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The Ministry of Reconciliation

5: 18-20

The ministry of reconciliation DIG: What does reconciliation mean? Who has to take the first step in the process of reconciliation? Why? What story from your life might illustrate this? What does God do through Messiah (verse 18)? Through us (verse 20)? For us? What is propitiation? What is the relationship between propitiation and reconciliation?

REFLECT: Knowing what it is like to be alienated and reconciled in other relationships, how is it going with God at this point in your life: still a family feud, a truce, or have you made up? If you embraced your role as an ambassador for Messiah, how might it change your life? Who can you tell about the reconciliation of their life to Yeshua this week?

All who are in Messiah become ambassadors of Messiah.

Today's Church is confronted by a seemingly endless variety of ministry methods, strategies, and styles. But there is no confusion in Scripture about what the Church's mission is to be, and that is evangelism. This passage clearly presents the heart and soul of the Church's responsibility as it represents Yeshua in the world. **ADONAI** has called all believers, especially Messianic rabbis and pastors, to proclaim the message of **reconciliation**.

The glorious good news of the gospel is that the **sin**-devastated relationship between lost **sinner**s and the holy **God** of the universe can be restored. At first glance that seems impossible. **Ha'Shem's** perfect, infinite, righteous justice demands the punishment for **sin**. And standing before the bar of **His** justice we are helpless, guilty **sinner**s, unable to either satisfy **Him**, or to change our condition. But through **YHVH's** plan of **reconciliation**, all the hostility, animosity, and alienation separating **the Holy One** and **sinner**s vanishes, and those who were once **His enemies (James 4:4)** become **His friends (John 15:15)**. The high calling and noble privilege of preaching this message of reconciliation is the most important duty in the world, since it deals with eternal destinations.¹⁴³



Reconciliation is by the will of God (5:18): Like the first **Creation** of the universe (see the commentary on **Genesis, to see link click [Ag - In the Beginning God Created the Heavens and the Earth](#)**), the new creation (see **Bd - A New Creation**) is initiated by **God**. **And all these things are from God, who through the Messiah has reconciled us to Himself and has given us the message of that reconciliation (5:18)**. Both the verb *katallasso* (**reconciled**) and the noun *katallage* (**reconciliation**) appear in the B'rit Chadashah only in **Paul's** writings (**Romans 5:11; Ephesians 2:13-16; Colossians 1:20-22**). **Sinners** cannot be **reconciled** to **God** on their own terms. Unregenerate people have no ability to appease the anger of **Ha'Shem** against **sin**, satisfy **His** holy justice, or conform to **His** standard of righteousness. They are guilty of violating **God's Word** and face eternal banishment from **His** presence. The deadly deceptive premise of all false religions is that sinners, based on their own moral and religious efforts and achievements, can **reconcile** themselves to **God**. But **God** alone designed the way of reconciliation and only **He** can take the first step in drawing sinners close to **Him**. The fact that **God has reconciled us to Himself** is precisely the good news of the gospel (**John 3:16**).

Thus, **reconciliation** is not something mankind does but what they receive; it is not what people accomplish but what they embrace. **Reconciliation** does not happen when we decide to stop rejecting **God**, but when **God** decides to stop rejecting us. It is a divine provision by which **Ha'Shem's** holy wrath against alienated sinners is appeased by the death of **Messiah**, satisfying every claim **His** holiness and justice so that **He** is free to act on behalf of **sinners** (propitiation). **Reconciliation** occurs because **ADONAI** was graciously willing to design a way to have all the sins of those who are **His** removed from them **as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12)**, **throw all their sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19b)**, and **threw all their sins behind His back (Isaiah 38:17b)**.

Reconciliation is by the act of forgiveness (5:19): Which is that **God in the Messiah** was reconciling mankind to Himself, not counting their sins against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation (5:19). The phrase **reconciling**

mankind must not be understood as teaching universalism, the false doctrine that all people will be saved. If **God reconciled the world**, Universalists simplistically argue, then the barrier between **God** and mankind has been removed for all, and everyone will be saved. Wrong! Scripture does teach that there is a sense in which **Messiah** died for **the whole world (John 1:29, 4:42, 6:51; 1 Tim 2:6; Hebrews 2:9)**. Everyone reaching the age of accountability has an opportunity for salvation and eternal life in heaven. But because of our free-will **in Messiah**, we can say no to **God** and make it stick. Those who choose to believe in **Yeshua** take advantage of **His** gracious offer, while those who reject **Him** do not (see the commentary on [Romans 1](#) - **The Evidence Against the Pagan Gentile**). But to all those whom **He** has reconciled, **ADONAI has given us the message of reconciliation**. All who are **in Messiah** become **ambassadors of Messiah**.

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for so graciously making **reconciliation** possible by the suffering of **Your Son** as the sacrificial **lamb of God (John 1:29)**. **You** are so overly generous in giving **Yeshua's** righteousness to all who love and trust **Him** as their **Savior (Second Corinthians 5:21; Romans 10:9-10)**. When I focus on the joy of eternity with **You** in heaven forever, I have overflowing joy and contentment! When I realize that some of my family and friends have not made the personal decision to follow **You** - I am so heart broken and anxious for their salvation. Heaven is real and so is Hell. My family and friends know about **You** and think **Your** love is wonderful, but they have not made the important personal decision to follow you as their **Lord** and their **Savior**.*

*Please work in their hearts to want to seek you. May you show them that while you are so very loving, you are also holy and can tolerate no sin in your holy heaven. It is their pride that is keeping them from bowing before **You**. Please allow situations, friends or whatever it takes to get them to want to be part of **Your** family by loving you as their **Lord, Master and Father**. May they use their free will to turn away from earthly short-lived happiness and to run hard after the eternal joy of loving and serving you forever! In **Your** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*

Reconciliation is by the obedience of faith (5:20): Therefore, **Paul** now summarizes his message, we are **ambassadors of the Messiah**; in effect, **God is making His appeal through us**. What we do is **appeal on behalf of the Messiah**, “**Be reconciled to God**” (**Second Corinthians 5:20**)! This is equal to the Great Commission (see the commentary on [The Life of Christ 10](#) - **The Great Commission**). Because believers are **His ambassadors**, it is though **God the Father makes His appeal** to the lost **on behalf** of the Son, **Yeshua Messiah**, to be **reconciled to the Triune God**.¹⁴⁴ This appeal for people to be **reconciled** makes it clear that the sinner is never delivered from wrath and judgment to

blessing and reward without a personal response to the truth of the gospel through the means **He** provided: We are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in **Messiah** alone (see the commentary on [Galatians Bc - We are Not Justified by Deeds of the Torah](#)). When our sins are forgiven, we get a new purpose driven life, and we are promised an eternal home in heaven.

You were made for a mission. **God** is at work in the world and **He** wants you to join **Him**. This assignment is called your mission. **God** wants you to have both a ministry in **the Body of Messiah** and a mission to the world. Your ministry is to believers, and your mission is to unbelievers. This is **God's** purpose for your life. The English word mission comes from the Latin word for *sending*. Being a believer includes being sent into the world as **an ambassador**, a representative, of **Yeshua Messiah**. The mission **Yeshua** had while on the earth is now our mission because **we** are **the Body of Messiah**. What **He** did in **His** physical body, **we** are to continue as **His** spiritual body, the Church. What is that mission? Introducing people to **the Lord**! The Bible says **God is making His appeal through us**.

ADONAI wants to redeem human beings from Satan and reconcile them **to Himself** (at **His** expense) so **we** can fulfill the purposes **He** created us for: to love **Him**, to be a part of **His** family, to become like **Him**, to serve **Him**, and to tell others about **Him**. Once **we** are **His**, **God** wants us to reach others. **He** saves us and then sends us out. **We are ambassadors of the Messiah. We** are the messengers of **God's** love to the world.¹⁴⁵