

Romans 3:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Analysis

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. The theological heart of Romans: *hon proetheto ho theos hilastērion* (δν προέθετο ὁ θεός ιλαστήριον, "whom God set forth as a propitiation"). *Hilastērion* (ιλαστήριον)—the mercy seat where sacrificial blood was sprinkled on Yom Kippur (Leviticus 16:14-15), or more broadly, a propitiatory sacrifice that satisfies divine wrath.

Dia pisteōs en tō autou haimati (διὰ πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι, "through faith in his blood")—appropriated by faith, grounded in Christ's blood. Purpose: *eis endeixin tēs dikaiosynēs autou* (εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ, "to demonstrate his righteousness") because of *paresin tōn progegonotōn hamartēmatōn* (πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων ἀμαρτημάτων, "passing over of former sins") in *anochē tou theou* (ἀνοχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ, "forbearance of God"). God's pre-cross patience in not immediately judging sin raised questions about His justice—answered at Calvary.

Historical Context

The Day of Atonement was Judaism's central ceremony for dealing with sin. Paul declares Christ as the ultimate hilasterion—not a mere symbol but the reality. His blood accomplishes what animal sacrifices foreshadowed: actual propitiation of

divine wrath, demonstrating God is both just (punishing sin) and justifier (saving sinners).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the word "propitiation" change your understanding of the cross—not just example but satisfaction of divine justice?
2. Why was it necessary for God to demonstrate His righteousness by punishing sin in Christ?
3. How does this verse answer the question: How can God be just and justify sinners?

Interlinear Text

ὅν προέθετο ὁ θεοῦ ἵλαστήριον διὰ τῆς πίστεως
Whom hath set forth G3588 God to be a propitiation for G3588 faith
G3739 G4388 G2316 G2435 G1223 G4102

ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἷματι εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης
in G3588 his G846 blood G129 to G1519 declare G3588 righteousness
G1722 G1732 G1343

αὐτοῦ διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων
his for G3588 the remission G3588 that are past
G846 G1223 G3929 G4266

ἀμαρτημάτων ἐν τῇ ἀνοχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ
of sins in G3588 the forbearance G3588 God
G265 G1722 G463 G2316

Additional Cross-References

1 John 4:10 (Sin): Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 2:2 (Sin): And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Acts 17:30 (References God): And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

Romans 5:9 (Righteousness): Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Hebrews 10:4 (Sin): For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Revelation 13:8 (Parallel theme): And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Hebrews 11:7 (Faith): By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Psalms 22:31 (Righteousness): They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.

Leviticus 16:15 (Sin): Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:

Romans 5:1 (Faith): Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

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