
The Ransom of the Martyrs:

The Atonement Theology of 4 Maccabees

6:27–29 and 17:21–22

殉道者的贖價：

瑪喀比四書 6:27–29 與 17:21–22 的贖罪神學

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摘要

本文旨在分析瑪喀比四書 6:27–29 與 17:21–22 中的贖罪思想。在敘利亞王之前忍受酷刑，年老的祭司以利亞撒堅決不放棄信仰，臨死前向上帝禱告：「……願我的血潔淨他們，並以我的生命作為他們的贖價 (ἀντίψυχον)」(6:27–29)。此外，一位有七個兒子的母親，親眼見到自己的七個兒子為堅持信仰而一一殉道，即使如此，她自己也絕不妥協。臨死前這位母親認為自己的死將為國家的罪帶來贖罪 (ἀντίψυχον) 的效果 (17:21–22)。從這兩段經文更大的上下文脈來看，瑪喀比四書的作者不單是著眼於「血」或「死」所帶來的效果，作者更加重視殉道者「絕對忠實順服上帝甚至到死」這樣的精神。換句話說，「血」或「死」僅是作者的文學象徵，其背後所指涉的「絕對忠實順服上帝至死」才是本書贖罪神學的核心所在。

關鍵詞：殉道、贖價、瑪喀比四書、贖罪神學

Abstract

The goal of this article is to analyze the concepts of atonement in 4 Macc. 6:27–29 and 17:21–22. Rather having been tortured than giving up his religious faith in front of the Syrian King, the old priest Eleazar prays to God before he dying: “... Make my blood their purification, and take my life as their ransom (ἀντίψυχον αὐτῶν λαβὲ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν)” (6:27–29). And a mother who has seven sons rejects to give up her Jewish tradition even she witnesses the deaths of her sons for their insisting their religious faith. Before dying, the mother believes that her death will be the ransom (ἀντίψυχον) of the sin of her nation (17:21–22). Thus, not death but rather the martyrs’ steadfastness and endurance unto death are effective. It is not the human blood itself that atones, but the obedience of these human beings unto death that God accepts as a perfect sacrifice. In 4 Maccabees the obedience unto death of the priest Eleazar, the seven sons and their mother are the acts that brought reconciliation with God, allowing Israel to be preserved by God. In 4 Maccabees, the obedience of the martyrs unto death is indeed viewed by the author as an effective sacrifice—one that God accepts as an atonement and that moves God to turn again to the people in favor and deliverance.

Keywords: martyrdom, ransom, 4 Maccabees, Atonement Theology