

he had sold himself, by any one near of kin to him or by himself. "If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom (*kopher*) of his life, whatsoever is laid upon him." Ex. xxi, 30. The owner of a vicious bull, who neglected to confine it, if a person was gored by it, forfeited his life; but the law allowed him to redeem himself by a money payment, which is called a ransom. The Saviour's work was a ransom paid to God, and it is the ground on which he delivers men from hell and redeems them to his favour and from the love of sin.

*Hilasmus*, *hilasterion*, and the verb *hilaskesthai* are also used to express what Jesus did for sinners. *Hilasmus* means propitiation, and is so translated in 1 John ii, 2; iv, 10, "And he is the propitiation (*hilasmus*) for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" "Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation (*hilasmus*) for our sins." *Hilasterion* signifies propitiatory. It is the word used in Rom. iii, 25. It is translated *mercy-seat* in Heb. ix, 5. The mercy-seat was the lid or cover of the ark in the Holy of Holies in the Jewish temple on which appeared the glory or symbol of the Divine presence. It was of pure gold. Cherubim of pure gold covered the mercy-seat with their wings and looked down upon it, to which Peter alludes when he speaks of the angels, desiring to look into the things of the plan of salvation. On this mercy-seat the blood of atonement was sprinkled by the High Priest when he went once a year into the Holy of Holies. *Hilaskesthai* signifies, to propitiate, and occurs in Heb. ii, 17, "make reconciliation† (*hilaskesthai*) for the sins of the people." The work of Jesus Christ is a propitiation—a ground on which, God may, without tarnishing his justice, or dishonouring his law, or injuring his angelic creatures, "reconcile men unto himself not imputing unto them their sins."

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† Pye Smith in his *Four Discourses*, p. 80, translates this passage, "make propitiation for the sins of the people;" and in his *Scripture Testimony to the Messiah*, p. 103, vol. ii, he translates it "to propitiate for the sins of the people." Whitby in his commentary on the place translates it "to make atonement for the sins of the people." This is the true idea of the passage; for, in the preceding part of the verse it is said that, "it behoved Christ to be made in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining to God," for that very purpose. Propitiation is made to God; reconciliation is an effect produced in men by the love of God displayed in the atonement, when the truth about it is believed.