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Discussion guide: Thomas F. Torrance, *The Mediation of Christ*, (Paternoster, 1983; T. & T. Clark, 1992)

Chapter Two: The Mediation of Reconciliation

Revelation and reconciliation belong together. A basic principle of knowledge: all genuine knowledge involves a cognitive union of the mind with its object. Knowing God requires cognitive union with him in which our whole being is affected by his love and holiness: it is the pure in heart who see God. *Askesis*

- (1) The covenant between God and Israel was not a covenant between God and a holy people but precisely the reverse – a covenant of grace with sinful, rebellious, estranged Israel.
- (2) Intensification of the conflict. He makes their very sin the means by which he binds them to himself. Brought to its culmination in Jesus
- (3) We may find this difficult: but Israel was elected to reject the Messiah vicariously (Acts 2:23). John Donne on the cross:

It bore all other sinnes, but is it fit
That it should bear the sinne of scorning it?

The continuing role of Israel: the scapegoat on the *Yom Kippur*

The Holocaust

Profound lesson: the Incarnation was the coming of God to save us in the heart of our *fallen* and *depraved* humanity – St Paul – the Greek Fathers. Otherwise atoning and sanctifying reconciliation can be understood only in terms of external relations between Jesus Christ and sinners – forensic, judicial terms. The awesome truth that through his Incarnation the Son of God appropriated our fallen humanity under the judgement of God.

Jesus used our very sin as the means to bind us irrevocably to himself in the love of God. Cf. the holocaust. The need to bind Christians and Jews together. The God-forsakenness of the cry from the cross, converted into a prayer of commitment and trust. The holocaust museum in Jerusalem: holocaust and covenant – the cross of Christ. Christians divided at the Holy Sepulchre.