

**GOSPEL TEACHING SUMMARY ELEVEN:  
THE GREATEST VICTORY EVER WON**

(Three Diagrams Illustrating the Stages of Christ's Work upon The Cross)

**The Director of YES-NOW Publications, 1997**

**1 John 2:2**

*“And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”*

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### ***Aims***

By carefully examining the three enclosed diagrams any reader of this document should be able to: -

- 1) Appreciate the various aspects of Christ's work at Calvary.
- 2) Discern the way in which the person of Jesus is connected to his work.
- 3) Perceive that a person who was both fully divine and fully human could only offer a perfect non-repeatable sacrifice for sin
- 4) See the blessings present in Christ's work on the cross.
- 5) Take the claims of the Gospel more seriously.
- 6) Understand the distinctive ways in which the Father, Son and Holy Spirit suffered as a result of the cross.
- 7) Worship God for so graciously condescending to suffer on behalf of a fallen humanity.

### ***Introduction***

For the sake of clarity Christ's work on the cross will be presented in the following stages: -

*Judgement  
Appeasement  
And  
Blessing  
(J.A.B. for short)*

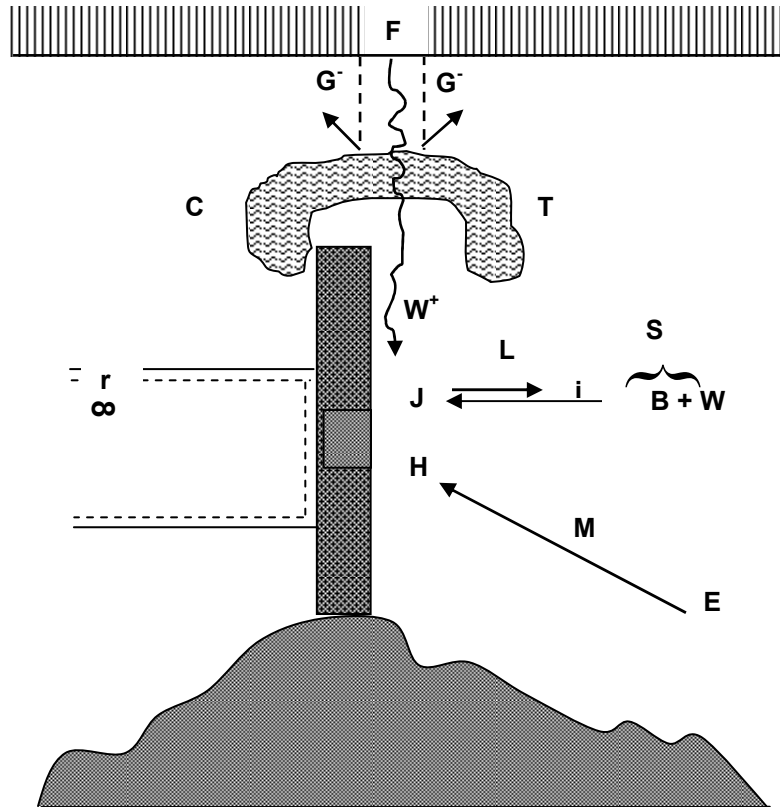
In reality, the Biblical record does imply that a considerable overlap existed between the first two stages with the third stage being more distinct. The first sign of blessing became most apparent following Jesus resurrection. These stages need to be borne in mind throughout this study.

As a final point it is worth stressing that the emphasis of this work rests on the great victory gained by Christ on the cross. Undoubtedly it is the greatest victory ever won because unlike any human victory it produced ETERNAL benefits that spilled over to affect the whole of creation. Indeed, without this victory it is hard to see why God would have any reason to have preserved the current fallen created order for as long as He has. His wrath would have snuffed it out within a microsecond of the first sin being committed.

Furthermore, it shall also be seen that this victory was obtained against almost impossible odds. Indeed, they would have been impossible except for the fact that the one who gained this victory was a person who was both truly God and truly man. As 2 Corinthians 5:19a states, '*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.*'

## STAGE ONE: JUDGEMENT

4



- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>F:</b>             | <b>God the Father</b>   |
| <b>G<sup>-</sup>:</b> | <b>The Father's Grace being withdrawn</b>                                       |
| <b>C:</b>             | <b>Cloud of separation</b>  |
| <b>T:</b>             | <b>Total separation from the Father's presence</b>                              |
| <b>W<sup>+</sup>:</b> | <b>The fullness of Divine wrath</b>   |
| <b>L:</b>             | <b>An expression of priestly love</b>   |
| <b>i:</b>             | <b>Intercession for sinners</b>   |
| <b>J:</b>             | <b>Judgement for</b>  |
| <b>S:</b>             | <b>the sins of</b>  |
| <b>B:</b>             | <b>individual believers</b>   |
| <b>W:</b>             | <b>and the world as a whole</b>   |
| <b>E:</b>             | <b>The evil one</b>   |
| <b>M:</b>             | <b>The very worst of Satan's malice</b>   |
| <b>H:</b>             | <b>The most extreme torments of hell</b>  |
| <b>r:</b>             | <b>The concealment or restraint of Christ's Divine attributes such as power</b> |

### **Comments**

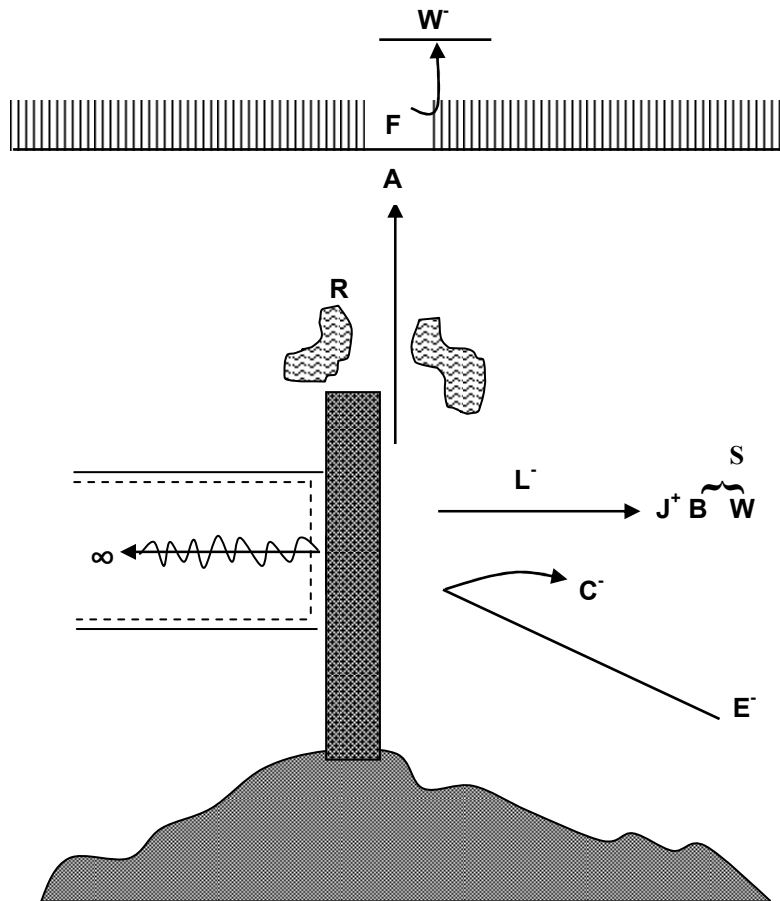
During this stage of Divine Judgement where Jesus is receiving the judgement for humanities sin it is noticeable that: -

- 1) The Father's (F) Grace (G<sup>-</sup>) is withdrawn from Jesus who is dying slowly upon the cross. Nevertheless Jesus in his priestly love (C) intercedes (i) for others whilst openly showing concern for the Spiritual and practical needs of others whether they are the dying thief or his own mother.
- 2) In stark contrast, the wrath of God (W<sup>+</sup>) is being passed out upon Jesus who under the cloud of separation (C) is enduring total alienation (T) from his Father's love as mediated by the Holy Spirit.
- 3) Simultaneously, Jesus is being judged (J<sup>-</sup>) for the sins of individual believers (B) and of the World (W<sup>-</sup>).
- 4) By using the mockery of the hostile crowd and possibly direct spiritual terrorism the evil one (E) launches a furious assault upon Jesus – maybe in a bid to claim him for his own.
- 5) As a result of this, Jesus tastes the most extreme manifestation of satanic malice (M) while enduring the worst torments of Hell (H) from a position of utter helplessness. In this position, he experiences the excruciating sense of loss suffered by unredeemed sinners.
- 6) All of the above happens when Jesus' own Divine attributes such as unlimited power are at their most restrained. On the cross Jesus' deity did not cease but it was concealed in order that he would better identify with human weakness.

This stage of judgement is characterised by the Divine abandonment of Jesus who is left alone to endure the word of God's wrath, human sin and satanic malice.

Relevant bible passages include Matthew 27:27-45, Mark 15:16-34, Luke 23:26-39 and John 19:17-28.

**STAGE TWO: APPEASEMENT**



**W:** Appeasement of the Father's justified wrath against sin

**A:** A perfect atonement (or covering) of sin

**L<sup>+</sup>:** A strong manifestation of Divine love and forgiveness

**J<sup>+</sup>:** Justification and the forgiveness of sins

**C<sup>-</sup>:** Satan being robbed of any justifiable claim over the human race

**∞:** Jesus unlimited deity swallowing up an unlimited amount of: -

- Divine wrath
- Human Sin
- Satanic Malice

All the other symbols remain unchanged

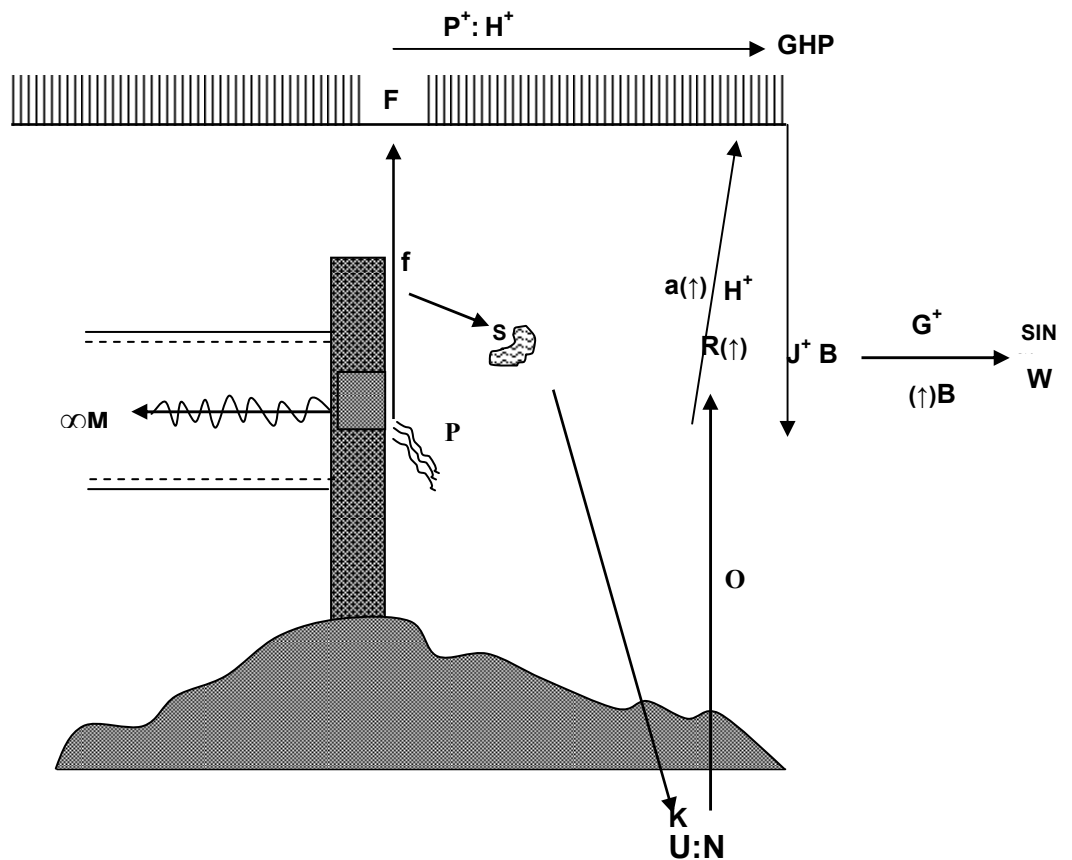
## Comments


During this Stage of Divine appeasement: -

- 1) Jesus offers a perfect blood sacrifice, which appeases Divine wrath (W) by offering a perfect atonement (A) for sin. During it Jesus represents (R) mankind to his Father. No longer is there any barrier between him and his Father, (↑).
- 2) Divine love (L<sup>+</sup>) is poured out upon believers – who receive that Justification (J<sup>+</sup>) which only Jesus can give - whilst judgement on a still evil world system has been deferred until the Gospel has been preached to all nations as a witness to the truths shown in these diagrams.
- 3) Robbed of any possible claim (C<sup>-</sup>) over Jesus and the whole human race. Satan, backs away totally defeated, his humiliation has been complete.
- 4) The infinite Deity of Jesus (8M) absorbs an infinite amount of Divine wrath, human sin and satanic malice. Only a being that was fully divine would possess the unlimited capacity to accomplish this.
- 5) All of the above takes place because Divine justice has been satisfied; God has been able to forgive sin without compromising his Holiness and essential requirement that sin be punished with death. In short, at Calvary God: -
  - 5.1 Confirmed His Holiness
  - 5.2 Demonstrated His humility
  - 5.3 Pacified His wrath
  - 5.4 Poured out His love
  - 5.5 satisfied His justice
  - 5.6 Vindicated His wisdom by devising a means of showing the essential harmony existing between all His attributes
- 6) Gained at Calvary was an unqualified victory over evil, indeed it was the greatest victory ever won in all eternity. Through it people came to relate to God personally as their Heavenly Father.

This stage is characterised by the appeasing of God's righteous fury against sin. Relevant bible passages include Matthew 27: 51-54, Mark 15: 37-39, Luke 23: 44-49 and John 19: 30.

### STAGE THREE: BLESSING



- f:** A restoration of a two-way fellowship between Jesus and his Father
- 8:** Divine wrath, human sin and satanic malice being swallowed up by the infinite Deity of Jesus
- P:** Being pierced by a Roman lance
-  : A flow of blood and water
- S:** Christ's spirit leaving his body
- U:** Descent into the underworld or place of the dead
- N:** the generation drowned in Noah's day
- K:** the keys of death and Hades
- R(↑):** Resurrection from the dead
- a(↑):** Ascension into heaven
- GHP:** Assumption of complete high priesthood
- H<sup>+</sup>:** Descent of the Holy Spirit on justified believers
- G<sup>+</sup>:** Taking the Gospel to a needy
- SIN:** dominated world
- (↑)B:** Increased amount of Divine blessing in the world
- All other symbols remain unchanged

## **Comments**

During this stage of Divine Blessing: -

- 1) A two-way fellowship (f) is restored between Jesus and His Father.
- 2) Divine wrath, human sin and satanic malice are swallowed up in the infinite Deity of Jesus, ( $\infty$ M).
- 3) A Roman Lance pierces Jesus' side, (p). The outpouring of blood and water from his body not only confirms that he is truly dead but it symbolises the outpouring of both Divine forgiveness and of the Holy Spirit upon a needy people. Judgement upon a satanically seduced world system is delayed in order to give time for Gospel outreach to take place.
- 4) Meanwhile the human spirit of Jesus descended into the underworld (U) where the dead dwell apparently in order to: -
  - 4.1 announce Satan's defeat.
  - 4.2 seize control of the keys of death and Hades, (K).
  - 4.3 preach to the generation drowned in Noah's day (N).
  - 4.4 release Old Testament saints so that they can be with him in Heaven.
- 5) After completing these momentous tasks Jesus rises from the dead (R $\uparrow$ ) in a new resurrection body; forty days later he ascends (a $\uparrow$ ) to Heaven to take up his role of the Great High Priest (GHP) – representing God before men, and men before God.
- 6) Once seated in Heaven, Jesus receives from his Father the prerogative (P $^+$ ) to outpour the Holy Spirit (H $^+$ ). This he does on justified believers (J $^+$ B) during the day of Pentecost. Empowered by the Holy Spirit justified believers can now take the Gospel (G $^+$ ) into a needy sin-dominated world. This increases the amount of divine blessing in the world, ( $\uparrow$ B).
- 7) All of the above blessings take place because God is free to pour out his love without violating his own Holiness. The requirements of His Holiness were completely satisfied at Calvary.

This stage is characterised by the outpouring of a variety of blessings. Relevant Bible texts include Matthew 28:1f, Mark 16:1f, Luke 23:43 – 2:41f, John 16:19f, 19:31 – 21:23, Acts 2 Ephesians 4:8, 1 Peter 3: 10f, Revelation 1:18.

## **Concluding Comments**

Taken in conjunction all these diagrams show the multi-faceted nature of Christ's work upon the cross. They also demonstrate that, WITHOUT A HARMONIOUS UNION OF PERFECT DEITY AND PERFECT HUMANITY IN ONE PERSON THERE CAN BE NO REMOVAL OF SIN; or to put it slightly differently, ONLY WITH A HARMONIOUS UNION OF PERFECT DEITY AND PERFECT UNITY IN ONE PERSON CAN SIN BE COMPLETELY REMOVED. There is therefore an INDISSOLUBLE CONNECTION between the person and work of Christ. Who he was (as God and man in one person) determined what he could do (e.g. his ability to offer a perfect sacrifice for sin and bring about many blessings from that work).

Consequently, those who warp the Biblical view of Jesus by denying either His deity or humanity are doing Satan's work; they are sealing off any avenue through which people can receive forgiveness. Briefly, if Jesus wasn't at the same time both truly God and truly man he could NOT discharge the role of Saviour who redeemed people from their sin by offering an acceptable blood sacrifice to his Heavenly Father. What Jesus did on the cross closely ties in with who He was. There can be no artificial separation between this person and His work.

Alongside Christ, both the Father and Holy Spirit were also participating in the mystery of suffering. Like Abraham in Genesis 22:1-10 the Father experienced the suffering involved in having to horribly sacrifice a much-loved son. However, unlike Abraham the Father ACTUALLY WENT THROUGH WITH THIS SACRIFICE. Exactly what pain this must have caused Him will remain a mystery. At the very least, He must have endured great anguish as he withdrew his comforting blessings from His Son. He left His Son ALONE to endure the most excruciating form of torment. For his part the Holy Spirit would have been profoundly grieved as He was called upon by the Father to withdraw his comforting presence from the Son. He would have experienced the anguish of seeing a perfectly Holy person being immersed in the vilest kinds of sin and evil. His anguish would have been similar in nature to that endured at time He withdrew from the first Jewish temple (Ezekiel 10:1f); however, it would have been on a far greater scale.

Compounding matters was the fact that NEVER ONCE THROUGH ETERNITY had the Father and Spirit been previously out of fellowship with the Son. During Christ's crucifixion it wasn't only God the Son who suffered, God the Father and Spirit also suffered. Each member of the Trinity suffered greatly in relation to the cross. The atonement was an act of freely chosen love involving all three members of the Trinity: -

*God the Father suffered  
As a parent sacrificing  
His son in order to provide  
A perfect atonement for sin  
God the son suffered  
By offering a perfect blood sacrifice  
Which involved him  
Receiving the worst kind of punishment  
For human sin  
God the Holy Spirit suffered  
In having to withdraw  
His comforting presence  
From someone  
Whom he had  
A passionate love for*

Consequently, the Divine Trinity suffered a temporary rupture in that love relationship which had existed unbroken from all eternity. Should this teaching still appear doubtful to those who are too much influenced by the Greek philosophical view that God is utterly impassive and above all emotion then it is worth stressing that the very titles of God suggest that He could freely choose to suffer. For example: -

*The title of 'Father'  
Suggest that God  
Can suffer as a Father  
The title of 'Son'  
Suggests that God  
Can suffer as a son  
Whilst the title Holy Spirit  
Suggests that God  
Can suffer as a Spirit  
Who is displeased  
By any lack of Holiness*

Any denial of God's ability to suffer is to render the titles Father, Son and Holy Spirit utterly meaningless. Taking the first title alone what use would God's Fatherhood be if it did not also involve the suffering, which can be involved in that role? By way of a qualifying remark, it is worth highlighting one difference between divine and human suffering. People often suffer involuntarily because they are weak sinners living in a fallen world. In contrast, Divine suffering represented a FREELY CHOSEN act of love whereby all three persons of the Godhead decided to suffer in order to redeem lost sinners. God's suffering was therefore voluntarily entered into, such a fact should make us all marvel at his Grace.