

Atonement

10/05

“All gospel blessings and all gospel truths are appendages to the Atonement.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 121)

“Just as a man does not really desire food until he is hungry, so he does not desire the salvation of Christ until he knows why he needs Christ.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Ensign*, May 1987, pg. 85)

Atonement Defined

(BD 616; Romans 5:11; 1 John 1:10, 19; D&C 34:3)

NOTE – Atonement, found only once in the New Testament. The translators preferred the word ‘reconciliation’:

Reconciliation = to be seated again with someone

Atonement = to be come one; [Hebrew] (Kaphar) to cover or to smear (Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion*, pg. 556)

“This chapter [2 Nephi 9] is one of the most enlightening discourses ever delivered in regard to the atonement. It should be carefully read by every person seeking salvation.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 4:57)

“This truth [atonement] is the very root of Christian doctrine. You may know much about the gospel as it branches out from there, but if you only know the branches and those branches do not touch that root, if they have been cut free from that truth, there will be no life nor substance nor redemption in them.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, May 1977, pg. 56)

“Now, the atonement of Christ is the most basic and fundamental doctrine of the gospel, and it is the least understood of all our revealed truths. Many of us have a superficial knowledge and rely upon the Lord and his goodness to see us through the trials and perils of life.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Ensign*, May 1985 pg. 10)

“We may never understand nor comprehend in mortality how He accomplished what He did, but we must not fail to understand why He did what He did. All that He did was prompted by His unselfish, infinite love for us.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, pg. 15)

Another question is sometimes heard: Why should Christ have volunteered to make this sacrifice? What was the motive that inspired and sustained him from the time of that council in heaven until the moment of his agonized cry ‘It is finished’? (John 19:30).

The answer to this question is twofold: **first, his undeviating devotion to his Father’s will.** He said: ‘...My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.’ (John 4:34)

“Second was his supernal and all-embracing love for mankind, who, without his mediation, would have remained in the total gloom of desiring without hope throughout eternity.” (Hugh B. Brown, *CR*, April 1962, pg. 108)

First Lessons

(Moses 4:20-21, 27-29; Moses 5:4-8)

“After Adam and Eve had partaken of the forbidden fruit, but before they were expelled from the garden, the Father taught them the law of sacrifice. Animals were slain that Adam and Eve might be clothed in coats of skins (Moses 4:27) that were to be a protection to them in our fallen world. Adam and Eve subsequently learned that the shedding of the animal’s blood was in similitude of the atoning blood of Christ (Moses 5:7). Thus the garments given them in the Eden were to serve as a constant reminder that through the atoning blood of Christ they could be protected from all the effects of a fallen world. Through his blood they could obtain a remission of

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sins, be born again, and return to the divine presence.” (Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Man Adam, The Mystery of Eden*, pg. 30)

“The Lord designed in the beginning to place before man the knowledge of good and evil, and gave him a commandment to cleave to good and abstain from evil. **But if he should fail, he would give to him the law of sacrifice and provide a Savior for him, that he might be brought back again into the presence and favor of God and partake of eternal life with him.** This was the plan of redemption chosen and instituted by the Almighty before man was placed on the earth. **And when man did fall by transgressing the law which was given him, the Lord gave to him the law of sacrifice, and made it clear to his understanding, that it was for the purpose of reminding him of that great event that should transpire in the meridian of time, whereby he and all his posterity might be brought forth by the power of redemption and resurrection from the dead, and partake of eternal life with God in his kingdom.** For this reason Adam and his posterity, from generation to generation, observed this law, and continually looked forward to a time when there should be provided for them a means of redemption from the fall and...

“In anticipation, therefore, of this great sacrifice which was to be offered for Adam and his seed, they offered sacrifices. . . .” (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, pg. 202)

In Anticipation

(Isaiah 53; 2 Nephi 11:4; Jacob 4:5; Alma 34:10-14; Moses 7:47)

“We can confidently cast our cares upon the Lord because, through the agonizing events of Gethsemane and Calvary, atoning Jesus is already familiar with our sins, sicknesses, and sorrows. **He can carry them now because He has successfully carried them before.**” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, November 1987, pg. 32)

“Thousands of years before he [the Savior] came upon the earth, the Father had watched his course and knew that he could depend upon him when the salvation of worlds was at stake, and he was not disappointed.” (Lorenzo Snow, *Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, pg. 19)

Exodus 12 - Passover (Moses 7:47; Genesis 22:8; John 1:29, 36; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Revelation 5:6)

1. Without blemish [Hebrew] whole or sound - Leviticus 1:1 fn. (vs. 5)
2. Male (vs. 5)
3. Of the first year (vs. 5)
4. Taken out of the sheep or goats {domesticated animal = real sacrifice} (vs. 5)
5. Whole of Israel will kill it (vs. 6)
6. Killed in the evening [3:00 - 5:00 pm - Jewish Encyclopedia 9:548] (vs. 6)
7. Not to break any bones (vs. 46)

Fulfillment:

1. 1 Peter 1:19
2. Matthew 1:25
3. D&C 93:21
4. 1 Nephi 22:25
5. 2 Nephi 10:3
6. John 19:31
7. John 19:33-36

NOTE - The sacrifice of the lamb alone did not bring protection. Safety was only promised to those who properly were marked with his blood. One must be covered and marked in the blood of Christ though the use of the atonement and obedience and appropriate ordinances of the gospel.

Named Passover due to the lamb passing over death successfully. (Exodus 12:21)

Passover was to be a token and a memorial, kept by an ordinance forever (Exodus 12:13-14, 17, 24). It was been through the memorial feast of sacrament!

Sacrifice [Sacred Face] ↔ Atonement ↔ Sacrament [Sacred Mind - Latin]

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(Russell M. Nelson, Ensign March 1983, pg. 67-68)

Go'El

(Ruth 2:20b; Helaman 14:16; Revelation 22:3; *Grace* - 2 Nephi 2:4; 2 Nephi 10:24; 2 Nephi 25:23)

“A central feature of the Cave of Treasures, a Syriac work, is its story of a cave where Adam lived and was buried. His body was retrieved by Noah, who took it into the ark and afterward reinterred it on Golgotha. By this account, the redemptive blood of Jesus, also called the last Adam, shed at the Crucifixion first flowed on the grave of Adam, demonstrating an inexorable link between the Fall of Adam and the atonement of Christ.” (Daniel Ludlow; Martin J. Palmer, *Adam: Ancient Sources, Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, pg. 18)

The Appointed Place

(Matthew 26:36; John 19:30; Revelation 14:19-20; D&C 133:50)

“Then the cross was raised that all might see and gape and curse and deride. This they did, with evil venom, for three hours from 9:00 A.M. to noon.

Then the heavens grew black. Darkness covered the land for the space of three hours, as it did among the Nephites. There was a mighty storm, as though the very God of Nature was in agony....

And truly he was, for while he was hanging on the cross for another three hours, from noon to 3:00 P.M., all the infinite agonies and merciless pains of Gethsemane recurred.

And, finally, when the atoning agonies had taken their toll, when the victory had been won, when the Son of God had fulfilled the will of his Father in all things, then he said, It is finished (John 19:30), and he **voluntarily** gave up the ghost.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Ensign*, May 1985, pg. 10)

“Again, on Calvary, during the last three hours of his mortal passion, the sufferings of Gethsemane returned, and he drank to the full the cup which his Heavenly Father had given him.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Ensign*, November 1982, pg. 33)

Gethsemane = Oil or Wine Press; Oil - Used for soothing, light, and healing. Press - Pressure, or pain and suffering. Oil press anciently was used to crush bitter olives under mighty pressure to yield sweet oil for light and healing. So also was the Lord crushed mighty pressure for the same, to yield sweet oil for light and healing.

The Price to be Paid

(Alma 34:8-16; 1 Nephi 198-13; D&C 19:15-20; Mark 14:33)

NOTE - The word depression [Greek] (ademoneo) in the scriptures, has three different words to describe the level and severity. Only during the atonement (Mark 14:33), is the strongest of the three words ever used.

“Mark wrote that Jesus became sore amazed and very heavy (Mark 14:33), meaning in the Greek, respectively, astonished and awestruck and depressed and dejected. None of us can tell Christ anything about depression!” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, April 1997, pg. 10)

“We are accustomed to saying that the Atonement took place in Gethsemane. In a literal sense this is true, since it was in Gethsemane that Christ took upon himself the full burden and weight of the sins of the world. But the trial of Jesus in Gethsemane would not have been possible and could not have occurred had not it been preceded by a lifetime of sinless virtue, accomplished in the face of the most vehement spiritual opposition.

All this he did with the knowledge that one misstep would mean creation’s doom! For had he sinned even in the smallest point or slightest negligence of thought, the Atonement would have become impossible and the whole purpose of creation frustrated. The burden of the whole world weighed upon him through every moment of his life.” (Bruce D. Porter, *The King of Kings*, pg. 92)

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“Our Lord descended in suffering below that which man can suffer; or, in other words, suffered greater sufferings, and was exposed to more powerful contradictions than any man can be.” (Joseph Smith, *Lectures on Faith*, 5:2)

“He was in all respects subjected to every mortal failing experienced by the human family. Not once did he raise the shield of godhood in order to soften the blows. Not once did he don the bulletproof vest of divinity. **That he also had godly powers did not make his suffering any less excruciating, any less poignant, or any less real. To the contrary, it is for this very reason that his suffering was more, not less, than his mortal counterparts could experience. He took upon him infinite suffering, but chose to defend with only mortal faculties, with but one exception-his godhood was summoned to hold off unconsciousness and death (i.e., the twin relief mechanisms of man) that would otherwise overpower a mere mortal when he reached his threshold of pain.** For the Savior, however, there would be no such relief. His divinity would be called upon, not to immunize him from pain, but to enlarge the receptacle that would hold it. He simply brought a larger cup to hold the bitter drink.” (Tad R. Callister, *The Infinite Atonement*, pg.119)

“It all the that He had and all the faith that He could summon for Him to accomplish that which the Father of Him.” (Lorenzo Snow, *Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, pg. 98)

“Christ’s agony in the garden is unfathomable by the finite mind, both as to intensity and cause. The thought that He suffered through fear of death is untenable. Death to Him was preliminary to resurrection and triumphal return to the Father from whom He had come, and to a state of glory even beyond what He had before possessed; and, moreover, it was within His power to lay down His life voluntarily. He struggled and groaned under a burden such as no other being who has lived on earth might even conceive as possible. It was not a physical pain, nor mental anguish alone, that caused Him to suffer such torture as to produce an extrusion of blood from every pore; but a spiritual agony of soul such as only God was capable of experiencing. No other man, however great his powers of physical or mental endurance, could have suffered so; for his human organism would have succumbed, and syncope would have produced unconsciousness and welcome oblivion. In that hour of anguish Christ met and over came all the horrors that Satan, ‘the prince of this World’ could inflict....

In some manner, actual and terribly real though to man incomprehensible, the Savior took upon Himself the burden of the sins of mankind from Adam to the end of the world.” (James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, pg. 613-614)

To This End Was I Born

(Mosiah 15:5-9; Alma 7:11-13)

“In Alma 7:12, the only place in scriptures, to my knowledge, that it appears, there seems to have been yet another purpose of the atonement, speaking again of the Savior and his suffering, ‘and He will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy,...’ Have you ever thought that there was no way that Jesus could know the suffering which we undergo as a result of our stupidity and sin (because he was sinless) except he near those sins of ours in what I call the awful arithmetic of the atonement?” (Neal A. Maxwell, *BYU Old Testament Address*, [1981], pg. 24-25)

“Can we, even in the depths of disease, tell Him anything at all about suffering? In ways we cannot comprehend, our sicknesses and infirmities were borne by Him even before they were borne by us. The very weight of our combined sins caused Him to descend below all. We have never been, nor will we be, in depths such as He has known. Thus, His atonement made perfect His empathy and His mercy and His capacity to *succor* us, for which we can be everlastingly grateful as He tutors us in our trials. There was no ram in the thicket at Calvary to spare Him, this Friend of Abraham and Isaac.” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Even As I Am*, pg. 116B17)

“Jesus thus not only satisfied the requirements of divine justice but also, particularly in His Gethsemane and Calvary ordeals, demonstrated and perfected His capacity to *succor* His people and his empathy for them. The agonies of the Atonement were infinite and firsthand! Since not all human sorrow and pain is connected to sin, the full intensiveness of the Atonement involved bearing our pains, infirmities, and sickness, as well as our sins.” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Not My*

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Will, But Thine, pg. 51)

“I testify that no one has or ever will experience any set of circumstances, be they disappointments, betrayal, pain, persecution, suffering, or whatever, that cannot and is not swallowed up in the Savior! You can feel no hurt, emotional or physical, that he has not already felt! There is no combination of human emotions, or physical illness, or suffering that cannot find refuge in the Savior’s sacrifice for us.” (John H. Groberg, *CES Fireside*, May 1, 1994, pg. 6)

“The King of Kings descended beneath and overcame every act of iniquity in human history: every murder ever committed, every act of torture and perversion, cruelty and abuse in all their forms; violence, anger, lust, betrayal, deception, theft, envy, and the whole sorry parade of human pride and vanity, in their endless forms... from the slightest shadow of sinful desire to the grief and horror of every war ever fought; Christ, paid the price for it all.” (Bruce D. Porter, *King of Kings*, pg. 102-103)

“He, by choice, accepted the penalty for all mankind for the sum total of all wickedness and depravity; for brutality, immorality, perversion, and corruption; for addiction; for the killings and torture and terror, for all of it that ever had been or all that ever would be enacted upon this earth.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Ensign*, May 1988, pg. 69)

“The Savior’s atonement is...**the healing power not only for sin, but also for carelessness, inadequacy, and all mortal bitterness.** The Atonement is not just for sinners.” (Bruce C. Hafen, *Ensign*, April 1990, pg. 7)

“The Atonement will not only help us overcome our transgressions and mistakes, but in His time, **it will resolve all inequities of life, those things that are unfair which are the consequences of circumstance or others’ acts and not our own decisions.**” (Richard G. Scott, *Ensign*, May 1997, pg. 54)

“Therefore, one of the most powerful and searching questions ever asked of all of us in our sufferings hangs in time and space before us: ‘The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?’ (D&C 122:8) **Jesus plumbed the depths and scaled the heights in order to comprehend all things. (See D&C 88:6) Jesus, therefore, is not only a fully atoning but He is also a fully comprehending Savior!**” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1990, pg. 35)

“As part of His infinite atonement, Jesus has borne the sins, griefs, sorrows, and, declared Jacob, the pains of every man woman, and child. Having been perfected in His empathy, Jesus thus knows how to *succor* us. Nothing is beyond His redeeming reach or His encircling empathy. Therefore, we should not complain about our own life’s not being a rose garden when we remember who wore the crown of thorns!” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1987, pg. 72)

“Elder Talmage used the word *succor*. **Do you know its meaning? It is used often in the scriptures to describe Christ’s care for and attention to us. It means literally to run to.** What a magnificent way to describe the Savior’s urgent effort in our behalf! Even as he calls us to come to him and follow him, he is unfailingly running to help us.” (Jeffrey R. Holland, *Ensign*, April 1998, pg. 22)

“In the garden and on the cross Jesus saw each of us and not only bore our sins, but also experienced our deepest feelings so that he would know how to comfort and strengthen us.” (Merrill J. Bateman, *Ensign*, May 1995, pg. 14)

“The Savior, as a member of the Godhead, knows each of us personally. Isaiah and the prophet Abinadi said that when Christ would ‘make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed’ (Isaiah 53:10, Mosiah 15:10). Abinadi explains that his seed are the righteous, those who follow the prophets (Mosiah 15:11). **In the garden and on the cross, Jesus saw each of us and not only bore our sins, but also experienced our deepest feelings so that he would know how to comfort and strengthen us....**

The Savior’s atonement in the garden and on the cross is intimate as well as infinite. Infinite in that it spans the eternities. Intimate in that the Savior felt each person’s pains, sufferings, and sicknesses. Consequently, he knows how to carry our sorrows and relieve our burdens that we might be healed from within, made whole persons, and receive everlasting joy in his kingdom.” (Merrill J. Bateman, *Ensign*, May 1995, pg. 14)

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“Alma reveals to us the process by which the master learned perfect empathy in the flesh. He experienced not only our sins but also our pains, sufferings, temptations of every kind, sicknesses, infirmities, and weaknesses. He also experienced death in order to loose the bands of death for his **people. Consequently, if one of us has a special problem, it is not possible for him or her to say, No one knows what I’m experiencing. No one understands my pain or suffering. The Lord knows. He not only knows the depth of your experience; he knows how to succor you because of his suffering. I testify that he knows each of us**, is concerned about our progress, and has the infinite capacity not only to heal our wounds but also lift us up to the father as sanctified sons and daughters.” (Merrill J. Bateman, *BYU Speeches 1997*, pg. 10-11)

Particulars

“We do not know, we cannot tell, no mortal mind can conceive the full import of what Christ did in Gethsemane.

We know he sweat great goutts of blood from every pore as he drained the dregs of that bitter cup his Father had given him.

We know he suffered, both body and spirit, more than it is possible for man to suffer, except it be unto death...

We know that an angel came from the courts of glory to strengthen him in his ordeal, and we suppose it was mighty Michael, who foremost fell that mortal man might be.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Ensign*, May 1985, pg. 9)

“I ask, is there a reason for men and women being exposed more constantly and more powerfully, to the power of the enemy, by having visions than by not having them? There is and it is simply this: God never bestows upon His people, or upon an individual, superior blessings without a severe trial to prove they will keep their covenants with Him, and keep in remembrance what He has shown them. Then the greater the vision, the greater the display of the power of the enemy. And when such individuals are off their guard they are left to themselves, as Jesus was. For this express purpose the Father withdrew His spirit from His son, at the time he was to be crucified. Jesus had been with his Father, talked with Him, dwelt in His bosom, and knew all about heaven, about making the earth, about the transgression of man, and what would redeem the people, and that he was the character who was to redeem the sons of earth, and the earth itself from all sin that had come upon it. The light, knowledge, power, and glory with which he was clothed were far above, or exceeded that of all others who had been upon the earth after the fall, consequently at the very moment, at the hour when the crisis came for him to offer up his life, the Father withdrew Himself, withdrew His Spirit, and cast a veil over him. **That is what made him sweat blood. If he had had the power of God upon him, he would not have sweat blood; but all was withdrawn from him, and a veil was cast over him, and he then plead with the Father not to forsake him. ‘No,’ says the Father, ‘you must have your trials, as well as the others.’”** (Brigham Young, *JD*, 3:205-206)

“His Father looked on with great grief and agony over His Beloved Son, until there seems to have come a moment when even our Savior cried out in despair: My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?

In that hour I think I can see our dear Father behind the veil looking upon these dying struggles until even he could not endure it any longer; and, like the mother who bids farewell to her dying child and has to be taken out of the room so as not to look upon the last struggles, so He bowed His head and hid in some part of His universe, His great heart almost breaking for the love that he had for His Son. Oh, in the moment when He might have saved His Son, I thank Him and praise Him that He did not fail us, for He had not only the love of His Son in mind, but He also had love for us. I rejoice that He did not interfere, and that His love for us made it possible for Him to endure to look upon the sufferings of His Son and give Him finally to us, our Savior and our Redeemer. Without Him, without His sacrifice, we would have remained, and we would never have come glorified into His presence. And so this is what it cost, in part, for our Father in heaven to give the gift of His Son unto men.” (Melvin J. Ballard, *Crusader for Righteousness*, pg. 137)

“Yet in His later description of His agonies, Jesus does not speak of those things. Instead, after the Atonement, there is no mention about His being spat upon, struck, or proffered vinegar and gall. Instead, Christ confides in us His chief anxiety, namely, that He would that [He] might not drink the bitter cup, **and shrink** (D&C 19:18) especially desiring not to get partway through the Atonement and **then pull back**. Mercifully for all of us, He finished [His] preparations unto the children of men (D&C 19:19). **Jesus partook of history’s bitterest cup without becoming bitter!** Significantly, when He comes again in majesty and power, He will cite His aloneness, saying, **AI have trodden the wine-press alone** (D&C 133:50).” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, April 1997, pg. 10)

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“Having bled at every pore, how red His raiment must have been in Gethsemane, how crimson that cloak! No wonder, when Christ comes in power and glory, that He will come in reminding red attire (Doctrine & Covenants 133:48), not only signifying the winepress of wrath but also to bring to our remembrance how He suffered for each of us in Gethsemane and on Calvary!” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1987, 72)

“Nevertheless’ He finished His ‘preparations.’ (D&C 19:18B19; 3 Ne. 11:11) The word nevertheless reflects deep, divine determination.” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1989, pg. 64)

“He showed condescension in his patience and restraint when brought before men for judgment (1 Nephi 19:9). The God who created everything was judged to be nothing! And yet he endured it with complete patience. Imagine the Being whose power, whose light, whose glory holds the universe in order, the Being who speaks and solar systems, galaxies, and stars come into existence – standing before wicked men and being judged by them as being of no worth or value! When we think of what he could have done to these men who took him to judgment, we have a new and different sense of his condescension. When Judas led the soldiers and the high priests to the Garden of Gethsemane and betrayed him with a kiss, **Jesus could have spoken a single word and leveled the entire city of Jerusalem.** When the servant of the high priest stepped forward and slapped his face, **Jesus could have lifted a finger and sent that man back to his original elements.** When another man stepped forward and spit in his face, **Jesus had only to blink and our entire solar system could have been annihilated.** But he stood there, he endured, he suffered, he condescended.” (Gerald Lund, *Sperry Symposium* [1991], pg. 85-86)

“In a messianic psalm David spoke about **Jesus’ heartbreaking circumstances, including His being totally alone in the awful process!** Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink (Psalm 69:20-21). **Jesus always deserved and always had the Father’s full approval. But when He took our sins upon Him, of divine necessity required by justice He experienced instead ‘the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God.’”** (Doctrine & Covenants 76:107; 88:106). (Neal A. Maxwell, Lord, *Increase Our Faith*, pg. 13)

“[Christ] was walking the fine line that separates death from life, consciousness from unconsciousness. **From Satan’s perspective, the time of vulnerability was here.** No wonder Satan came at such a propitious moment, spewing forth his insidious temptation through the lips of his mortal pawns: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross (Matt. 27:40). **The Savior’s body writhed in pain; his pure, spotless spirit revolted in violent reaction to sin and its consequences that Satan came at such a moment on the cross is indicative that the Savior was reaching the threshold of his pain, the climax of his mission. This was Satan’s last chance, his final desperate hope to frustrate the redemptive plan. It was now or never. There was no angel to strengthen the Holy One, no sustaining influence of the Father. Surely Satan liked the odds. This was the showdown: Satan, accompanied perhaps by his legions of nefarious forces, against the Savior in all his compelling loneliness- the Savior in his weakened, almost lifeless condition battling a universal accumulation of suffering. Satan’s timing was impeccable.”** (Tad R. Callister, *The Infinite Atonement*, pg. 136-138)

“His infinite atonement affected every age, every dispensation, and every person (2 Nephi 9:7; 25:16). **Hence, the appropriate symbolism of His bleeding at each and every pore-not just some-in order that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”** (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, November 1988, pg. 33)

“Imagine, Jehovah, the Creator of this and other worlds, ‘astonished!’ **Jesus knew cognitively what He must do, but not experientially. He had never personally known the exquisite and exacting process of an atonement before. Thus, when the agony came in its fulness, it was so much, much worse than even He with his unique intellect had ever imagined!** No wonder an angel appeared to strengthen him! (Luke 22:43)

The cumulative weight of all mortal sins – past, present, and future – pressed upon that perfect, sinless, and sensitive Soul! All our infirmities and sicknesses were somehow, too, a part of the awful arithmetic of the Atonement.” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1985, pg. 72-73)

“However dim our days may seem, they have been a lot darker for the Savior of the world. **As a reminder of those days, Jesus has chosen, even in a resurrected, otherwise perfected body, to retain for the benefit of His disciples the wounds in His hands and in His feet and in His side- signs, if you will, that painful things happen even to the pure and the perfect; signs, if you will, that pain in this world is not evidence that God doesn’t love you; signs, if**

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your will, that problems pass and happiness can be ours. It is the wounded Christ who is the captain of our souls, He who yet bears the scars of our forgiveness, the lesions of His love and humility, the torn flesh of obedience and sacrifice.” (Jeffery R. Holland, *CES Address*, August 2000, pg. 9)

An Infinite Atonement

(2 Nephi 9:21; Jacob 4:12; D&C 18:10-11; D&C 76:22-24; D&C 88:33)

“Why not speak of the atonement of Christ? (Jacob 4:12). Brothers and sisters, given man’s true self-interest, why should we really speak much of anything else?” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, November 1986, pg. 53)

“I can say to you in regard to Jesus and the atonement (it is so written, and I firmly believe it), that Christ has died for all. He has paid the full debt, whether you receive the gift or not. But if we continue to sin, to lie, steal, bear false witness, we must repent of and forsake that sin to have the full efficacy of the blood of Christ. Without this it will be of no effect; repentance must come, in order that the atonement may prove a benefit to us.” (Brigham Young, *Discourses of Brigham Young*, pg. 157; J Fld. S, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 2:4)

“Christ offered himself a sacrifice for this earth, for men, for the animals, for fishes, and the creeping things. Christ died for the earth and for the elements; Christ died for all mankind upon its face.” (Parley P. Pratt, *JD*, 3:315)

“It’s [atonement] effects cover all men, the earth itself and all forms of life thereon, and reach out into the endless expanses of eternity.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pg. 64)

“If there had been no atonement of Christ...then the whole of the plan and purpose connected with the creation of man would have come to naught. If there had been no atonement, temporal death would have remained forever, and there never would have been a resurrection. The body would have remained forever in the grave, and the spirit would have stayed in a spirit prison to all eternity. **If there had been no atonement,** there never would have been spiritual or eternal life for any persons. Neither mortals nor spirits could have been cleansed from sin, and all the spirit hosts of heaven would have wound up as devils, angel to a devil, that is, as sons of perdition.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pg. 63)

“There is no impropriety, therefore, in speaking of Jesus Christ as the Elder Brother of the rest of human kind. That he is by spiritual birth Brother to the rest of us is indicated in Hebrews: Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2:17). **Let it not be forgotten, however, that He is essentially greater than any and all others, by reason (1) of His seniority as the oldest or firstborn; (2) of His unique status in the flesh as the offspring of a mortal mother and of an immortal, or resurrected and glorified, Father; (3) of His selection and foreordination as the one and only Redeemer and Savior of the race; and (4) of His transcendent sinlessness.”** (The First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, (June 30, 1916), *Improvement Era*, 1916, August, 1916 pg. 934)

Repent or Suffer

(D&C 19:4, 15-17)

“We will end up either choosing Christ’s manner of living or His manner of suffering! It is either ‘suffer even as I’ (D&C 19:16--17), or overcome ‘even as [He] . . . overcame’ (Revelation 3:21). His beckoning command is to become ‘even as I am’ (3 Nephi 27:27). The spiritually settled accept that invitation, and ‘through the atonement of Christ,’ they become and overcome! (Mosiah 3:18, 19).” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 1987, pg. 72)

“...all will suffer until they obey Christ himself.” (Joseph Smith, *TPJS*, pg. 357)

“I once wondered if those who refuse to repent but who then satisfy the law of justice by paying for their own

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sins are then worthy to enter the celestial kingdom. The answer is no. The entrance requirements for celestial life are simply higher than merely satisfying the law of justice. For that reason, paying for our sins will not bear the same fruit as repenting of our sins. Justice is a law of balance and order and it must be satisfied, either through our payment or his. But if we decline the Savior's invitation to let him carry our sins, and then satisfy justice by ourselves, we will not yet have experienced the complete rehabilitation that can occur through a combination of divine assistance and genuine repentance. Working together, those forces have the power permanently to change our hearts and our lives, preparing us for celestial life.” (Bruce C. Hafen, *The Broken Heart: Applying the Atonement to Life's Experiences*, pg. 7)

“One of the greatest sins, both in magnitude and extent, for it enters into the lives of every one of us without exception to some degree, is the sin of ingratitude. When we violate a commandment, no matter how small and insignificant we may think it to be, we show our ingratitude to our Redeemer. It is impossible for us to comprehend the extent of his suffering when he carried the burden of the sins of the whole world, a punishment so severe that we are informed that blood came from the pores of his body, and this was before he was taken to the cross. The punishment of physical pain coming from the nails driven in his hands and feet, was not the greatest of his suffering, excruciating as that surely was. The greater suffering was the spiritual and mental anguish coming from the load of our transgressions which he carried. If we understood the extent of that suffering and his suffering on the cross, surely none of us would willfully be guilty of sin. We would not give way to the temptations, the gratification of unholy appetites and desires and Satan could find no place in our hearts. As it is, whenever we sin, we show our ingratitude and disregard of the suffering of the Son of God by and through which we shall rise from the dead and live forever. If we really understood and could feel even to a small degree, the love and gracious willingness on the part of Jesus Christ to suffer for our sins we would be willing to repent of all our transgressions and serve him.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Restoration of All Things*, p. 199)