

Q19: Is there any way to escape punishment and be brought back into God's favour?

Yes, to satisfy his justice, God himself, out of mere mercy, reconciles us to himself and delivers us from sin and from the punishment for sin, by a Redeemer.

Isaiah 53:10–11

Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.

Commentary

But is there any thing which Christians can find in heaven or earth, so worthy to be the objects of their admiration and love, their earnest and longing desires, their hope and their rejoicing, and their fervent zeal, as those things that are held forth to us in the gospel of Jesus Christ? in which not only are things declared most worthy to affect us, but they are exhibited in the most affecting manner. The glory and beauty of the blessed Jehovah, which is most worthy in itself to be the object of our admiration and love, is there exhibited in the most affecting manner that can be conceived of, as it appears, shining in all its lustre, in the face of an incarnate, infinitely loving, meek, compassionate, dying Redeemer. All the virtues of the Lamb of God, his humility, patience, meekness, submission, obedience, love and compassion, are exhibited to our view in a manner the most tending to move our affections of any that can be imagined; as they all had their greatest trial, and their highest exercise, and so their brightest manifestation, when he was in the most affecting circumstances; even when he was under his last sufferings, those unutterable and unparalleled sufferings he endured from his tender love and pity to us. There also, the hateful nature of our sins is manifested in the most affecting manner possible; as we see the dreadful effects of them in what our Redeemer, who undertook to answer for us, suffered for them. And there we have the most affecting manifestation of God's hatred of sin, and his wrath and justice in punishing it; as we see his justice in the strictness and inflexibleness of it, and his wrath in its

terribleness, in so dreadfully punishing our sins, in one, who was infinitely dear to him and loving to us. So has God disposed things in the affair of our redemption, and in his glorious dispensations, revealed to us in the gospel, as though every thing were purposely contrived in such a manner as to have the greatest possible tendency to reach our hearts in the most tender part, and move our affections most sensibly and strongly. How great cause have we therefore to be humbled to the dust that we are no more affected!

Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758). A colonial American preacher, theologian, and philosopher, Edwards became pastor of his church in Northampton, Massachusetts in 1726. He is widely known for his famous sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" as well as his many books including *The End For Which God Created the World* and *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (from which this quote is taken). Edwards died from a smallpox inoculation shortly after beginning the presidency at the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University).

From *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (Philadelphia: James Crissy, 1821), 48–49.

Further Reading

"Obedience" in *Concise Theology*, by J. I. Packer.

Prayer

Ah Lord, that thou shouldest be so patient, and so full of forbearance, as not to send me to hell at such an instant! But, oh Lord, that thou shouldest go farther, and blot out mine iniquities for thine own sake.... Lord, what shall I say it is? It is the free grace of my God. What expression transcendeth that, I know not.

John Owen (1616–1683). An English Puritan theologian, Owen went to Oxford University at 12 years of age, gained his MA at 19, and became a pastor at 21. Years later he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University. He preached to parliament the day after the execution of King Charles I, fulfilling the task without directly mentioning that event. He wrote numerous and voluminous works including historical treatises on religion and several studies on the Holy Spirit.

From the sermon "A Vision of Unchangeable Free Mercy" in *The Works of John Owen*, edited by Thomas Russell, Volume 15 (London: Richard Baynes, 1826), 37.

Adapted by Timothy Keller and Sam Shammas from the Reformation catechisms
© 2012 by Redeemer Presbyterian Church

Q20: Who is the Redeemer?

The only Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, in whom God became man and bore the penalty for sin himself.

1 Timothy 2:5

For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.

Commentary

I behold a new and wondrous mystery. My ears resound to the Shepherd's song, piping no soft melody, but chanting full forth a heavenly hymn. The Angels sing. The Archangels blend their voice in harmony. The Cherubim hymn their joyful praise. The Seraphim exalt His glory. All join to praise this holy feast, beholding the Godhead here on earth, and man in heaven. He Who is above, now for our redemption dwells here below; and he that was lowly is by divine mercy raised.... And ask not how: for where God wills, the order of nature yields. For He willed; He had the power; He descended; He redeemed; all things yielded in obedience to God.... For when He was God, He became man; yet not departing from the Godhead that is His. Nor yet by any loss of divinity became He man, nor through increase became He God from man; but being the Word He became flesh, His nature, because of impassability, remaining unchanged.... The Only Begotten, Who is before all ages, Who cannot be touched or be perceived, Who is...without body, has now put on my body, that is visible and liable to corruption. For what reason?... The Ancient of days has become an infant. He Who sits upon the sublime and heavenly Throne, now lies in a manger. And He Who cannot be touched...now lies subject to the hands of men. He Who has broken the bonds of sinners, is now bound by an infants bands. But He has decreed that ignominy shall become honor, infamy be clothed with glory, and total humiliation the measure of His Goodness. For this He assumed my body, that I may become capable of His Word; taking my flesh, He gives me His spirit; and so He bestowing and I receiving, He prepares for me the treasure of Life. He takes my flesh, to sanctify me; He gives me His Spirit, that He may save me.... For...the power of death is broken...the curse is taken away, sin is removed from us, error driven out, truth has been brought back.... Why is this? Because God is now on earth.

John Chrysostom (347–407). Archbishop of Constantinople, John was born in Antioch. He was given the title Chrysostom which means “golden mouth” because of his eloquent preaching. He is recognized by the Eastern Orthodox Church and the

Catholic Church as a saint and Doctor of the Church. Chrysostom is known for his *Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, and his vast homiletical works including 67 homilies on Genesis, 90 on the Gospel of Matthew, and 88 on the Gospel of John.

From the sermon “Christmas Morning” in *The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers*, Volume 1 (Swedesboro, NJ: Preservation Press, 1996), 110–115.

Further Reading

“Covenant” in *Concise Theology*, by J. I. Packer.

“The Covenant” in *A Faith to Live By*, by Donald Macleod.

Prayer

May God grant that we know...that being born of God, we do not continue in sin. May God grant that we know that the Son of God is keeping an eye on us and is watching over us and is protecting us. May God grant that we may always know...that we can have this assurance that...we belong to God our Heavenly Father, to the Lord Jesus Christ, His precious Son and our Saviour, and to the Holy Ghost, whom He has given to us to form Christ in us and to prepare us for the glory that awaits us.

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899–1981). A Welsh medical doctor and Protestant minister, Lloyd-Jones is best known for preaching and teaching at Westminster Chapel in London for thirty years. He would take many months, even years, to expound a chapter of the Bible verse by verse. Perhaps his most famous publication is a 14 volume series of commentaries on Romans.

From *Life in Christ: Studies in 1 John* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002), 690.

Adapted by Timothy Keller and Sam Shammas from the Reformation catechisms
© 2012 by Redeemer Presbyterian Church