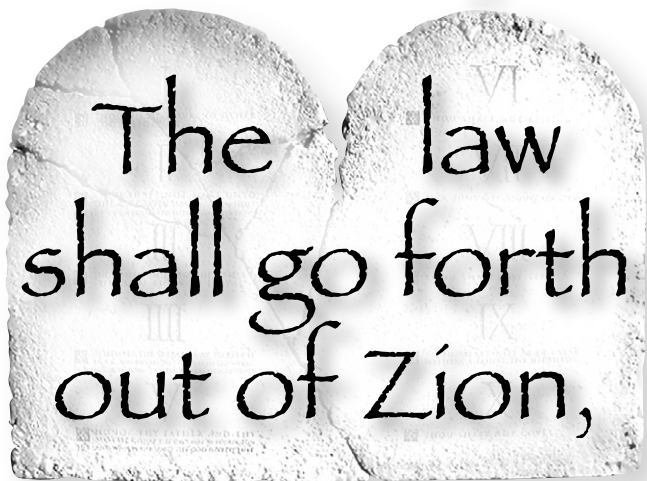


In the last days...



the word of the LORD
from Jerusalem.

Isaiah 2: 2-3

Part 2

“The Law Shall Go Forth Out of Zion”

Part 2

by Tom Quinlan

A detailed look at the hope God has for accomplishing His purposes in Israel and all the Earth, as shown forth in the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.

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Deliverance

If we have deliberately disobeyed His commands, as the scripture says we have, and if separation from the Holy One of Israel is as awful as the words we read in Part 1, then we should begin thirsting and even crying out for the mercy of God.

People are fond of quoting the verses of scripture that speak of the LORD's mercy like this one from Lamentations 3:

“Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

But passages like these are almost always sandwiched between the firm, even fierce, judgements of the LORD. **So then, how then does God reconcile His holiness and justice on the one hand with His compassion for guilty humanity on the other?**

It turns out that within the Law, God illustrates the manner whereby those who have failed to keep His statutes may be made clean before Him and start fresh with His blessing. The Law prescribes the sacrifice of the life of an innocent animal that is without blemish or defect, in place of the marred life of the guilty man or woman. This requirement seems severe and primitive to our modern, “cultured” ways of thinking, but that is largely because we have forgotten how far we have fallen and how severe the consequences are for walking in our own ways rather than in the ways of God, who sustains all life.

Here is how the Law says it:

“For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; **it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.**” Lev 17:11

Even before the Law was given, the LORD gave Israel vivid pictures of this atoning sacrifice. During the last plague in Egypt, Moses heard this from God:

When the LORD goes through the land... **he will see the blood...** and he will not permit the destroyer to... strike you down. Ex 12:23

In fact, this kind of provision began immediately after “the fall”, when God Himself replaced Adam and Eve's fig leaves with “coats of skins”, which is the first record of death in the Scriptures.

Perhaps part of why we object to animal sacrifice is the intuition we have that the sacrificing of an animal is not adequate. The lamb or bull or dove sacrificed has no capacity to fall short of God's requirements, so the fact that it is innocent does not carry enough weight.

David caught wind of this discrepancy and put it this way: “Sacrifice and offering you *did not* desire, but my ears you have opened. Burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require. Then I said, ‘*Here I am*, I have come— in the scroll it is written *about me*. I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.’” Psalm 40: 7-9

Abraham, the father of faith, experienced first hand the high cost of this kind of sacrifice when he heard the call to offer his promised son Isaac to the LORD:

“And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, ‘My father’: and he said, ‘Here am I, my son’. And he said, ‘Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?’ And Abraham said, ‘My son, *God will provide Himself a lamb* for a burnt offering.’” Gen 22: 7-8

The sacrifices spoken of in the law, were something that Moses saw in the heart of God, as he tarried in His presence those 40 days and 40 nights. While these portions of the law are a further demand on us to lay down our lives before God as living sacrifices just as Isaac did, they are *first and foremost* a description of God's heart toward broken humanity. "My son, God will provide *Himself* a lamb."

God knows that our whole being has been tainted with death, pride, and selfish ambition, including those capacities that desire to keep the law. He knows that while we **must** keep the law to draw near to Him, we **cannot** keep it the way He intended it to be kept. The LORD has always been fully aware that if this job is going to be done, He is the one that must do it.

So what would that involve? What would it look like if the holy, perfect, unblemished God of the Universe laid down His life for wasted, law-breaking, rebellious humanity? Wouldn't He have to handicap Himself by taking on our limitations if He were to legitimately pay the penalty that should fall on us? It seems that God would have to become a man to properly taste our condition before He would be legally qualified to pay our penalty for sin.

Prophet after prophet confirm that this is what He has promised to do, if you have eyes to see it:

"Therefore *the LORD himself* will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him **Emmanuel** [*God with us*]." Is 7:14

"The Lord will lay bare **His** holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God." Is 52:10

"Out of Bethlehem shall come a ruler in Israel *whose origins are from everlasting*." Micah 5:2

"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days *Judah will be saved* and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: ***The LORD Our Righteousness***." Jer 23:5-6

"The Branch From Jesse will bear fruit. The *Spirit of the LORD will rest on him*- (the Spirit of... wisdom, understanding, counsel, power, knowledge and the fear of the LORD) He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips *he will slay the wicked*. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist." Is 11:1-5

"He sent the *ark of his might* into captivity, his splendor into the hands of the enemy... Then the LORD ***awoke*** as from sleep, as a man wakes from the stupor of wine. He beat back *his enemies*; he put them to *everlasting shame*." Ps 78:61,65-66

"See, My servant will act wisely, he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted. Just as there were many who were appalled at him — *his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and his form marred beyond human likeness* — so will he **sprinkle many nations**, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand." Is 52:13-15

"**Who hath believed** our report? And *to whom is the arm*

of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

“But **he** was wounded for **our** transgressions, **he** was crushed for **our** iniquities: the chastisement of **our** peace was upon **him**; and with **his** stripes **we** are healed. *All we* like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him *the iniquity of us all*.

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought **as a lamb** to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so *he openeth not his mouth*. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: *for the transgression of my people* was **he** stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

“Yet *it pleased the LORD to bruise him*; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: *by his knowledge*

shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

“Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and *he shall divide the spoil* with the strong; because he *hath poured out his soul unto death*: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and *he bare the sin of many*, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

Isaiah 53

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? — All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: ‘He trusts in the LORD; let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.’ ...

“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a piece of pottery; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: **they pierced my hands and my feet**. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.”

Ps 22:1, 7-8, 14-19

“It is *too small a thing* for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will *also make you* a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.”

Is 49:6

“I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.’ I will proclaim the decree of the LORD : He said to me, ‘*You are my Son; today I have become your Father.* Ask of me, and I will make *the nations* your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.’

“Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry* and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. **Blessed are all who take refuge in him.**”

Ps 2:6-12

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me *whom they have pierced*, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth *for his only son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn... In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.” Zech 12:10, 13:1

You have probably guessed long before now that I am talking about One who has already appeared to us: namely, Jesus of Nazareth. John the Baptizer, the prophet to Israel that immediately preceded Him, referred to Jesus as “the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world.”

It is the blood of Jesus —God’s sinless Son and Messiah— that atones for our sins once and for all. We broke God’s perfect law,

and the Messiah paid our horrible fine. But because He was perfect in all His ways, death could not hold Him. God, the Father raised Him from the realm of death and He now sits on David’s throne where, as a royal priest, He intercedes for you and me with His own blood as “a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

Ps 110:4 “Joshua [the Hebrew name for Jesus]... will be a *priest on his throne*. And there will be harmony between the two.” Zech 6:13

If this were not true, the following scripture would have been false prophesy: “For this is what the LORD says: ‘David will *never* fail to have a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, nor will the priests, who are Levites, *ever* fail to have a man to stand before me *continually* to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings and to present sacrifices.’” Jer 33:17,18

But those words *are* true, and from God’s presence, the Messiah, our Prophet, Priest and King, has opened the door for the very Spirit of God to be released back into the hearts of repentant sinners.

So, what part, if any, do we play in all of this?

Our job is to do what Abraham did: believe God. Believe God when He says you have fallen short of His glory. Believe God when He says that the penalty of sin is death. Believe that God has had compassion on you and paid your penalty for you through Jesus. Believe that God has raised this Jesus —whom you help put to death by your sins— up from the grave.

And finally... believe God when He says that *now* He has poured out His own Spirit in you and on you... if you will turn from your wicked ways and receive Him. This is the ultimate fulfillment of all His promises.

The Promised Land

When Isaiah prophesied — “He shall divide *the spoil* with the strong”, he was speaking, first and foremost, of His promised Holy Spirit.

Is 53:12

“And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of *your graves*, and shall put **My spirit** in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.”

Ez 37:13-14

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that *I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh*; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will *I pour out My spirit*. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, *before the great and terrible day of the LORD come*. And it shall come to pass, that *whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered*: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.”

Joel 2:28-32

“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A **new heart** also will I give you, and a *new spirit* will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give

you an heart of flesh. And *I will put My spirit within you*, and *cause you* to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God.”

Ez 36:25-28

“Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and *get a new heart and a new spirit*. Why will you die, O house of Israel? For *I take no pleasure in the death of anyone*, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!”

Ez 18:31-32

It is no accident that the Messiah also shares the name that means “God Saves” with Joshua, son of Nun (perpetuity). Moses, the lawgiver, could only *reveal our need* for salvation *from* our sinful condition. It took Joshua, “filled with the Spirit of wisdom” to lead Israel *out of* the wilderness of sin and *into* the promised land. The law should lead us to cling to the **only** provision God has made for us to escape His judgement.

“I will raise up a prophet like you (Moses) from among their brothers. He will tell them everything I command Him. If anyone does not listen to My words that the prophet speaks in My name, I Myself **will call him to account**.”

Deut 18:18-19

Anyone who rejects God’s suffering servant will face the preordained consequences of their own sins — the dreadful judgement we read about in Part 1. But those that confess their sins before Him and let Him apply His precious blood to the doorposts of their hearts, will “be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that **He** might be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

And *strangers* shall stand and feed your flocks, and *the sons of the alien* shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God...” Is 61:3-6

With the outpouring of His Spirit, there comes a much greater calling upon our lives. The Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to know the Holy One of Israel more closely than a brother.

“And the LORD spake unto Moses *face to face*, as a man speaketh unto *his friend*.” Ex 33:11 “He made known *his ways* unto Moses, *his acts* unto the children of Israel.” Ps103:7 “The word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: ***I am*** thy shield, and ***thy exceeding great reward***.” Gen 15:1 “But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham *my friend*.” Is 41:8

“You shall no more be termed Forsaken, nor shall your land be called Desolate any more. But you shall be called Hephzibah [My delight is in her], and your land be called Beulah [married]; for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married... As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall ***your God*** rejoice over ***you***.” Is 62:4,5

Ironically, this free gift of God’s favor and salvation is not without cost (as the carnal mind of sinful man reckons cost). If you receive the words that are written here, you will immediately become an irritant and an outcast in this upsidedown and fallen world. Like Abraham, you will become a stranger and a pilgrim looking for the city whose maker and builder is God.

You will most certainly experience testings in dry, lonely places as the LORD trains you to be more sensitive to His word and His

favor, than you are to the words and approval of your peers. It will be in that place of painful rejection by family, friends and countrymen, that you will find the most precious communion with the God who has repeatedly been rejected by his own children (*including you and me*) throughout history.

If and when you lay down your strength for His strength, your righteousness for His righteousness, your plans for His plans, and lay down your life for His life, then and only then can you possibly fulfill His law. And then, out of Zion the law of God ***shall*** go forth *in your hearts* to smite the nations with the revelation of their need for the salvation that only the Messiah can give them.

So...

“Today, ***if you hear his voice***, do not harden your hearts, as they did in the provocation.” Psalms 95:7-8

If you ***are*** hearing His call, get serious with Him before the cares and demands of this world once again drown out the sound of His voice, and lay ***your life*** on the altar of ***His sacrifice for you***.



Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples. For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Psalm 96:3-5



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