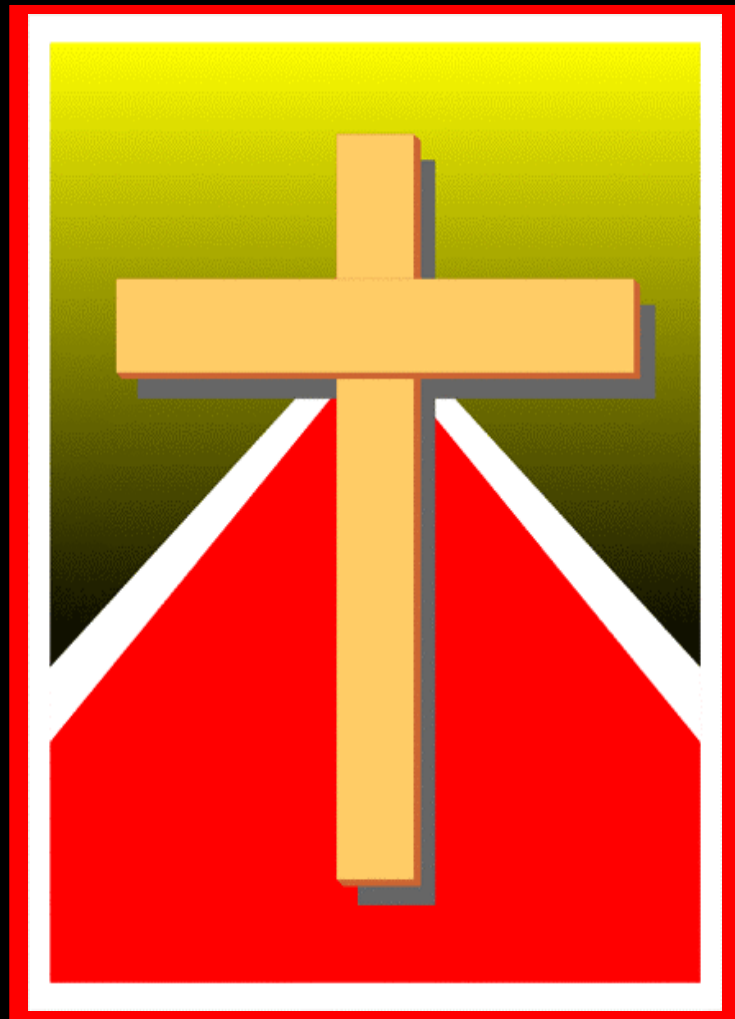


The Atonement



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Introduction

The Bible's central message is atonement, that is to say, that God has provided a way for humanity to come back into harmonious relation with Him. This is apparent everywhere in Scripture. From the first stories in Genesis to the last visions of Revelation, God seeks to reconcile His people to Himself.

The Old Testament

In the Old Testament atonement, and related phrases, such as sacrifice of atonement, most often translates “mercy-seat” or the place where the sacrifice of atonement happens. These occur with meanings related to atonement around 140 times. The breadth of the use of the concept in the Old Testament is striking.

Sacrifice accomplishes atonement "for sins." Of course, the majority of all the references are to atonement on behalf of people, either individually or as members of the community of Israel.

Atonement can be associated with houses, temples and other inanimate objects. However, primary among the objects of atonement in the Old Testament are the people of God, but the means of atonement can vary. Goats, sheep, and birds are listed among the acceptable animals to be sacrificed, but there were also grain, oil, and drink offerings.

Certainly the most frequently mentioned means of atonement in the Old Testament were the blood sacrifices, dominating the use of the term by constant reference in the books of Leviticus and Numbers. Atonement needed to be made for everything from heinous crimes like idolatry (**Num 16:47**) to mistakes of intent, when the only sin was ignorance or error, not willful disobedience. (**Num 15:22-29**)

The Day of Atonement

Perhaps the heart of the Old Testament teaching on atonement is found in Leviticus 16, where the regulations for the Day of Atonement occur. Five characteristics relating to the ritual of the Day of Atonement are worthy of note because they are generally true of atonement as it is found throughout Scripture:

- (1) the sovereignty of God in atonement;
- (2) the purpose and result of making atonement;
- (3) the two goats emphasize two different things, and the burning another, about the removal of sin;
- (4) that Aaron had to make special sacrifice for himself
- (5) the comprehensive quality of the act.

Atonement is clearly the action of God and not of man throughout the Bible, but especially in Leviticus 16. Aaron's two sons, Nadab and Abihu, had been recently put to death by the Lord for disobeying his command by offering "unauthorized fire" before the Lord. (**Lev 10:1-3**) Here God gives Aaron precise instructions concerning how He wants the sacrifices to be made, down to the clothes Aaron is to wear, the bathing rituals in which he is to engage, and the types of sacrificial animals he is to bring. His sovereignty is

further emphasized by the fact that the lot is used to choose which goat will be sacrificed and which goat will serve as the scapegoat.

The purpose for the ritual is made very clear in several places. It is to cleanse you "from all your sins" (**Lev 16:30**). Other passages make it clear that such cleansing results in saving the life of the participant (**Lev 17:11**). The restoring of pure relationship is an important result, too, since the atonement is for all "uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites, whatever their sins have been" (**Lev 16:16**). Thus Israel is reunited in purity to its God by the atoning sacrifice for sins.

The symbolic import of the sacrifices is so detailed that three different actions were necessary to display everything that God apparently intended us to understand about the way He was to deal with sin.

- (1) The sacrificial death of the first goat showed clearly that the offense of sin requires the punishment of death (**Ezra 18:4**).
- (2) The sending of the second goat into the wilderness with the sins laid on the top of its head emphasizes that sin will be removed from the person and the community "as far as the east is from the west" (**Psalms 103:12**).
- (3) The burning of the sacrifice so that it is consumed shows the power of God over sin, completely destroying it so that it can bother the supplicant no more.

Particularly important for the full biblical picture of atonement as it is found in Christ is the sacrifice Aaron makes for himself and his family (**Lev 16:11-14**). Everyone, even the high priest, is guilty and needs atonement that can only be provided by God Himself. The author of Hebrews emphasizes this point to make clear his doctrine of the purity of Christ as both the true and perfect sacrifice and the true and perfect priest who performs the ritual of atonement (**8:3-6 ; 9:6-15**).

The Old Testament sacrifices are shown to be but shadows of the real sacrifice of Christ on the cross by the fact of Aaron's sinfulness; an imperfect high priest cannot offer a true sacrifice, just as the blood of bulls and goats could never truly pay for the offense of human sin or substitute for the shedding of human blood.

Atonement covers all sins: intentional, unintentional, heinous, and trivial of those for whom it is intended. The comprehensive nature of the sacrifice of atonement prefigures the shedding of Christ's blood on the cross, but it limits its effects in the same way the Old Testament limits the effects of its sacrifice on the day of atonement to the people whom God has elected to call His own and to them alone.

The New Testament

The “ransom saying”, found in the Gospel of **Mark (10:45; and the parallel saying at Matt 20:28)**, offers a bit more insight into the atonement. Speaking in the context of the apostles' dispute over which of them is the greatest, Jesus relates His mission. Two things become apparent:

- (1) Serving all peoples.
- (2) Giving His life as a ransom for many.

Like many of the teachings of Jesus, the saying dramatically extends the answer to an immediate question (that of the selfishness and pride of the apostles) to include something that no one would have linked to that answer (the ransom nature of the cross). The saying primarily relates the death of Christ to the metaphor of service; giving His life is the greatest example of servanthood that can be imagined. The fact that His death is also a ransom links the idea of atonement to the servant spirit of the Christ.

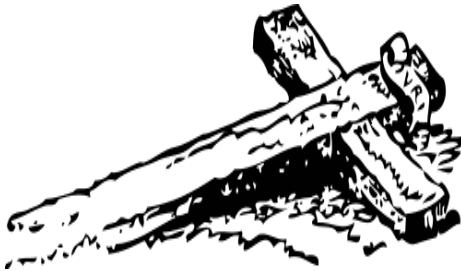
Crucifixion

Crucifixion is an ancient instrument of capital punishment: the method of slow and painful execution in which the victim is tied or nailed to a large wooden beam and left to hang for several days until eventual death from exhaustion and asphyxiation. This is what Jesus faced. He had to endure the cross, despising the shame in order to pay the penalty of our sins. The fact that it was during a feast and that He was already dead stopped him from being on the cross for days.

Benefits of The Atonement

Jesus was crucified to save those that believed in Him. If we qualify as a, “Whosoever Believes”, we are entitled to all the benefits that come with the plan. (John 3:16) tells us, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”* We can see by what Jesus said in this verse that the 1st two benefits of His death, burial and resurrection are a pardon from death...will not perish and the second being everlasting life.

It should be noted that the meaning of “Everlasting” is life without end. That only happens in God. His life never ends and He alone is life. Without Him, there is no life. So to have everlasting life is to be connected to the life-giver. Thus when we, as Christians, are “In Him” we are connected by faith, which is the same as believing.



I know that you may be questioning my premise and might feel that this looks like a limited grace designed for an elect few. However, that’s not what I mean. The call is open to WHOSOEVER WILL, which encompasses all of humanity. The sad part about it is that there will be only a

select few that accept the invitation. This select few is prophesized as a, “Remnant”. That Remnant will still be millions because they have been gathered from every county, every walk of life, and every century.

Other Important Benefits

1. Justification...Mankind’s sinful ~nature~ began in the Garden of Eden through Adam. It is through this genetic lineage we are forever cursed to be separated from God. But God had a plan to correct this sinfulness and the separation from Him through the atonement of sin, and avoiding the rightful and just punishment these murderous actions deserve.

Through the atonement given to us by the Grace of God the Father, through the death of His son, the Lord Jesus, we are no longer unjust in our sinfulness; we are changed and become justified through His shed blood. We then receive forgiveness of our sins and not the wrath of God as the

righteous and just punishment; and once again we “man” can walk in harmony with God and with and within the rest of His creation. This is demonstrated in a number of Biblical passages. For those who are unfamiliar with Hebrew, the name Jesus or in the original Hebrew Yeshua, is translated as “salvation” or as “the salvation of Yah”.

Job 13:16-18... *He also shall be my salvation, for a hypocrite could not come before Him. Listen carefully to my speech, and to my declaration with your ears. See now, I have prepared my case I know that I shall be vindicated.*

Titus 3:7... *that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

Romans 5:18.... *Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.*

Galatians 2:16... *knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.*

2. Reconciliation...Being reconciled to God is to return to a friendship with our Creator. Just as God was with Abraham, His friend:

2Chr 20:7... “Are you not our God, who drove out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and gave it to the descendants of Abraham your friend forever?”

James 2:23... “*And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God.*”

By reconciliation, we return to that ability to walk with God as Adam walked with God in the Garden. We once again have a personal relationship with the Father through the Son.

Rom 5:10... *For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*

2 Cor 5:18-20... *Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Not then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us; we implore you on Christ's behalf,, be reconciled to God.*

Eph 2:16... *and that he might reconcile them (Jew & Gentile) both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.*

Col 1:19-22... *For it pleased the Father that in Him (Jesus) all the fullness should dwell, and by him to reconcile all things to himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight.*

3. Adoption... Another aspect of the Atonement is our becoming adopted heirs of the inheritance God has promised. God adopts each and every one of us who puts their trust in the Lord Yeshua and His sacrifice.

Mt 12:49-50... *“And He stretched out his hands toward His disciples and said, “Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.”*

And thus we are adopted into God's Righteous and Holy Family, and become heirs of His kingdom.

Rom 8:15... *For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of Adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.*

Rom 8:23... Not only that, but we also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

Gal 4:5... *“to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons”*

Eph 1:5... *Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will,*

4. Sanctification... Sanctification, to be sanctified, made Holy, pure; this occurs only through the Atonement, which was made by the death of Jesus, the Messiah. It is through His death we are once again made pure in the sight of God the Father; we are then worthy of entering into the righteous Kingdom of Heaven.

John 17:19... *“And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

Acts 20:32... *So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

Acts 26:18... *“to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me”*

1 Cor 1:2... *To the church of God, which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:*

1 Cor 6:10-11... *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortionists will inherit the kingdom of God and such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified in the name of Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*

Heb 2:11... *For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.*

Heb 10:10... *By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

Heb 10:14... *For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.*

Jude 1:1... *To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:*

5. Access to God... As was mentioned before, once again we are able to approach God and able to speak to Him as children to their father. It was only through the shed blood of the Messiah and the Atonement, which that carried with it, was this made possible.

Rom 5:1-2... *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

Eph 2:18... *For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.*

Eph 3:11-12... *according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.*

6. The removal of the Fear of Death... One of the most famous Biblical quotes is **John 3:16** **“For God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son to the end that all who believe in Him shall not die but have everlasting life”** This exemplifies the removal of death and thereby the fear of it. We know from the fact of the Resurrection, we too shall be resurrected in due time at the last harvest. We know our souls can no longer be destroyed by anyone or anything and our eternal future is guaranteed in the Messiah.



Mt 10:28... *“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both the soul and body in hell.”*

Mt 4:16... *The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death, Light has dawned.*

1 Cor 15:21-26... *For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order; Christ the First fruits, afterward those who are Christ's at his coming; Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till He has put all enemies under his feet, the last enemy that will be destroyed is death.*

1 Cor 15:54-57... *So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written "Death is swallowed up in victory" "Oh death, where is your sting? Oh Hades, where is your victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Hosea 13:14... *"I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death. Oh death I will be your plagues! Oh Grave I will be your destruction! Pity is hidden from My eyes"*

2 Cor 1:9-10... *Yes we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us.*

2 Tim 1:10... *But has not been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*

2 Tim 2:11... *This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him.*

Heb 2:14-15... *Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

1 John 3:14... *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.*

Rev 21:4 ...*And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.*

Our Glorious Inheritance

By becoming an heir through Jesus' sacrifice, we then also become heirs of His Kingdom. God does not break His promises or covenants. That alone should be a comfort to all believers, (as well as to those who are seeking to believe).

Mt 19:29... *And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life"*

Mt 25:34... *Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;*

Heb 6:11-12... *And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

1 Pet 3:8-9 ... *Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous, not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.*

Rev 21:7... *He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

Acts 20:32... *So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

Acts 26:18... *"To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified in Me.*

Eph 1:11-14... *In him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of his glory.*

Eph 1:18... *the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,*

Col 1:12... *giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.*

Col 3:24 ... *knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance, for you serve the Lord Christ.*

Heb 9:15... *And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*

1 Pet 1:3-4 ... *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.*

What has just been shown is how the Atonement made for our sins by the Lord Jesus carries with it many different aspects and rewards. From being justified, made pure and righteous, to becoming an adopted child of God and thereby becoming an heir to His kingdom; God has reconciled man to Him to once again be able to walk in the Garden in harmony with God. What an amazing statement that is, to be able to walk again in harmony with God.

It is almost inconceivable to think anyone can be in harmony with God, that awesome Creator with endless love for His creation. Boundless enough to take upon Himself the form of man and suffer the ultimate cruelties man can put another man through. The horrific and inhuman act of crucifixion; but God showed nothing is impossible as three days later He rose from the

dead. One day we too shall be raised from the dead to be with the Lord in His kingdom. Bless His most Holy Name now and forever; amen.

Conclusion

As we have discussed, the Atonement is a Hebrew term, established by God for the salvation of His children. The premise for such an action is twofold.

1. Man was created as a sinless being but fell from that state into sin and must now embrace death as a penalty.
2. God, the creator new man would fall into sin and established a plan of salvation through His only Son, Jesus, the Christ.

All the Old Testament sacrifices were nothing more than a foreshadow of the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus. They could not atone for man's sin beyond one year. They were only a covering until the Lamb of God would come.

Old Testament saints had to put their trust in the atonement sacrifice in order to be forgiven and saved. They were trusting in an anointed one that would come. We trust in an anointed one that did come. His name is Jesus. Both Messiah and Christ are Hebrew and Greek names for Anointed. We should hold fast our confession of Christ and believe in Him forever for He is our Atoning Sacrifice that opens the door to heaven and a relationship with God.



For The Joy Set Before Him

*I could have lived forever,
As a simple mortal man.
I could have called 10,000 angels,
To help me to stand.
But I laid down my life
Despising the shame.
For the joy set before me,
Was your life to gain.*

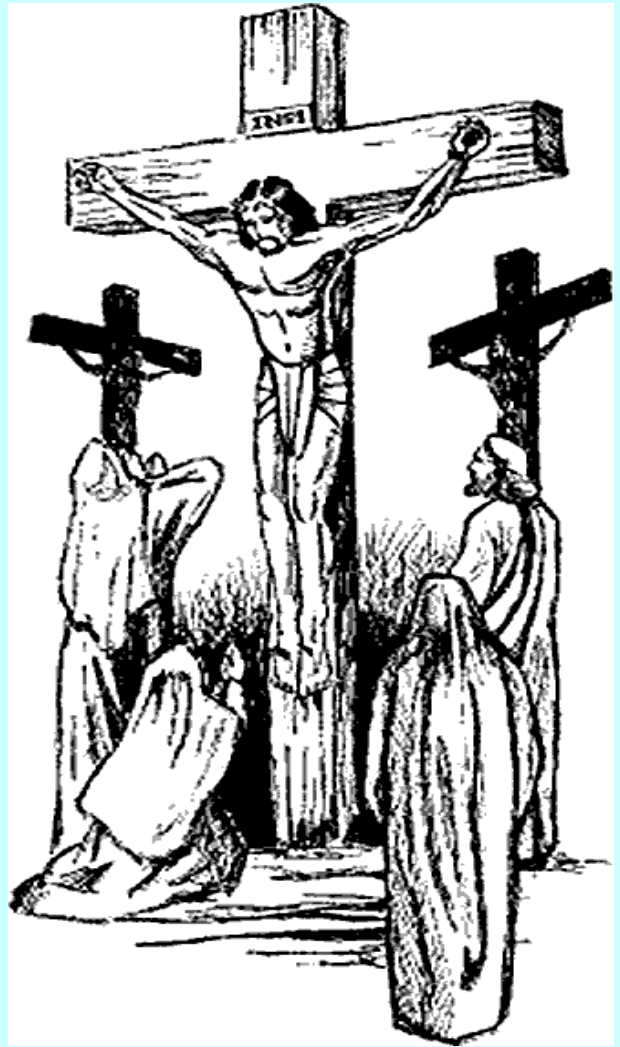
*I could have stayed in heaven,
As the supreme ruler of all things.
I could have played among the stars,
And listened for the flutter of angel's wings.
But I laid down my life,
Despising the shame.
For the joy set before me,
Was to know you by name.*

*I could have sent my armies,
To rid the world of sin.
I could have destroyed the Earth,
As I did way back then.
But I bore the suffering of the cross,
Despising the shame.
For the joy set before me,
Was to take away your pain.*

*I could have done a lot of things,
To make this world right.
Or I could have done nothing,
And ignored your plight.
But God so loved the world,
That I endured the shame.
For the joy set before me,
Was your love to gain.*

Written By Rev.

John Marinelli



***“For God so loved the world that
He gave His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him
should not perish but have
everlasting life.” John 3:16***

FORGIVE



*May the Lord bless you and keep you
in His Love & Grace*