

The Debt Cancelled

“He...(hath) forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”

(Colossians 2:13,14)

There is a beautiful oriental custom of which I have read that tells the story of Christ's atonement on the cross very perfectly.

When a debt had to be settled, either by full payment or forgiveness, it was the usage for the creditor to take the cancelled bond and nail it over the door of him who had owed it, that all passers by might see that it was paid.

Oh, blessed story of our remission! There is the cross, the door of grace, behind which a bankrupt (elect) world lies in hopeless debt to the law. See Jesus, our bondsman and brother, coming forth with the long list of our indebtedness in his hand. He lifts it up where God and angels and men may see it, and then, as the nail

goes through his hand, it goes through the bond of our transgressions to cancel it for ever, blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, that was contrary to us, he took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross!

Come to that cross, O sinner! Not in order that you may wash out your sins by your tears, or atone for them by your good works, or efface them by your sophistries or self-deceptions. But come rather that you may read the long list that is against you, and be pierced to your heart by compunction and sorrow that you have offended such a Being; and then that, lifting up your eyes, you may see God turning his eyes to the same cross at which you are looking, and saying, “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”

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(1836-1895)**