

Hebrews 2:9-10

The culmination of the argument, verse 9, up to this point is that the only One who can fulfill all that has been said to this point is Jesus. No other meets the requirements as argued in 1:1-14 and 2:5-8 (remember 2:1-4 is parenthetical and is a warning to professing believers). Jesus is the Messiah (prophet, priest, and king - 1:1-3, 9); the Son of God (1:5); God (1:6,8); Creator (1:10); eternal (1:11,12); Sovereign King (1:13; 2:5,7,8); made a man (2:9).

Verse 10 pointedly tells the recipients of this letter that God required that the Son, Jesus, would "lead" people to heaven through His suffering (i.e. His death and resurrection). *Jesus was made a little lower than the angels* (became man), to suffer (die), in order that all people could have a chance to become God's children through faith. The thought is that to think of going back to "Mosaism" and rejecting God's sacrifice is absurd.

Verse 9 ***But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.***

But we see Jesus

If one were to examine the prophecies in the earlier scripture (Old Testament), in this case the prophecies found in chapter one, the only conclusion to be reached is that Jesus is Messiah because He alone fulfills the prophecies.

who was made a little lower than the angels

The writer states a fact that was promised throughout the Old Testament. God would become a man!!! In this way He was made a little lower than the angels.

Born in Bethlehem - Micah 5:2
Born of a virgin - Isaiah 7:14
Son of David - Isaiah 9:6

for the suffering of death,

Why did God need to become man? So He could pay the sin debt we owe! He needed to be the eternal, perfect, efficacious sacrifice required by a Holy God!

No one is perfect - Ecclesiastes 7:20
Everyone will die - Ezekiel 18:20
A blood sacrifice is required - Leviticus 17:11
A perfect sacrifice is required - Isaiah 1:11; 53:9
He would be our substitute - Isaiah 53:5,6,10-12

crowned with glory and honour;

In His humanity he humbled Himself unto death (Philippians 2:6-8) and, thus, God exalted Him (Philippians 2:9) and honored Him (Hebrews 5:4-5; Ephesians 1:19-22).

that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

NKJV that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for **everyone**.
NIV so that by the grace of God he might taste death for **everyone**.
ASV that by the grace of God he should taste of death for **every man**.
YLT that by the grace of God for **every one** he might taste of death.
NAS that by the grace of God He might taste death for **everyone**.
RSV so that by the grace of God he might taste death for **every one**.
NLT Yes, by God's grace, Jesus tasted death for **everyone in all the world**.

Jesus' death was God's gracious, free gift to all - John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*
9 *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Jesus died for **every** man - 1 John 2:2; 1 Timothy 4:10

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

"For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."

WHAT ABOUT THE TEACHING OF LIMITED ATONEMENT IN LIGHT OF VERSE 9?

Calvinism:

Total Depravity

Unconditional election

Limited atonement

Irresistible grace

Perseverance of the saints

The following are excerpted from FOR WHOM DID CHRIST DIE? A Defense of Unlimited Atonement, by George Zeller.

This is a case where those holding to a limited atonement are forced to re-translate. For example, in *The Christian Counselor's New Testament* by Jay Adams, a reformed Christian, the passage is rendered: "that...He might taste death for all sorts of persons." This is a case of amending the text in order to fit one's theology. Likewise the *New Geneva Study Bible* says that "every man" (v.9) refers to the "many sons" of verse 10. This would mean that "every man" does not really mean "every man," but it refers only to the elect. Why do Reformed scholars insist upon this? Because their theological system demands it.

The Greek scholar, Dean Alford, explains the true significance of this term: "If it be asked, why *pantos* (each) rather than *panton* (all), we may safely say that the singular brings out, far more strongly than the plural would, the applicability of Christ's death to each individual man" (*New Testament for English Readers*, p. 1459). Westcott agrees: "Christ tasted death not only for all but for each" (*The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p.46).

PROponents AND DEFENDERS OF THE FACT THAT CHRIST DIED FOR ALL

In establishing any doctrine, it is what God says that counts. "*Let God be true, but every man a liar*" (Rom. 3:4). Having already established from the Scriptures that upon Christ were laid the iniquities of all of us, it is of interest to consider what great and godly men of the past have said about this issue of the universal extent of the atonement.

Norman F. Douty, in his excellent book *The Death of Christ*, lists over 70 of the Church's leading teachers, from the early centuries to the modern era, who stood firmly for the doctrine that Christ died on behalf of all men, not the elect only (pages 136-163). Here are some of the names on the list: Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Augustine, Martin Luther, Hugh Latimer, Myles Coverdale, Thomas Cranmer, Philip Melancton, Archbishop Ussher, Richard Baxter, John Newton, John Bunyan, Thomas Scott, Henry Alford, Philip Schaff, Alfred Edersheim, H.C.G. Moule, W.H. Griffith Thomas, and A.T. Robertson.

The following quotes are of interest:

"Although the blood of Christ be the ransom of the whole world, yet they are excluded from its benefit, who, being delighted with their captivity, are unwilling to be redeemed by it" (Prosper, who died 463 AD).

"For Christ only, and no man else, merited remission, justification, and eternal felicity, for as many as will believe the same; they that will not believe it, shall not have it, for it is no more but *believe and have*. For Christ shed as much blood for Judas as He did for Peter; Peter believed it, and therefore he was saved; Judas would not believe and therefore he was condemned – the fault being in him only, and in nobody else"
(Hugh Latimer, devoted bishop and martyr, 1485-1555)

"Christ died for all, yet, notwithstanding, all do not embrace the benefit of His death...they despise the offered grace"
(Benedict Aretius, 1505-1575)

"We may safely conclude that the Lamb of God offering himself a sacrifice for *the sins of the whole world*, intended, by giving sufficient satisfaction to God's justice, to make the nature of man, which he assumed, a fit subject for mercy, and to prepare a medicine for the sins of the whole world, which should be denied to none that intended to take the benefit of it" (Archbishop Usher, 1581-1656)

James Morison argues that the doctrine of a limited atonement was never taught in the early centuries of church history:

"The doctrine of a propitiation for the elect alone is not yet above fourteen hundred years old. Such a doctrine was unheard of during the glorious first three centuries of the Christian era. Nay, it was not known for about two hundred years after that. This surely is a striking fact, and should make some men pause and ponder before they condemn. "I think," says the illustrious Bishop Davenant, a divine most intimately versed in ecclesiastical history and the writings of the Fathers, "that it may be truly affirmed, that before the dispute between Augustine and Pelagius, there was no question concerning the death of Christ, whether it was to be extended to all mankind, or to be confined only to the elect. For the Fathers, when speaking of the death of Christ, describe it to us as undertaken and endured for the redemption of the human race; and not a word (that I know of) occurs among them of the exclusion of any person by the decree of God. They agree that it is actually beneficial to those only who believe, yet they everywhere confess that Christ died in behalf of all mankind." [He then quotes from Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Primasius, Athanasius and Prosper].

Bishop Davenport goes on to give some further details respecting the opinions of Augustine: "We assert, therefore, that Augustine never attempted to impugn that proposition of the Semi-pelagians, that Christ died for the whole human race . . . For neither did Augustine ever oppose as erroneous the proposition 'that Christ died for the redemption of the whole human race;' nor did he ever acknowledge or defend as his own, 'that Christ died, not for all men, but for the pre-destinate alone.' "

Augustine died A.D. 429, and up to his time, at least, there is not the slightest evidence that any Christian ever dreamed of a propitiation for the elect alone. Even after him, the doctrine of a limited propitiation was but slowly propagated, and for long but partially received.

More recent advocates of unlimited atonement are as follows: D.L.Moody, Albert Barnes, L.S.Chafer, John Walvoord, Robert Lightner, William Newell, R.C.H. Lenski, D.Edmond Hiebert, Robert Gromacki, E.Schuyler English, R.A. Torrey, Charles Ryrie and all the members of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America who have made unlimited atonement part and parcel of their doctrinal statement. Unlimited atonement seems also to be the position of the GARBC (Regular Baptists) because the Regular Baptist Press published the original edition of Robert Lightner's book, *The Death Christ Died*, which presents a strong case for unlimited atonement and also David Nettleton's book *Chosen to Salvation*. Nettleton refers to "the erroneous doctrine of limited atonement" and says that "limited atonement is not a necessary corollary of the sovereign election of God" (page 79).

Those who are defenders of a Limited Atonement would include Berkhof, Crawford, Cunningham, Eldersveld, Haldane, Hodge, Lloyd-Jones, John Murray, Owen, Packer, Pink, Smeaton, Spurgeon, Stonehouse and Warfield (see Douty, page 163). To this list can be added John Gerstner, Gary Long, David N. Steele, Custis C. Thomas, W.E. Best, John MacArthur and many others.

10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

"For it became him" is speaking of God **"whom are all things, and by whom are all things."**

This speaks of the grace of God that is shown to all of mankind. Grace is God's unmerited favor. It is His love shown to us. It is not earned nor merited. It is God's desire for sinful man to know Him personally and be restored to a personal relationship that was lost through sin. This thought encompasses the truth of verse 9 which itself is a summary of chapter 1:1 - 2:8.

See Isaiah 45:21-25; Ephesians 2:8-9

in bringing many sons unto glory,

"sons" is υιοσ υιου {hwee-os'}

Meaning: "in a wider sense, a descendant, one of the posterity of any one"; "generally used of the offspring of men" (Strong's Concordance)

God's grace will ultimately bring His children to heaven.

Psalm 73:23-24

23 *Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand.*
24 *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.*

Romans 8:18, 23-24, 29-39

- 18 *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*
- 23 *And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*
- 24 *For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*
- Adoption - see Ephesians 1:1-5; Galatians 4:1-5 - is the promise of a glorified body
- 29 *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*
- 30 *Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*
- 31 *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*
- 32 *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*
- 33 *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*
- 34 *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*
- 35 *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*
- 36 *As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*
- 37 *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*
- 38 *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*
- 39 *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

"captain" is the leader

"perfect" means complete

"Through sufferings" was the means by which our Captain would get us to heaven.

Isaiah 53:4-10; 1 Peter 3:18

Jesus, the Messiah, had to suffer and die for us so we could have our sins forgiven and be in heaven one day with a perfect, holy God.