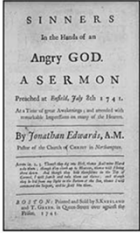


**Jonathan Edwards**  
(1703-1758)



Doctrine: *"There is nothing that keeps wicked men, at any moment, out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God."*

*Their foot shall slide in due time.*  
Deuteronomy 32:35

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# The Atonement

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## The Necessity and Nature of the Atonement

(Part Three)

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## The Atonement: Necessity

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**Premise:**

God **cannot** forgive sin without adequate atonement, namely, the death of Christ

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## The Atonement: Necessity

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**Question: Why?**

- Why can't God chose, according to His great mercy, simply to forgive repentant sinners?
- Why can't God forgive us in the same manner that He calls us to forgive one another?

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## The Atonement: Necessity

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**Answer: The Holiness of God**

- God's holiness and sin are utterly incompatible
- God's wrath/anger is the inevitable or necessary response of His holiness to sin

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## The Atonement: Necessity

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**Problem: God's tolerance**

- In spite of His holiness, God seems to be able to tolerate a multitude of sin
- If God can tolerate sin and chose not to be wrathful for a moment, why not forever?

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## The Atonement: Necessity

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### Patience of God

#### ➤ Exodus 34:6-7

- “slow to anger” – *lit.* “long-nose”; He does not express His wrath quickly
- this is a property of the Divine nature and part of His glory (used 18x of God in the Bible)

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## The Atonement: Necessity

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### Patience of God

#### 1. Nature of His Patience

##### ➤ Definitions:

- *A delay of the execution of God's wrath upon sinners, a wrath He necessarily possess against sin*
- *“It is His self-restraint in the face of provocation which delays the expression of His wrath” (R. Strauss)*

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## The Atonement: Necessity

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### Patience of God

#### 1. Nature of His Patience

- it is not the removal of God's disposition of wrath
- it does not equal forgiveness of sins
- it does not negate the justice of God
- it is by definition temporary, not eternal

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## The Atonement: Necessity

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### Patience of God

#### 2. Grounds of His Patience

##### A. The atoning death of Jesus (**Romans 3:25**)

- God withheld the execution of His wrath toward OT saints in view of the execution of that wrath upon His Son on the cross
- Since Christ, God, in view of the cross, exercises His patience toward all who will believe in Christ

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## The Atonement: Necessity

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### Patience of God

#### 2. Grounds of His Patience

##### B. The final judgment of God (**Romans 2:4-5**)

- God delays wrath upon unrepentant sinners in view of His execution of that wrath in the final judgment
- The delay of His wrath is also the storing up or accumulating of His wrath against sin

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## The Atonement: Necessity

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### Patience of God

#### 3. Reason for His Patience

##### ➤ *To lead sinners to repentance* (**Romans 2:4-5**)

- it both gives opportunity for and allures people to repentance and faith
- warning: do not mistake God's patience for His indifference to or approval of sin!

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