

Peter Shows the Lord's Use of Honor Code Principles, 1 Pet 2:20-23; the Lord Does Not React to Revilings or Offer Threats but Entrusts His Enemies to God

Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 5:446:

- It is certainly an inalienable part of the New Testament message that deliverance from the wrath to come was achieved in the death of Christ. In Christ alone has eternal wrath been breached. Only in Him can we see the solution to the unparalleled tension between God's wrath and His love.

If there is deliverance from eternal wrath in Christ alone, then everything depends on whether a man rejects Christ or appropriates what Christ is and brings. To reject Him is to abide under wrath. To receive Him is to be free. "Either we must fear future wrath or love present grace—one of the two" (Ignatius). Liberation from God's wrath is bound up with faith in Christ, John 3:36 ["He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."]. In faith in Him we have the eschatological gift of freedom from wrath as a present reality. (p. 446)

NOTE: Everyone is born under the wrath of God's judgment which can only be removed by faith in Christ which is the unmeritorious response to the love of God.

25. In addition to these concepts, Peter points out how the Lord used this honor code principle in Roman 12:19 while enduring His Passion:

1 Peter 2:20 - What credit is there if when you sin you are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? [divine discipline is to be expected and to endure your comeuppance patiently is no virtue.] But if when you do what is right [Christian integrity] and suffer for it and patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.

v. 21 - For unto this [undeserved suffering, v. 20b] you were called, because Christ also suffered for you leaving [ὁπολιμπάνω, *hupolimpanō*: to leave behind for the benefit of others, i.e., a legacy] you a pattern [ὁπογραμμός, *hupogrammos*: "to write under"], that you should imitate [ἐπακολουθέω, *epakolouthēō*: to follow upon] His footprints [ἵχνος, *ichnos*: the impression left by the sole of the foot in walking, i.e., footsteps of righteousness.].

NOTE: In verse 21 there are four words that illuminate the principle of not avenging ourselves but to defer to the justice of God. This involves patience under the testing of underserved suffering.

The first word to consider is *hupolimpanō* which indicates that the Lord's application of the honor code leaves behind a legacy for us to reference when we endure undeserved suffering.

This is followed by the direct object of *hupogrammos* a word from Classical Greek that refers to an instrument used in teaching children how to write:

Liddell, Henry George and Robert Scott (comps). *A Greek-English Lexicon*. Revised by Henry Stuart Jones. (Chicago: Oxford University Press, 1968), 1877:

ὁπογραμμός, writing-copy, pattern, model, outline. Copy-heads for children, containing all the letters of the alphabet.

The manner by which the Lord conducted Himself while under the pressures of the Passion is left behind—*hupolimpanō*—as a legacy for us to examine in the biblical record.

The recorded legacy of His personal conduct is said to be a pattern, presented figuratively by the word *hupogrammos*, an implement used by children to learn their letters. But we are not to use this pattern to learn our letters but rather to learn principles developed over the course of the Lord's Incarnation and especially during the time of His Passion.

Our pattern is said to be his footsteps: *ichnos*, which correlates nicely with wheel-tracks of righteousness except we don't have the imagery of synaptic ruts repetitiously facilitated into neural pathways, but rather the footprints of our Lord cast figuratively into the landscape of Palestine, leaving a legacy which we are to follow by imitation: *epakolouthēō*.

The next verse gives the key as to how we are to accomplish these objectives:

1 Peter 2:22 - Who did not sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth [a quote from Isaiah 53:9c, "... he had done no violence, nor was there any deceit (מִרְמָה *mirmah*: no verbal sins) in His mouth];

This quote is used to illustrate how others observed Christ. What He thought could not be observed and what He did was often misunderstood, but throughout the Incarnation He always spoke the truth.

v. 23 - Who when being reviled [λοιδοπέω, *loidopeō*: **scurrilous, abusive attack prompted by anger or hatred**], He did not revile in return; while suffering, He did not utter threats, but kept entrusting [παραδίδωμι, *paradidōmi*] Himself to Him Who judges righteously.

The Lord did not consider abusive vituperations or the extreme pathos of His suffering as excuses to sin. On the one hand He did not enter into counter bellicosity or use His superior position to issue threats to His adversaries. On the other hand He kept entrusting Himself to the God of justice, the imperfect active indicative of the verb:

paradidōmi: "to entrust; to deliver over; to transfer"

imperfect: Iterative; "Used to describe action as recurring at successive intervals in past time. The vernacular English "kept on" represents quite well the sense. It may be graphically described by a broken line (-----)" [Dana and Mantey, 188-89].

Whenever our Lord was reviled he consistently kept on transferring the issue over to God. While on the cross and suffering from being associated with our sins, He consistently kept on transferring the issue over to God. For three hours of judgment, Christ dealt with being identified with our sins by keeping on entrusting the circumstance to God.

The Father is said to "judge righteously" which indicates that due to the Lord's impeccability He was accepted as a qualified substitute for the human race. God's righteous judgment resulted in propitiation, complete acceptance of the Lord's work as efficacious for our salvation

active: Jesus Christ produced the action of entrusting personal assaults on Himself to the justice of God for prosecution.

indicative: Declarative; this is a statement of fact.

This passage is the Lord's application of the principle He presented in:

Matthew 5:44 - "I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Both of these passages corroborate Honor Code principle #12 found in:

Romans 12:19 - Stop the current practice of avenging yourselves, members of the royal family. Instead, defer ...

From Peter's passage we find several examples provided by our Lord where honor code principle number 12 applies:

- "If when you do what is right and suffer for it and patiently endure it, this finds favor with God" (1 Peter 2:20).
- Christ left "you a pattern, that you should imitate His footprints" (v. 21).
- He "did not sin, neither was deceit found in His mouth" (v. 22).
- He did not respond with revilement to those who reviled Him (v. 23a).
- He did not threaten those responsible for His undeserved suffering (v. 23b).
- He kept on entrusting Himself to the Father, the righteous Judge (v. 23c).

26) The act of entrusting Himself to God's justice is the concept found in our twelfth honor code principle, indicated by the word *orgē*.

27) What is indicated by *orgē* is the transfer of punishment from the offended party to an objective Judge who will execute precise justice.

27) Therefore the rationale behind ordering us to transfer our grievances over to divine protocol is so that the varied details can be adjudicated by an all-knowing Arbiter.

28) For true justice to be served, a system must be in place to insure that punishment fits the crime.

29) Punishment is the end result of this system's process and procedure and therefore the best English word to use for the system is "prosecution," defined as follows by:

Black, Henry Campbell, *Black's Law Dictionary*. Rev. 4th ed. (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1968), 1385:

Prosecute. To "prosecute" an action is not merely to commence it, but includes following it to an ultimate conclusion. **Prosecution.** A proceeding instituted and carried on by due course of law, before a competent tribunal, for the purpose of determining the guilt or innocence of a person charged with crime.

30) *Orgē* is accompanied by the definite article **τῇ, tēi** "the prosecution." This definite article indicates a particular kind of wrath, or prosecution, and takes us back to the introduction of the book of Romans.