ... so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation," Hebrews 9:26, 28.

"...who his own self bare (removed) our own sins in his body upon the tree," I Peter 2:24.

The fact that Jesus "bore" our sins and iniquities does not mean our sins, guilt and punishment were transferred (imputed) to him. His death actually occurred but the terms used to describe what it accomplished are used figuratively.

(Part 3)

Substitution advocates argue their position from the prepositions, translated "for" in English, primarily huper and anti in Greek. They insist that these words mean "in the place of" in certain key passages that deal with the death of Jesus. However, we find that lexical and grammatical authorities are so contradictory, and, in many instances self-serving, that at times they are as misleading as they are informative.

A consensus of lexical sources tells us that anti means over, for, opposite to, before, because of, over against, exchange, in the place of, in the stead of. These are the basic meanings. Some lexical authorities will also assign "on behalf of" as a meaning as well.

Huper has a basic meaning of over, above, upon, across and then for, for one's advantage, for the sake of, on behalf of. Many will also assign the meaning of "in the place of."

There are dissenting views to this last meaning. Substitution advocates deny that anti ever means on behalf of, and other language authorities deny huper means in the place of in the New Testament passages, especially when the subject is the sacrifice of Jesus. Thayer, page 639, admits that "in the place of" as a meaning for huper is a "disputed sense," which admits that language scholars are not agreed on that meaning for huper. R.C. Trench acknowledges, in his Synonyms of the New Testament, page 311, that some have denied this use of the word. Some, such as Blass & Debrunner, do not list "in the place of" as meaning for huper at all. Louw & Nida, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, which is the most recent lexical effort, says about huper and anti, 90.36, 37,

"huper (with the genitive): a marker of a participant who is benefited by an event or on whose behalf an event takes place - 'for, on behalf of, for the sake of.'"

"anti (with the genitive): a marker of a participant who is benefited by an event, usually with the implication of some type of exchange or substitution involved - 'for, on behalf of.'"

Notice that Louw & Nida say that anti may mean "on behalf of." Harold K. Moulton came from a family of Greek scholars. His father was James Hope Moulton and his grandfather was W.F. Moulton, both famous linguists. Harold Moulton served in linguistic translation fields for several decades. I say this only to show that he was not ignorant of his subject. In his book, *The Challenge Of The Concordance*, page 143, he says,

"And this brings us finally to the supreme use of this word in the New Testament: Christ died for our sins, and for our sakes. The word huper never means 'instead of.' It is always used in the sense of 'on behalf of.'"

Granted, this is just another Greek scholar who dissents from what others have said. But, it does show that there is disagreement by capable men on these word meanings. Even some Calvinist authors caution that one cannot establish the substitution theory by the prepositions while others rely heavily on the meaning of "in the place of" for huper. There are other prepositions involved but I will not take up the space here to deal with them.

Anti certainly does mean "in the place of," or some variation of that. Matthew 2:22 says that Archelaus was reigning over Judea "in the room of his father Herod." Matthew 5:38 notes the "eye for an eye" of the Old Testament. There are other passages that could be cited for this meaning. It is also used to mean "because," Luke 1:20, II Thessalonians 2:10, Acts 12:23, Ephesians 5:31. These last instances do not exactly describe exchange, substitution or doing something in the place of another.

However, as some linguists insist, it can also mean "on behalf of." Secondly, context is a better indication of meaning than lexical definitions. Sometimes the Holy Spirit used human words in a slightly different way than the ordinary. How did the inspired writer use the term. So, let's look at the most referred to passages where anti is found that supposedly support the substitution view. First, Matthew 17:27,

"But, lest we cause them to stumble, go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a shekel: that take, and give unto them for me and thee."

"For (anti) me and thee" is the center of the controversy. Calvinists claim that this illustrates their doctrine. The passage refers to "substitution money." They view this as what they call redemption money as a tax to absolve the lives of the people from divine wrath. Well, regardless of what the priests might do with the money, it was a tax they were obligated to pay, Exodus 30:12-16. Notice the purpose of the tax in verse 16,

"...for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make atonement for your souls."

The tax was for expenses and it was the "service of the tabernacle" that was the spiritual activity, made possible by the taxes. The coin was the tax, not a substitute for the tax. Jesus said that tax money owed to Caesar belonged to Caesar, Luke 20:22-25. We are to render to all their due, paying tribute and taxes, Romans 13:6-7. Such taxes are the responsibility of the citizen for support of government, not a substitute for us. The shekel Peter obtained was paid on behalf of Jesus and Peter, whatever it was used for by the temple authorities; it was not a substitute for Jesus and Peter. See Gingrich & Danker Lexicon, page 73 (3.). Now, to Matthew 20:25-28,

"But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant: even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

The preposition "for" is from anti. R.E. Davies in his Tyndale Biblical Theology Lecture, 1969, "Christ in our Place - The Contribution of the Prepositions," page 73, after insisting that anti means "in the place of," or "instead of" in this passage, admits,

"This understanding of the saying is disputed by many scholars, particularly with regard to the meaning of the preposition; it is maintained, that anti can occasionally have the broader, more general meaning, 'on behalf of', the strict substitutionary meaning yielding to the general idea of something done for a person's sake, rather than in his place...."

The solution is simple. Take special note of the context in the quotation from Matthew 20. The very subject Jesus is discussing is doing something on behalf of, or for the benefit of, others. He uses Himself

as an example of His instruction. That included giving His life "for" (anti) all. The logical understanding of anti in the context is "for the benefit of," "service to." Understanding it as substitution is not required here. Now to I Timothy 2:5-6,

"For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom (antilutron) for (huper) all."

Antilutron is found only here in the Bible, a compound of anti and lutron. Substitution advocates admit that huper means "on behalf of" in this passage so their argument hinges on antilutron. A ransom is a price paid to redeem something. "Exchange" is in some way involved, but exchange and substitution are not necessarily the same thing. The blood of Christ was the payment to purchase us but He did not make that purchase in our place for we were never intended to make such a sacrifice in the first place. Jesus did not take our place as a redeemer. Notice that Jesus gave Himself as the purchase price on our behalf! Anti, in the compound with lutron, only heightens the importance of the meaning of ransom.

In regard to huper, several authors insist that huper is used most often because it means both on behalf of and in the place of. The reason is that often what is done on behalf of someone is done in their place. However, that is not necessarily true even in English. We do things on behalf of others frequently without taking their place. Do we forget that as Christians we are taught that very principle. I can fulfill the teaching of laying down my life for the brethren and do so without taking their place. If I wanted to express that thought in Greek, then huper would be the perfect way to express it. Jesus died on my behalf but did not take my place on the cross. Huper expresses that. The substitution theory is not true to begin with so huper cannot express something that does not exist. Let's examine some passages used by Calvinists to argue their point on huper. First, Deuteronomy 24:16, where huper is used in the Septuagint,

"The fathers shall not be put to death for (huper) the children, neither shall the children be put to death for (huper) the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin."

In the Septuagint, huper is found twice in this passage, translated "for." However, in the place of their children or the father is not what is meant here. A general practice among nations around Israel was that a criminal's children would be punished along with the father, or the parent would be punished along with his criminal children. Haman's ten sons were hanged along with their father, Esther 9:13-14. We find Deuteronomy 24:16 put into practice in II Chronicles 25:3-4,

"Now it came to pass, when the kingdom was established to him, that he slew his servants that had killed the king his father. But he slew not their children, but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, where the Lord commanded, saying, The father shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin."

Family members were not to be punished for crimes in which they took no part. Substitution was not the point in this law and so huper is the correct preposition to be used.

In John 10:11-15, Jesus says that He knows His sheep and He "layeth down his life for the sheep." Substitution is asserted by advocates of the theory. But, enlarging this to the literal situation of a shepherd with his sheep, how can we say that the wolves killing the shepherd would thus satisfy the wolves so they would leave the sheep alone? And, what shepherd just laid down and let the wolves eat him without a fight? Was the shepherd saying to the wolves, "come on and eat me in the place of my sheep and I know you will leave them alone then because I am their substitute dinner?" No. Let's not push the illustration of Jesus beyond what He intended by His saying. In John 13:37-38, Peter says that he would lay down his life for the Lord. Did he mean by this that he would take the place of Jesus? Peter demonstrated what he meant by his claim when he drew his sword to protect Jesus in the garden. He wasn't taking the place of Jesus but was protecting him and would have died to protect Him, just as the shepherd was doing for his sheep. Next, John 11:49-52 says,

"But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said unto them, ye know nothing at all, nor do ye take account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. Now this he said not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation; and not for the nation only, but that he might also gather together into one the children of God that are scattered abroad."

It is claimed that this means Jesus would die instead of, as a substitute for, the nation dying. The substitution argument misses the fact that what Caiaphas said was a prophecy from God. Caiaphas didn't realize it himself. Caiaphas intended it for evil. But, what concerned the rulers the most is found in verse 48,

"If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

Notice the statement that the Romans will "take away from us both the place and the nation." "From us" is related equally to both "place" and "nation." Their only concern was for their position of authority and control in Israel. The Romans already "owned" Israel. Rome allowed these priests and Pharisees only limited control. What the priests feared was losing what they did have. From the standpoint of this prophecy, in what sense would "the nation perish" or not perish? Certainly not in the sense that the physical state of Israel might cease to exist just because people believed on Jesus. The prophecy was that Jesus would die, physically, so others would not perish, eternally. Substitution advocates assume that Jesus' dying "for the nation" means in the place of. Louw and Nida, *Lexicon*, 90.36 are certain it means "on behalf of" because they translate it, as do other capable translations, "in order that one person might die on behalf of the nation." Now, notice II Corinthians 5:14-15, which says,

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for (huper) all, therefore all died; and he died for (huper) all that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes (huper) died and rose again."

This is presented as a prime instance of substitution. However, the context indicates the meaning of huper. In verse 15, Jesus died AND rose again for (huper) us. Huper no more means that He died in our

place than that He was raised in our place. Whatever He was raised for, He died for and He was raised on our behalf and thus died on our behalf.

Further, it's obvious that "died" does not mean the same thing throughout. When it says Christ "died," it means He physically died. When it says all "died," it cannot mean physical death. Everyone dies physically, regardless of what Christ did. "Died" in the second instance must be figurative and all interpretations accept this. The question is, what is the figure?

Obviously, the word "live" refers to being spiritually alive. The resurrection of Jesus is specified, implying that a burial also took place. So, there is a death, burial and a resurrection being considered here. Romans 6:1-11 gives us the detailed explanation of II Corinthians 5:14-15. We are baptized into His death, buried with Him and raised with Him into newness of life. We are thus united with Him in the likeness of His death and thus the likeness of His resurrection. "...if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." There is no substitution involved here. Now to II Corinthians 5:20,

"We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." ASV

Some translations say "we beseech you in Christ's stead," or something like that. Every inspired man, Apostle or Prophet, in whatever century, was the channel through whom God revealed His mind to man. None functioned as the Vicar of God but rather they all worked on behalf of God. In the preceding verse, Paul says they were given "the ministry of reconciliation:" and then says God was "entreating by (dia, through) us."

Now, to one of the most often referred to passages on "substitution," Galatians 3:8-14. The pertinent statement is that "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for (huper) us." To put this in perspective, note the comments of well known grammarian, J. Gresham Machen in his commentary on Galatians, page 181,

"Here we come to the very heart of Paul's teaching. The curse which Christ bore upon the cross was not a curse that wrongly rested upon Him; it was not a curse pronounced upon Him by some wicked human law. No, it was the curse of God's law; it was a curse therefore, we tremble as we say it, but the Scripture compels us to say it, it was a curse which rightly rested upon Him. But if that be so, there can be no doubt but that the substitutionary atonement is taught in Scripture. The only way in which a curse could rightly rest upon a sinless One is that he was the substitute, in bearing the curse, for those upon whom it did rightly rest. That is the heart of Paul's teaching and the heart of the whole Bible."

Of course, Dr. Machen was a renowned Calvinist, a Professor at Westminster Seminary. We would expect him to take such a position. Please take note of his statement, "but if that be so..." Substitution writings are full of "if," "probably," "perhaps," and the like. Actually, the understanding of Galatians 3 is simple.

First, the Law of Moses had no provision for absolute forgiveness of sins, Romans 4.1-6, Hebrews 10:1ff, Colossians 2:13-14, Ephesians 2:14-16. Such a system of law required perfect obedience, which

no one attained, Romans 3:9. By His sacrifice, Jesus removed the authority of the Old Law and established a better one by which we can be sanctified,

"He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," Hebrews 10:9-10.

As long as the Old Law remained in effect, the curse of a system of law remained. So, "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all the things that are written in the book of the law, to do them," Galatians 3:10. We have seen that the word "cross" is a figure of speech to stand for everything Jesus did to accomplish redemption. By the "cross," Jesus removed the "curse" of the law, "hanging on a tree," by taking away the authority of the law.

Second, the word "curse" in Galatians 3:13, is from *katara*. It means consigning someone to something bad, to be doomed to destruction, a cursing. We are pointed back to Deuteronomy 21:22-23,

"And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."

Here is capital punishment for capital crimes. A criminal hanging on a tree provides a graphic image for all who see him that he is a violator of God's law. Hence, it's obvious that he is cursed because he did not continue to do what God commanded. See Joshua 10:26-27.

But, Galatians 3:13 cannot literally be applied to Jesus. The fact is, it only appeared to others that He was accursed of God. This was the visual image of Deuteronomy 21. Gingrich & Danker Lexicon, page 410 says,

"they will be saved by the accursed one himself (i.e. by Christ who, in the minds of those offended by him, is accursed; cf. also Gal. 3:13, *katara*)."

The Jews treated Him as though He were guilty; they considered him to be a criminal, charged with blasphemy and thus worthy of death. Note Matthew 27:39-43,

"And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou are the son of God, come down from the cross. In like manner also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, he saved others; himself he cannot save. He is the King of Israel; let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe on him. He trusteth on God; let him deliver him now, if he desireth him: for he said, I am the Son of God."

See also Psalm 22:6-8. Jesus went through false imprisonment, public spectacle, suffering, scorn and torturous death but it was on our behalf, not in our place.

Third, the real point at issue in Galatians 3:13 is the preposition *huper*. Thomas Crawford, one of the most energetic of Calvinists, said in his book, *The Doctrine of the Atonement*, page 43, says,

"The chief thing, however, to be noticed in these texts is, that they evidently represent our Lord's sufferings as vicarious. They imply an interchange of parts between Him and us - a laying of our burden upon Him, with the view and to the effect of securing our deliverance from it ... It was 'for us' - that is, probably, 'instead of us,' certainly 'on our behalf' - that He was made so."

Crawford wants to occupy the substitution position here but seems a little tentative with his "probably." A.T. Robertson in his *Word Pictures*, Vol. 4, page 294, is certain this is a clear case of *huper* meaning substitution. Others are not so sure. Winer's *Grammar*, page 383, footnote, says,

"Still in doctrinal passages relating to Christ's death (Gal. iii.13; Rom.v.6,8; xiv.15; I Pet.iii.18, etc.) it is not justifiable to render *huper* *hemon* and the like rigorously by *instead of*..."

The same conclusion is indicated by Gingrich & Danker *Lexicon*, page 412, giving the following translation of Galatians 3:13, "by becoming a curse-offering (or an object of a curse) in our behalf." Next, Philemon 10-13 says,

"I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus, who once was unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and to me: whom I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is, my very heart: whom I would fain have kept with me, that in thy behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the gospel."

This is the ASV translation of the passage. Others have rendered *huper* as "in thy place," "in thy stead," "as your representative," or, as the New English Bible puts it, "as you would wish."

Notice Paul says "Onesimus, who once was unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and to me." How was it that Onesimus was now profitable to Philemon? It must have been because of his contact and study with Paul. Onesimus was now a Christian who had Paul's respect and confidence and was valuable to Paul in his work. If Onesimus could have continued with Paul, instead of going back to Philemon at that moment, he would have become an even better servant, a more spiritual and capable Christian with more knowledge in the truth. That would have made him even more profitable and beneficial to Philemon. Thus, any continuation of Onesimus with Paul would have been, not in the place of Philemon, but for the benefit of Philemon. That fits the context.

There are other passages where *huper* is found and dealing with the death of Jesus. The meaning of *on behalf of* fits each of them very well.

(Part 4)

In the previous three articles, we have looked at the theory called "Substitution." Substitution says that Jesus died, was sacrificed, took our punishment for sins upon Himself, became a curse, satisfied the moral order and Divine law, satisfied justice, rendered perfect obedience to the Father, was our justification all in our place. Substitution is a theory developed over the centuries bit by bit until Anselm

gave it substance in the eleventh century and it was crystallized into a religious dogma through the influence of John Calvin. Calvinism grew out of the substitution theory, as we have also seen.

If there is anything, and there is, that we have to do today, any commands of God that we must obey in order to obtain forgiveness of our sins and escape the punishment for our sins, have justification, redemption and propitiation, then Substitution is not true for these are contradictory positions. If Substitution is true, then there is nothing we must do, or can do, to stand justified before God; everything has already been done in our place by our substitute! We cannot hold on to both the gospel and Substitution. With this in mind, let's notice some observations to sum up.

(1) Jesus did not take our place in physical death. Since Jesus died for all men, how did He physically die in the place of all men? Except for those still alive at His coming, most faithful Christians must physically die, Hebrews 9:27, yet no Christian should physically die if Jesus physically died in our place.

(2) Jesus did not take our place in spiritual death because Jesus did not die spiritually. The idea of Jesus' spiritual death is a consequence drawn from the substitution theory, but is not an evidence for it and certainly is not taught in the Bible. We took note in *The Scheme of Redemption, Volume I*, that the statement of Jesus on the cross, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me," has no reference to such a thing as God's withdrawing His presence from Jesus at that time, or any time. Indeed, Jesus specifically denies any such separation in John 8:28-29, 16:32. These passages show that the Father would be constantly with Jesus while on the cross as He had always been with Jesus.

Further, no one should be spiritually dead since the cross if Jesus spiritually died in everyone's place. I should not be held accountable if my substitute has already done that in my place!

(3) Jesus did not physically die to take the place of our spiritual death. Those two do not match up. There is a punishment for sins that's worse than physical death, Hebrews 10:26f. So, a physical death could not stand in the place of eternal, spiritual death, even though Jesus did die on our behalf so we can escape eternal death. It's just that His physical death was not a substitute for our spiritual death.

(4) Jesus did not take our place as a sacrifice for sins. How could Jesus have taken our place on the cross as a sacrifice for sins when none of us have ever been scheduled to die on a cross as a sacrifice in the first place?

(5) Jesus did not take our place in suffering for righteousness. There were people of God in Old Testament times, for whom Christ died (was substituted?), who suffered physical pain in the service of God as intense as that of Jesus? Why did they have to go through that when Jesus was going to do it in their place, seeing that His death was as much "for" the "redemption of transgressions" for them as for us, Hebrews 9:15. See also Hebrews 11:32-38. There have been Christians who have suffered as much or more physical torture than Jesus did. Why have they gone through that when Jesus "took their place" in suffering - James and John were told,

"Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink? or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We are able. And Jesus said unto them, The cup that I drink ye shall drink; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized," Mark 10:38-39.

Whatever bitter experience Jesus was about to have, James and John would have the same; the same cup and the same baptism. If Jesus were a substitute in suffering, why would James and John have to experience exactly what Jesus did? See also I Peter 2:20-21, 3:14.

The difference in regard to Jesus as versus others who suffered was based on who He was, why He came, why He suffered and died and what He accomplished by His ascension into heaven.

(6) Jesus did not take our place in punishment for sins, endure our penalty, because the penalty and punishment for sins is eternal death, eternal separation from God, consignment to eternal torment. Jesus experienced none of that. Most of us are at least familiar with the filmstrips of Jule Miller even if we haven't used them. Miller's filmstrip #4: God's Plan For Redeeming Man, says in frame #45, (emphasis is mine):

"Second, knowing that man could not pay for his own sin, God in love sent his only Son to bear the burden of our sins on the cross. Think of all the sins that have ever been committed brought together in one nauseous mass! The very thought of it staggers our imagination. Enduring the horror of this awful burden the Son of God cried, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' (Matthew 27:46). Christ was actually tasting the hell we deserve, being separated from God by the burden of man's sins. This suffering was far more horrible than the mere death of the body."

This is classic Calvinist substitution and clearly shows just what the theory of substitution claims. All of the sins of all mankind, past, present and future, were transferred to Jesus on the Cross, in one nauseous mass, it is said. Of course, Calvinism limits that to only the elect, "limited atonement." As we have before shown, God did not desert Jesus at His crucifixion, or any other time, nor was the statement "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" made in response to an imputation of man's sins to Him. But, note especially the statement I put in italics. This supposed separation from God while on the cross is "tasting the hell we deserve." If that's so, then every sinner alive today must already be tasting hell because the majority of people in the world are separated from God because of sin! But, most of them rock along through life without any recognition of what it means to be separated from God. They are not "tasting" anything. Hell is not just eternal separation from God, it is eternal torment. Jesus was never even close to tasting hell much less having our punishment for sin transferred to Himself.

(7) Jesus did not remove the wrath of God against sin because that still exists and sinners will be punished, II Thessalonians 1:6-9. And, the wrath of God against sin should not exist for anyone in the world, seeing Jesus died for all men. If the death of Jesus on the cross, at that very time, appeased and took away the wrath of God against sin, then the very nature of God was changed; we would expect that God would no longer have any such wrath and, consequently, render no punishment for sins on anyone, which is universal salvation.

(8) The Substitution/Satisfaction theory negates the grace of God in forgiveness. Barton W. Stone said,

"This scheme destroys the ideas of grace and forgiveness. For if my surety or substitute has fully discharged my debt, having paid the real, proper and full demand for me, can it be grace in my creditor to forgive me? God is proposed as an example to us, how we should forgive one another. Eph. iv:32, 'forgiving one another, even as God (en Christo) in Christ hath forgiven you.;' Matt. vi:12 - we are taught to pray, 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.' Now if God does not forgive us till our debts are paid, and he is our example, then must we do likewise! If my surety fully discharged my debts for me, though I am free from my creditor, yet I am not in debt to my surety, who, for the same reason, can not forgive me; for he must forgive even as God does. On this principle there can be no forgiveness in the universe forever." Works of Elder B.W. Stone, page 121.

As we have seen, according to the Substitution theory, every sin must be punished without exception; this punishment must either be placed on the sinner or on his substitute. If our punishment has been transferred to Jesus, then we should not be held accountable; our substitute has taken it in our place. The debt was paid before we were born. It was thus paid for all men for all time. Again - universal salvation.

This negates the grace and mercy of God. On what basis can God be merciful to sinners? God owes the sinner salvation because his debt was paid by his substitute! Nothing can be exacted from the sinner. The "debt" cannot be required of both the substitute and the sinner as well, collecting twice to satisfy law and justice.

(9) Jesus did not take my place in obedience to the Father. We are told that substitution was made possible by the perfect life and perfect obedience of Jesus. That amounts to salvation by perfect works, accomplished at the cross, providing salvation by perfect works in our place. Based on Jesus as our substitute, God thus owes us salvation, grace is necessarily excluded. Again, this is well said by Stone, *ibid.*, page 126,

"This scheme contradicts the Gospel plan of justification by faith. For it represents the sinner as justified by the surety righteousness of Christ imputed to him. This surety-righteousness was Christ's active obedience to the precepts of the moral law, and his passive obedience in suffering its penalties in the sinner's stead. This righteousness of Christ is entirely a law-righteousness; and if a sinner is justified by this righteousness imputed, he is justified by the works of law. It matters not whether he or the surety has fulfilled it, for they are one in law, as before observed. This is not the righteousness of faith; for the law is not of faith. Faith has no part in this justification; the elect sinner being as much justified before he believed as afterward; for the works were finished near eighteen hundred years ago, when Christ died on the cross. Then the satisfaction was really, properly and fully made, and their debts fully discharged. If not, then something else is necessary, and therefore the satisfaction of Christ is not full and complete."

Wiley and Culbertson, *Introduction to Christian Theology*, page 229, rightly observe,

"The Satisfaction theory leads logically also, to antinomianism, or disregard of the law. It holds that Christ's active obedience is imputed to believers in such a manner, that it is esteemed by God as having been done by them. In a sense, this makes Christ's obedience superfluous, for if he has done all that the law requires, why should we be under the necessity of being delivered from death? Also, if Christ's active obedience is substituted for that of the believer, it shuts out the necessity of personal obedience to God. Lastly, this type of satisfaction cannot be called such in truth, for it is merely the performance of all that the law requires by one person in substitution for another."

(10) To extricate themselves from a problem, substitution advocates may present that what Jesus suffered was not the exact same punishment for sins that we might receive in eternal torment; it was just "equivalent" punishment, but not the same in quantity or quality. But, this doctrine of "equivalence" lays God open to a charge of being unjust! Most people who have existed and who will exist are going to be eternally lost, Matthew 7:13-14. Their loss will be a punishment worse than physical death, Hebrews 10:28-31, II Thessalonians 1:6-9. If the death of Jesus on the cross was the substitute for the punishment of man's sins, then He fell far short of doing that. The punishment for sins is worse than physical death.

Consider: (1) All of the suffering and punishment for sin was transferred to Jesus on the cross. (2) But what He took was far, far less in quantity and quality than the actual suffering and punishment for sin, a slap on the wrist by comparison. (3) But, if what Jesus endured was sufficient suffering and punishment for sin, those who are condemned should be able to insist on the same suffering and punishment for their sins. No more than what Jesus endured was sufficient punishment for God to accept as a penalty for sin, it satisfied Divine justice, it fully satisfied the claims of the law. Why then will God inflict far worse punishment on sinners than what Jesus endured? Why would it not be unjust of God to inflict eternal punishment on the lost when just a few hours torture and physical death is sufficient payment for their sins? Why does not equivalence work both ways? The punishment of sinners should be equivalent to the suffering of Jesus on the cross.

(11) The Substitution/satisfaction/equivalence theories lead directly to the impossibility of apostasy position of Calvin and his posterity. If Jesus took all of our punishment on Himself, there is no punishment left for us to endure. Seeing He did this for all men, not a single human can be charged with sin, guilt or punishment and not one can ever be lost. Our surety has already paid the price. If it is insisted that one must accept Jesus as their substitute (our "personal savior") in order for it to affect their sins, then that person not only is saved from sin but can never be charged with sin again no matter what he does, Baptist doctrine. His surety has already paid the price in his place before the individual was ever born. Presbyterian author, Loraine Boettner, in his book, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, page 155, says,

"The great Baptist preacher Charles H. Spurgeon said: 'If Christ has died for you, you can never be lost. God will not punish twice for one thing. If God punished Christ for your sins he will not punish you ... How can God be just if he punished Christ, the substitute, and then man himself afterwards.'"

The reasoning of Boettner and Spurgeon on this point is very clear. If one cannot scripturally accept the impossibility of apostasy, then he must likewise reject the substitution theory. One follows the other. Albert Barnes said,

"It would follow, further, that those for whom he died could not themselves be held and regarded as guilty. If there has been a transfer of their guilt, it is no longer their own, and they cannot be responsible. Two persons cannot be held responsible for the same offence. If a debt has been paid by a friend, it cannot be demanded of him who originally contracted it. If one could be substituted in the place of another in a penitentiary, and serve out the term of punishment assigned to the original offender, the offender could not be again imprisoned for the crime. If a man who is 'drafted' for military service procures a substitute who is accepted, he cannot be made to serve if the substitute dies of disease or is killed in battle. And so, if Christ was literally made 'sin' and a 'curse;' if he took literally upon himself the sins of men and paid the penalty of the law; if there was a real transfer of the whole matter to him, then it would follow that those whose place he took could no longer be held to be guilty," *The Atonement*, pages 298-299.

These facts were not lost on John Calvin. He could not accept universal salvation, the logical conclusion, so he limited his "universal salvation" to the predestined elect, "limited atonement." Predestination, limited atonement, irresistible grace and the impossibility of apostasy of Calvinism all depend on substitution as their solid foundation. And, substitution is bound together with the imputation of sin to Christ and imputation of His righteousness to the elect. Wiley and Culbertson, *Introduction To Christian Theology*, page 229, makes this same observation,

"If Christ bore the sinner's punishment as a Substitute, then the sinner is unconditionally free from it, for both the sinner and the Substitute cannot be justly punished for the same offence. The theory, therefore, leads necessarily to either universalism on the one hand, or unconditional election on the other."

Barton W. Stone, wrote three articles disagreeing with Thomas and Alexander Campbell on substitution. Stone had not changed any of his position since leaving the Presbyterian ministry, thirty-three years before. The articles appear in Stone's paper, the *Christian Messenger*, 1833, volume 7, numbers 7,8,10. At the beginning of his second article, Stone says,

"In the close of my first letter, I was remarking on your exposition of Isa. 53,6 and 2 Cor. 5,21. 'He hath laid on him the iniquity of us all' - this, in your view, means he laid on him the punishment due to us all. You think by this vicarious punishment we are justified. 'Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him:' Rom. 5,9. You add a little to the text, 'that being justified by faith in his blood.' - Dear bro: what has faith to do in the justification of which you speak? If A is guilty of murder and is condemned to die; and if B becomes his surety, and bears the punishment due to A - then is not A clear, whether he believes or not that B has died for him? A's faith produces no effect whatever, in the matter of his justification. But, why talk of justification or forgiveness at all in A's case? The debt due was fully paid by B the surety of A. Could the law, or executive now say to A, I forgive or justify you freely by

my grace? Not freely, might A say; for my surety has paid my due, or debt, fully in my stead - I have nothing to be forgiven."

We must stick with the facts we know are taught in the Bible and leave the matter there, abandoning all human theories All other approaches will lead us into more error.

By

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