

DOMINION

My understanding of the Atonement

Who caused all the trouble? Why is the world in such a mess?
Why did the Son of God come to earth - as a man?

*compiled by Rachel Cory-Kuehl, 2001. Edited 2016.
Scripture is from New King James Version unless otherwise noted*

In the New Testament writings, you will find Jesus and His apostles, teaching that Satan is very real. He is the enemy. And he is the reason that Yeshua Messiah (Jesus the Christ), the Son of God, had to come into the world as a human being, to live a life of perfect obedience.

Before this world was created - There was WAR in Heaven.

Ezekiel 28:14-15 [Speaking of Lucifer, God said] "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity (evil) was found in you"

Isaiah 14:12-14 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'"

Revelation 12:7-9 "And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

Lucifer was the highest and greatest created being. He was one of the two "covering cherub" next to God's very throne (*Ezek 28:14*). He rebelled against God the Father, taking one third of the angels of Heaven with him (*Rev. 12:4*). Lucifer, meaning "Light Bearer" became Satan, "the adversary," (*1 Pet. 5:8*) "the accuser of the brethren" (*Rev. 12 10*).

Dominion of Earth - Given to Mankind

Psalm 115:16 “The highest heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth he has given to mankind.” (NIV)

God *gave* this earth to mankind. God would not take back His “gift”. It *belonged* to mankind, to enjoy with God’s blessing, or to destroy - without Him.

Genesis 1:26-28 “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

“dominion” - meaning sovereignty or lordship

Psalm 8:3-8 “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit [care for] him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet . . .”

Lucifer had lost the war in Heaven.

What would be his next move?

Lucifer needed a kingdom, a place to rule over. He knew that the Creator was protecting the two humans, but if he could deceive them into rebellion against the Creator, then he could take over. The Creator would have to withdraw His protection, and the humans would be no match for his power.

This is important!

Dominion was given to Adam –
on condition of perfect loyalty to God the Creator.

Satan knew this.

On earth, the LORD allowed Satan to access to the newly created humans, but only if they approached the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Satan's access was limited to that tree. And the LORD had forbidden Adam and Eve the fruit from that tree. He told them they would die if they ate the fruit. There was no reason for them to go near it. But Eve got curious.

Satan disguised himself as a tree snake, speaking very subtle accusations against the Creator. Eve was deceived and ate of the fruit which God had expressly forbidden. Eve thought the serpent had become able to speak, because he ate the fruit. She thought she would acquire super-powers also. The Serpent told her she would become "like God". Adam was not deceived, but he loved Eve and chose to share her fate. They disobeyed a direct command of the LORD. They had rebelled. Satan was released from the Tree, and the rest is history.

The name Satan means "accuser" or "adversary". He is the adversary of Jesus Christ, and he accuses human beings, seeking dominion over them.

1 Peter 5:8 "Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour." (NRS)

Satan is called:

"the prince of this world" (*John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11*)

"the ruler of the darkness of this world" (*Ephesians 6:12*)

"the god of this world" (*2 Corinthians 4:4*)

"the prince and power of the air" (*Ephesians 2:2*)

"Beelzebub, the ruler of demons" (*Matthew 12:24*)

"the Devil" (*Matthew Chapter 4, Luke Chapter 4, Revelation 12:9 and 20:2*)

"the adversary" (*1Peter 5:8*)

"the enemy" (*Matthew 13:39*)

"the Tempter" (*1Thessalonians 3:5, Matthew 4:3*)

"a liar and the father of lies" (*John 8:44*)

"a murderer from the beginning" (*John 8:44*)

"the dragon" and "the serpent of old" (*Revelation 20:2*)

"The humans have rebelled against You." Satan said. "You cannot continue to protect them. They have broken Your covenant."

What could the Father do? If He continued to protect Adam and bless his dominion, then He would appear unjust. It would seem as if He had one law for Lucifer, and another for his "favorites." Just as soon as the Creator removed His special protection, Satan was free to follow humans and to tempt them constantly. The humans began to fight with each other. Slowly but surely the enemy took control of the earth, and of mankind. He stole the dominion. And so Satan became the ruler of this world. He has tormented human beings ever since. It is his way of tormenting the Father, because the Father loves us. His rulership was not complete however, for a couple of reasons.

Loss of Heavenly Protection

I want to write just a bit about this principle of divine protection, and loss of that protection. We see this played out over and over in the history of Israel. God protected them from seven of the plagues which fell upon Egypt. He protected them for forty years in the wilderness. But when they complained incessantly or rebelled against Him, He withdrew His protection. The Israelites were immediately attacked by enemies, by diseases, even by poisonous snakes. After they crossed the Jordan, God gave them victory at Jericho, only to allow defeat at Ai. An Israelite had taken war booty for himself, something God had forbidden. Satan claimed the right to destroy Israel, so long as this man remained in the camp. God could not protect them, while they allowed this man to live.

In the New Testament, Paul wrote concerning persons in the church who continued to live immorally. “Deliver such a one to Satan” (*I Cor. 5:5, I Tim. 1:20*). Everyone understood that believers are either protected by God, or they *will* be ruled over by the Evil One. Now, does this mean we are to execute immoral people? No. That power now belongs to civil authorities. We do however, dis-fellowship such people. We do not allow them to hold church office, or in some cases even membership.

Please see the study titled “**Cursed**”, which explains this principle in more detail.

Deuteronomy 11:26-28 “Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside from the way which I command you today, to go after other gods which you have not known.”

Jeremiah 7:23 “But this command I gave them, ‘Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you.” (NRS)

Exodus 23:22 “But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.”

God has promised to protect and bless those who obey Him!

Satan’s dominion is limited.

First: Humans who break the law of God – die. Separated from God, their lives do not continue indefinitely. Therefore Satan can only dominate them while they live. They do have children however, and Satan has claimed dominion over every descendant.

NOTE: Let me just dispel the belief that Satan is in charge of Hell or Purgatory, where he takes delight in tormenting the souls of humans who have died.

Please see the studies “[Where are the Dead?](#)” and “[Hell - What it’s Not](#)”.

Second: If human beings cry out to God, praying forgiveness for their rebellion, God will forgive them. The Son of God and His loyal angels, will help human beings who want to return to God. Satan, of course, cries “foul” at this interference in “his” kingdom, but the Father said that Lucifer had stolen the earth through deception. Therefore Adam and Eve, and any descendants could be forgiven and restored to the Heavenly family if they truly repent of their rebellion.

**How could the Father free the humans from the bully Satan?
How could He recover dominion of the earth - for mankind?**

The first Adam lost the dominion –
because of disobedience.

The “last Adam” would recover the dominion –
by perfect obedience.

Jesus is called the “last Adam” in 1Corinthians 15:45.

Dominion could belong to any perfectly loyal human being. Satan would have no claim over that individual. But every human being since Adam has sinned. There was no perfectly obedient human being - until Jesus.

This is very important! **Jesus came to recover the dominion FOR mankind.** Dominion was given to mankind, upon condition of perfect obedience. The only way to recover the dominion FOR mankind, was by perfect obedience AS A HUMAN. This is why Jesus became a human being. He did not simply take the form of a human being. He became a man!

When the Son of God incarnated as a human being, Satan was allowed to TEST Him in every way possible - short of actually taking over control of Jesus mind. The Father did not shield His own Son from this TEST.

Philippians 2:7-8 “rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming **obedient unto death**-- even death on a cross! (NIV)

It's about His perfect life!

Most Christian preachers make the atonement all about His death. It's really about His LIFE of perfect obedience. It's really about enduring every TEST with perfect loyalty to His Father God. The moment of His death, was simply the conclusion of Satan's final TEST.

He came as a man - without divine powers.

Philippians 2:5-7 "In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature of God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" (NIV).

NOTE: "Made himself nothing" is translated as "emptied Himself" in several versions. The Son of God "emptied Himself" of His own divine power.

Hebrews 2:16 "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham" (KJV).

Hebrews 2:9 "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone."

Angels cannot die physical death. They can only die the "second" type of death - spirit death - in "the lake of fire", which by the way, was prepared for their execution (*Matthew 25:41*). So Jesus "was made" "a little lower than the angels that He might taste death". He became human, so that he could physically die. And He must be "obedient" until the moment of that physical death. If He stopped short of death, the TEST would be unfinished. A shred of doubt could be left.

Hebrews 4:15 "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin."

NOTE: The word "tempt" means "test."

I have heard the argument that it was not possible for Christ to sin because He was divine. I would argue that He emptied Himself of all divine power when He incarnated as a man. His human body was flesh, just as the body of Adam was flesh.

Adam was made from the dust of the ground. Adam was not created with a spiritual body - like the angels. And Christ - the "last Adam" incarnated into this same mortal flesh. If He had sinned against His Father in any way - He would have died, and all mankind with Him - forever.

All the power came from His Father.

Acts 2:22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—”

John 14:10 “Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.”

John 3:34 [Speaking of Christ] “... because the one whom God sent speaks God's words. For God does not give him the Spirit in limited degree ...” (CJB)

To be “one” with God, is to be filled with Him - with His Spirit - His mind - His power. This sharing of Spirit can come by degrees - from a little, to unlimited. Christ received the Spirit of His Father - without limit. This was the power for the miracles. This same power is available to us - if we ask.

Jesus did not resurrect Himself.

Galatians 1:1 “Paul, an apostle not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead,”

Acts 3:15 “ ... and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.” (Acts 4:10)

Ephesians 1:17-20 “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, ... according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,”

Let’s review.

Adam and Eve were given dominion of the earth, under God’s protection, on condition of perfect obedience.

Satan used deception to manipulate them into disobedience of God’s expressed command. When they sinned, God was compelled to remove His special protection. Satan then began to dominate men, because he was more powerful. He began to rule.

God allowed Satan a limited dominion, but helps those humans who cry out to Him.

God the Father needed a perfect man. He could give dominion over the earth to that perfect man. The Son of God was sent to earth to become that perfect man.

Satan was given permission to test Jesus to the point of death, but Satan failed to cause Jesus to sin against His Father's will. **Jesus was victorious. He fulfilled the condition. He was perfectly obedient. He will therefore receive the dominion.**

With dominion, comes the right to rule. This is why "all judgment is committed to the Son" (*John 5:22*). Jesus will decide which humans will continue to live within His dominion - His coming kingdom.

When Jesus died on the Cross, He won the right to depose Satan, and to destroy Satan's dominion forever.

John 5:22 "All judgment is committed to the Son."

The Plan

God knew that rebellion was a possibility, because angels and men were created with free will. He made a plan to rescue mankind, if they were ever deceived by Satan. He beget a Son in His exact image, *before* anything was created. God's Son became the agent of His Father, in creation, mediation, and redemption.

God the Father could not "empty Himself" of all divine power to incarnate as a human infant, and then die, while at the same time "upholding all things." He beget a Son, "in His express image" - in His exact likeness, for this purpose (*Heb. 1:1-3*). The Son of God was a divine being. He gave up His divine power, to become a human being - in order to win back the dominion of earth *for* human beings.

An unfair advantage?

I need to explain something here about the nature of man. Ever since the sin of Adam, human beings have been born with a carnal (selfish) nature. Why? Because we are not born with the indwelling of the Spirit of God. Without that indwelling, we are selfish. We are born this way because the indwelling must be requested or chosen. Parents can pray for protection of the children, but they cannot obtain the indwelling of the Spirit for them. Each one must consent to this by believing in Jesus as Lord.

In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had perfect open communion with God. They lost this perfect communion when they rebelled against the Creator. Because we now live within the dominion of Satan, **we must ask for the divine connection**. We must ask for the indwelling of God's Spirit. By the time we ASK for that connection, we already have a slew of bad habits.

The Son of God existed in Heaven with His Father before He was reborn (incarnated) with human flesh and nature. He could ask for the indwelling - before being born as a human. He is called “the second Adam” (*1 Cor. 15:45*) because, like Adam who was connected with God from the moment of His creation (until He sinned), **Christ was indwelt from the moment of His birth.**

The divine Spirit enables a human being to resist selfish temptations. It does NOT force the choice, or make the choice *for* him. It allows a choice. Without the indwelling - sin is inevitable. I know you’re thinking that this gave Christ an unfair advantage in the “test.” Satan was probably yelling, “Foul!” But the Father gave Satan permission to test His Son in every possible way.

How did the Father create a fair test? He allowed Satan to test His Son - even to the point of death - even death by torture.

As Jesus was being tortured - God the Father *allowed* Satan to cloud Jesus’ mind, so that **Jesus could not feel the Father’s presence with Him.** The worst possible TEST for Jesus, would be to *feel* that all His suffering was for nothing - that He had failed in His mission, and worse, that He would be separated from His Father forever. What did Jesus cry out? “My God, why have you forsaken me?” This tells us that Jesus *felt* abandoned. God allowed His Son to feel as condemned sinners will feel.

The “wrath of God” is to be separated from Him. Jesus suffered this “wrath of God” - for us (*Romans 8:32, Isaiah 53:10*).

(Please see the study: “[The Wrath of God - A Different View](#)”)

The story of Job holds a clue.

God held a council and Satan came to that meeting as the self-proclaimed ruler of earth. God pointed out that He still had a few loyal (not perfect) human subjects living on earth. “Have you considered My servant Job,” He said, “a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil” (*Job 1:6-8*).

Job 1:9-11 “So Satan answered the LORD and said, ‘Does Job fear God for nothing? 10 Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!’”

Satan was demanding the right to TEST Job. We know the story. Job’s children, his servants, his flocks, his herds – everything of value, everything he held dear – everything was taken in a single day. The only one left was Job’s nagging wife, who told him to “curse God and die.” If Job’s wife had been anything but discouraging, the Devil would have killed her too.

You're thinking that if Job was a "perfect and upright man", then why wasn't the dominion given to him. If you read the book carefully, you will see that Job was not really "perfect." He had a little problem with self-righteousness. He was indeed a very good man - but he wasn't "perfect." He was not giving God any credit. And he accused the LORD of injustice. When He finally heard the Lord speak he "repented in dust and ashes" (*Job 42:6*).

Job did not realize that He needed a Savior.

The Apostle Paul, speaking of himself, said that "concerning the law" he was "blameless." But when he saw Christ, his eyes were opened and He saw that he had not really kept the Law at all - not in his heart (*Romans 7:14, Phil. 3 4-9*).

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" - including Job (*Romans 3:23*).

"But you have not let me touch his flesh."

Once again the council met. "And the LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause.'"

"So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out Your hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!'" (*Job 2:3-5*).

"Behold, he is in your hand, but spare his life," God said to Satan (*Job 2:6*).

Now, can you see the scene in Gethsemane? This time God said to Satan, "He is in your hand - period." **No limit to the torment.** "Do your worst - physically, and mentally. My Son will remain loyal to me." In Gethsemane, and on the cross - **Christ was given into the hand of Satan.** Every angel of Hell was there to torment Him. He had no protection. He was completely alone. He did this for you, and for me.

If the Father had protected His Son from torture or death, it would have left open the possibility of doubt. I can just hear Satan, insinuating doubts. "Well, how do we really know? How can we know that in the final darkness - feeling death about to swallow Him - that He would not have bailed? How can we know that in that last moment, He would not have rejected this death, opted out, rebelled against the expressed will of God? How can we know?"

*Death by crucifixion was the Father's will, for His Son.
To refuse the cross would have been disobedience.*

Thank God we know. "He was obedient unto death."

Philippians 2:5-11 “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation taking the form of a servant and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD to the glory of God the Father.”

It’s all about dominion.

We see the confrontation over and over.

Satan insinuated his dominion - Christ challenged that dominion.

Satan caused a storm (*Mark 4, Luke 8*).

Christ said “peace be still”

Satan caused disease.

Christ said “come out of Him” (*Mark 1, Mark 9, Luke 4*) - “you are made whole” (*John 5:14*) - “take up your bed” (*Matt. 9, Mark 2, John 5*).

Satan said “this is my kingdom.”

Christ said, “all authority is given unto me” (*Matthew 28:18*).

Consider what Satan offered Christ, during the wilderness temptations, and this after Jesus went without food for 40 days. This temptation was all about dominion!

Luke 4:5-6 “Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, ‘All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.”

Satan was obviously claiming dominion over “all the kingdoms of the earth”. His statement was a half-truth. He had been *allowed* to rule over mankind, because of their rebellion against the Creator, but Satan had deceived the humans into disobedience. **He stole the dominion through deceptive manipulation.** Satan offered to give this authority to Christ, if Christ would worship him. Of course this authority would be *under* Satan, but why explain the details. (*Excuse my sarcasm.*)

Dominion - given to “the Son of Man”

Daniel 7:9-10 “I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days [God the Father] was seated . . . Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated and the books were opened.”

Notice who is the subject of this judgment. It is Jesus - the Son of Man. This event in Heaven will be the formal announcement. Dominion will be officially given to the Son of Man. He will then take possession of His Kingdom.

Daniel 7:13-14 “I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.”

Daniel 7:26-27 “But the court shall be seated and they shall take away his [Satan’s] dominion to consume and destroy it forever. Then the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.”

The dominion is given to Christ, who will then share that dominion with His redeemed.

**** Some believe this heavenly judgment scene took place shortly after the ascension of Christ. I do not agree. In the vision given to Daniel, the little horn (Anti-Christ) is at the height of his power, “speaking pompous words.” The “saints of the Most high” are persecuted by this evil power for three and a half years just before the court sits in heaven (Daniel 7:21-22). These things have not yet taken place.*

*When the seventh trumpet sounds, loud voices in heaven cry out, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ” (Revelation 11:15). It is the end of this present age! ****

We do not yet see it.

Hebrews 2:8 “For in that He [God] put all in subjection under Him [Christ], He left nothing that is not put under Him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.”

*God speaks of what will be, as if it already is.
The betrothal is legally binding, even though the marriage has not yet taken place.*

Our Advocate

Because He passed the test, Christ can now stand before the throne of God as our advocate. When Satan accuses the brethren, wanting to gain control over them, Jesus is there to say, “I claim this person for My kingdom. He believes in Me. I have the right to strengthen this person, to bless this person, and to deliver this person.”

Revelation 12:10 “Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.”

Romans 8:32 “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?”

Three Things Accomplished

1. Christ won the right to dominion of this earth.
2. Satan was unmasked.
3. Christ delivered the Father’s message of love and reconciliation.

Satan Unmasked

The Father wanted to restore this earth to mankind, but He could not do so without leaving doubts about His justice which would tear apart His kingdom in Heaven. Satan had been telling lies about the Father for millennia. So God’s Son became a man, and lived a life of absolute loyalty. When Satan finally incited men under his control to torture and murder God’s innocent Son - when demons tormented Jesus as He was whipped and then hung on a cross - Satan was unmasked! His lies about the Father were shown to be exactly that - lies! He showed himself to be a liar, a thief and a murderer. The Father could then promise dominion of the earth to His Son, and every loyal angel of Heaven would agree this is just!

This full unmasking of Satan was very important for all unfallen heavenly beings. They had great work to do - protecting believers. They would need to fight against Satan and his evil ones. The war would continue for at least 2000 more years. No trace of doubt could be left to weaken the heavenly forces.

As our human brother, Christ has won the right to give us power against our enemy. Christ has won the right of dominion - over you, and over me - if we want Him as our LORD. Very soon, the Father will “put all things under His feet” (*Psalm 8:6; I Corinthians 15:25,27*). Christ will take possession of His dominion. He will destroy Satan and all of those who chose Satan as their master.

Jesus is given dominion of the earth, not because He is the Son of God, but because He is “the Son of man”- because He perfectly obeyed God’s law as a man.

He will have the legal right to give eternal life to any human being within His dominion. He has power to give eternal life, because He is the Son of God.

He will also have the right to remove - through death - any human who remains rebellious against Him.

Psalm 72:8-11 “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him, And His enemies will lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles Will bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba Will offer gifts. Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him.”

God’s Love Revealed!!

John 3:16 “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoso ever believes in Him, might not perish, but have eternal life.”

God our Father loves us. That is the message of the cross. Paul calls it the message that reconciles. God’s love draws us, and wins us. We see what pain He would endure to win us for His kingdom.

1 John 4:19 “We love Him because He first loved us.”

1 John 4:9 “In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.”

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 “All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us” (NRS).

Other Views of the Atonement

Some argue that because Christ died for the whole world - His death “paid the price” for every sin. (This is the argument for Universalism.) The Bible *does* use the analogy of “payment” for a “debt”. I have discussed this in another study. That analogy - that Christ “paid our debt” to rescue us from debt slavery - *is* valid. He paid for us as one would buy a slave. But that does not mean the slave is now free to do as he pleases. He is simply owned by a new righteous master. All human beings will belong to Christ Jesus, because they live within His dominion. He will give eternal life to those who willingly serve Him.

I do not believe we need a *metaphysical* explanation of the atonement, wherein all of mankind was somehow merged with the body of Christ on the cross, and therefore died when He died.

I certainly do not feel we need a *forensic* explanation, in which God demands the execution of sinners, and accepts a substitute victim in their place. I do not believe that the Father sent Jesus to be the “whipping boy” for mankind. That view does not fit with God's character, or His law (which forbade execution of one man for another's crime). I realize that some Scripture uses images of this type, to explain the atonement, but I believe those were written for “babes” and beginners. Those of us who have grown a little in The Word, can place those passages, *within* the larger context of dominion. Even today we say “he paid the ultimate price”, when we mean that someone died defending freedom and country. We're not saying that the person who died was actually being *punished* for another's crime.

God could have left our little planet to simply decay into dust. But He loved us. The Son of God left Heaven. He gave up divine power. He submitted Himself to every test and torture the Evil One could devise. And He was obedient unto death. His goal was to reclaim dominion of this earth, for those of us who choose to serve Him.

This study only scratches the surface. I hope it has peaked your interest, and that you will dig deeper.

*We pray this study will prove a blessing.
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