

Appeasing an Offended God, What It Really Means!

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | November 4, 2013



This week, an online viewer to my weekly Bible Study Class asked how I understand this quotation from an article in Signs of the Times Dec 23, 1886:

The altar and the promise stand side by side, and one casts clear beams of light upon the other, showing that the justice of an offended God could be appeased only by the death of his beloved Son.

I deferred answering because I wanted to know the context, what altar was referred to etc. I am glad I did. The context of the article is that of Cain and Abel. The altar is the altar built by Cain and Abel, at the instruction of Adam.

The author contrasts the attitudes of the heart of Cain and Abel.

The article starts out with this:

These two brothers, Cain and Abel, represent the whole human family. They were both tested on the point of obedience, and all will be tested as they were. Abel bore the proving of God. He revealed the gold of a righteous character, the principles of true godliness. But Cain's religion had not a good foundation; it rested on human merit. He brought to God something in which he had a personal interest,—the fruits of the ground, which had been cultivated by his toil; and he presented his offering as a favor done to God, through which he expected to secure the divine approval.

Note the context is over character, one of love and trust versus pride and selfishness. The article describes how Abel understood the principles of God's government, how God is always the giver, not the receiver, but Cain sought to put God in the role of receiving the offerings to earn favor.

So, with this context what does the quote mean? Through which "law" lens do you understand justice? Imposed law or Designer law, the protocols upon which life is built?

What is God's justice? It is doing what is right, doing what is right as defined by the law of love. Which is what, what does love require? None other than to heal, to restore, to redeem, and to save.

Thus the promise given to Adam (that the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head, but the serpent would bruise his heel) stands beside the altar, which visually acted out the selfless sacrifice of Christ to achieve what was promised. The promise and the theater (altar) enlightened each other.

Then what about the justice being appeased? Again which law lens do you look through?

If you look through the lens of imposed law, then one believes this is a legal payment to an offended God, but the article itself disallows this interpretation, because it makes clear throughout that the gifts are not given to God, but are from God to man for man's need. Here is another example from the article:

Man, in the pride of his heart, would like to believe that he can confer some favor upon God; that our heavenly Father may be the receiver, and not always the giver. But God will not be bribed.

God is not bribed. The barrier set up between God and man is that of sin in man, thus what is required is provided by God to fix the problem of sin in man.

It is offensive to God (as it is to any being with a heart of love) to see pain, suffering, and death, which occur when God's design for life is broken. Thus God hates sin, because it breaks the protocols upon which life is constructed and inflicts pain, suffering, and death and is an offense to the pure loving heart of God.

Therefore, if we look through the lens of designer law, the law upon which life is built, we see that the sacrifice of Christ was the only means to please God's purpose in saving mankind.

If you think I am being dishonest with the quote, then here is the dictionary definition of the word appease: to make (someone) pleased OR less angry by giving or saying something desired.

What would please God after Adam deviated from God's design and plunged humanity into a death spiral? Would it not please God to see mankind delivered and saved? Is this not what God desired? Thus, the only way God's justice (do what's right according to love) could be pleased (appeased) was through the death of Jesus who provides remedy for the terminal condition Adam inflicted upon the

world, fulfilling (appeasing) God's desire to save the human race!

We will go into much greater depth regarding God's law and justice in our "God And Your Brain" Seminar, Saturday November 9 from 2-6 p.m. Please consider attending either in person or online as we will broadcast this live. For more details see comeandreason.com home page.