

The Aorist Tense

in John 3:16



Considering the use of the aorist tense twice in the main clause of verse 16 to indicate with the context:

(God loved—aorist tense; God Gave – Aorist tense) shows God's completed action of love in His giving His one and only Son once for all time completed action of paying for the sins of the whole world.



We can therefore conclude that the aorist tense in "me apoletai," may not perish, means

a completed action

resulting in a condition of never perishing

as a result of the application of God's once for all time giving of His one and only Son

upon the one who believes, the believer.

Since this action of God is a completed action and has been appropriated by the individual at the moment he became

"ho pisteuon" = "the believer,"

then we may conclude that the state of the believer "not perishing," is permanent.

Thus, the subjunctive mood of the verb "me apoletai," may not perish, in this clause expresses action which is objectively possible for the whole world and which becomes a reality for the

"pas ho pisteuon" = the one who is believing,
 i.e., the believer considering the context and especially considering the unfailing capacity and sovereignty of God in fulfilling His declared purposes.



The subjunctive mood allows for the assumption that there is some doubt as to the outcome depending upon the reliability of the One acting for the purpose stipulated. Since God is absolutely reliable then the outcome in the subordinate clause for the believer is actual and not potential.

He will not perish

Now we come to the subordinate clause: but have eternal life