

Short Christological Analysis of Christ's Suffering on the Cross

by

F.C. Bouter, MA

(an adaptation of notes by the late Huig Bouter)

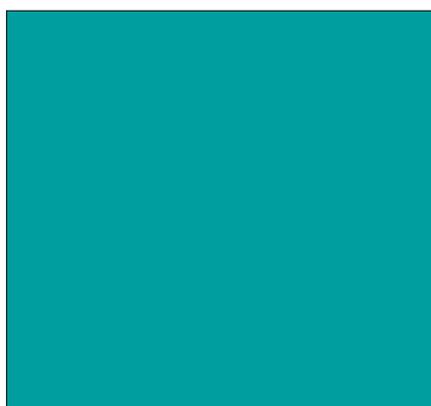
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§ 1. For whom did Christ die?

For= for the sake of *all* humans (Greek= 'huper').

[See and/or cf. Ezech.33:11; John 3:15-16; 1 John 2:2; 2 Cor.5:15; 1 Tim.2:3-4,6; 2 Pet. 3:9]

For me personally
[Gal. 2:20, Gr. 'huper'].



Only for (=in the place of; Gr.= 'anti') all truly born-again believers.
[See and/or cf. Is.43:4; Jer.31:3; Mat.15:13; John 3:3, 27; 6:44; Rom. 8:28-30; Eph.1:4-6; Heb. 9:27,28; *and particularly Mat.20:28; Mark 10:45*]

For the people of Israel [John 11:50-51, Gr. 'huper'].

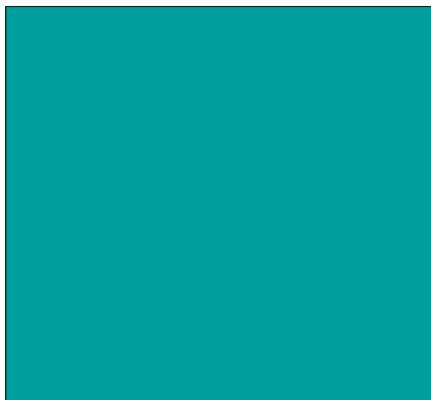
When you overaccentuate the sufficiency of Christ's Work, then you will end up with universalism and believe that everybody will be saved. Christ's Work is (all)sufficient, but not all atoning! If one overaccentuates, however, the atoning Work of Christ, then one will end up with (hyper)Calvinism and a one-sided approach to election. Much confusion can be prevented if in all simplicity one gives the proper place to the various aspects of Christ' Work and let them exist side by side. Through ignorance many do not even know what exactly is written in the Scriptures.

That Christ has also died for the Jewish people; about that we only want to say here that on the basis of that Jewry will experience a spiritual and national revival. In that time (the Millennium) the earth will be filled with the knowledge of God's glory as the waters cover the sea [Hab. 2:14]. God's promises to Abraham are sure and God will never repent of these *unconditional* promises. We make Him a liar by claiming that these promises are now only applicable to some kind of spiritual Israel. (See also my short studies of biblical prophecies, when available).

§ 2. Who killed Christ?

Satan; the murderer from the beginning [Cf. John 8:44].

Nobody. He laid His
life down freely.
[See John 10:18]



Humans; Jews and
gentiles. [See Acts 2:23]

God. [See Is. 53:10]

From the times that the christian church became pretentious (after the emperor Constantine) have the Jews been accused one-sidedly of the murder of Christ. However, the Roman empire was involved as well in the corrupt person of Pilate. And in the end we all must point the finger to ourselves. I hanged Him there! Because of my sins, mistakes and shortcomings did He have to finish the atoning Work . . .

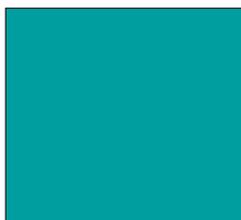
That on the one hand Christ was killed and on the other hand He freely laid His life down, is an example of biblical truths that go directly against the grain of our human and feeble logic. But how else could it be? As a sinless Person Christ was immortal. Death had no power over Him whatsoever, unless He voluntarily gave Himself over to that power. That we, gentiles and Jews, are responsible anyway is a spiritual and legal question.

Satan has the power of death (Hebr. 2:14; some translate 'had', but the Greek has the aorist participle of 'having' which is difficult to translate; it might mean had, but as a present tense it can also be translated as 'having [yet] momentarily the power of death'. Death, however, has been swallowed up by victory, as satan has been and even as sin has been, but satan still has a role to play. Of course the devil cannot do anything without God permitting it, as is apparent from Job 1 and 2) and as such he also killed Christ. Ultimately it is God Himself that slew Christ for all humans and particularly for all believers. All four aspects are true.

§ 3. The Offerings of the Altar

Gospel of Matthew: the guilt offering [Lev. 5]

Gospel of John:
the burnt offering [Lev. 1]



Gospel of Mark:
the sin offering [Lev.4]

Gospel of Luke: the peace offering [Lev. 3](the Table of the Lord).

In the introductory study about biblical types and symbols you can read more about these four offerings and about the fact that in the four gospels they are portrayed and that they are four different aspects of the suffering of Jesus Christ. Here I only want to say that the all-sufficient (not all-atoning) Work of Christ is pictured by the guilt offering and His atoning Work by the sin offering. That is the difference between the fact that Christ died *for the sake of* all humans, but only *in the place of* those that would truly believe.

He bought all of humanity back after first having created them and on that ground He can be both their Savior and Judge. According to 2 Cor. 5:21 God even made Him to be sin, as if He were the cause of sin in us (which actually has its existence through our pride). And therefore sin will once be removed from the cosmos (see John 1:29) and there can be a new heaven and new earth in eternity, in which 'righteousness dwells' (see 2 Pet. 3:13). In the Millennium righteousness will *reign*, but in eternity it will find *rest* in the hearts of humans.

Christ's words on the cross 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' occur only in Matthew and Mark, where Christ is pictured as respectively the guilt- and sin offering. A good understanding about the difference between these two offerings is a must so as not to lean towards universalism on the one hand, or (hyper)Calvinism on the other. Both aspects are true and necessary. As the guilt offering Christ has died for the sake of all humans. All can come to the Father on the basis of that Work. And as the sin offering He has only paid for the sins of all those that would believe in His Person.

If He had paid for all sins, then all would be saved. He has only paid for the sins of those that are truly born again. As the guilt offering He holds a claim on all humans and all have the responsibility to acknowledge Him. Else they make God into a liar (cf. John 3: 18-21; 1 John 1:10).

§ 4. The Altar as a Type of the Death of Christ

On the North side the animals were sacrificed [Lev.1:11].
This speaks of the suffering and death of Christ.

On the day of atonement the people waited in the front court for the high priest to return from the tabernacle or temple. They all looked out towards the East. This speaks of the second Advent of Messiah [cf. Lev. 16].



The East side was the place for the ashes [Lev. 1:16]. This speaks of the grave and the resurrection of Christ.

In Ezech.47:1 waters flow from the South side of the altar. [See also Zech. 14:8]. This Speaks of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit [See Acts 2; John 7: 37-39].

The entire service of the offerings in the O.T. and the ceremonial laws that went with it, is a foreshadowing of the Work of Christ. Christ's suffering on the cross is pictured on and in the altar. The altar was square. So all four sides were equally long. All truths of God's Word are equally important. We must not exaggerate, take out of context, or deny any of them.