

Atonement - Redemption

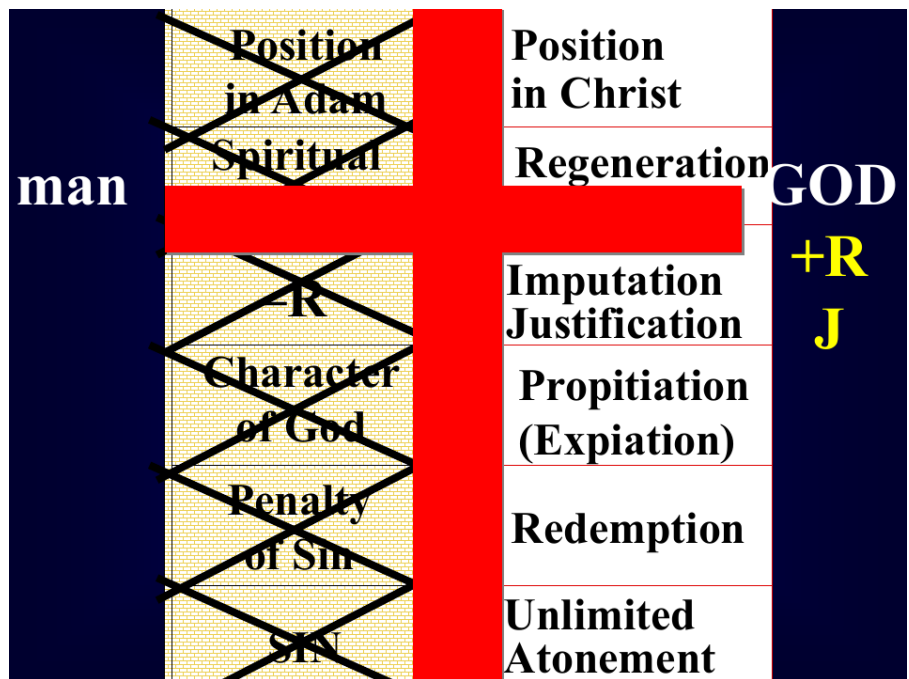
For several more weeks we will find ourselves in Romans chapter 3 investigating various aspects of atonement.

You might ask, “Why would you want to learn about atonement? Isn’t that some seminary term?”

Well, do you care what Jesus’ suffering on the cross did FOR YOU?

Atonement answers the question of why you have salvation. It solves problems in the barrier between God and man. It is so important that sacrifices in the Old Testament illustrate and provide visual teaching aids so the believer can learn what God did for you.

Below is Robby Dean’s illustration of the barrier between man and God. R. B. Thieme Jr. had a similar illustration.



1 <https://deanbible.org/dbmfiles/slides/2002-Salvation-08.pdf>

Redemption Romans 3:24

Another reason to learn about atonement is that there are many false teachers out there that will lead you astray. Too often people like to listen to false teachers who can mesmerize with smooth talking but provide the poison of false doctrines. Often they emphasize feel good emotions. But our relationship with God is not based upon emotion. It is based upon God's grace, what He provides free of charge based upon the work of Jesus Christ on the cross: atonement, the blood of Christ. What you understand about these topics can direct your evangelical efforts. They answer questions like: Who did Jesus die for on the cross? Everyone or only those who would eventually believe. Is the blood of Christ literal physical blood or does it represent the spiritual death of Jesus on the Cross.

The last two weeks we dealt with sin in Hebrew and Greek vocabulary. These words were not identifying particular sins or sin lists but focused on the character of sin. Sin is missing the mark of God's perfect righteousness. It can be deliberate or from ignorance. The worst kinds of sins are sins that engage in idol and demon worship—directly anti-God activities. Sin is the reason we are here. Adam and Eve sinned in the garden...the original sin. God, in his infinite mercy and grace provided a means of solving the sin problem while maintaining his integrity in righteousness. As we have seen, sin was not the only issue. Everlasting life and righteousness were also lost in the garden. As a result, Christ bore the sins of the world and was judged. But life and righteousness are imputed to anyone, everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ for salvation. The work of Christ on the cross provided the basis for our so great salvation: atonement. Let us read the passage in Romans and then start our path on the various topics related to atonement.

**Redemption
Romans 3:24**

Romans 3:21 But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Romans 3:22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 3:24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

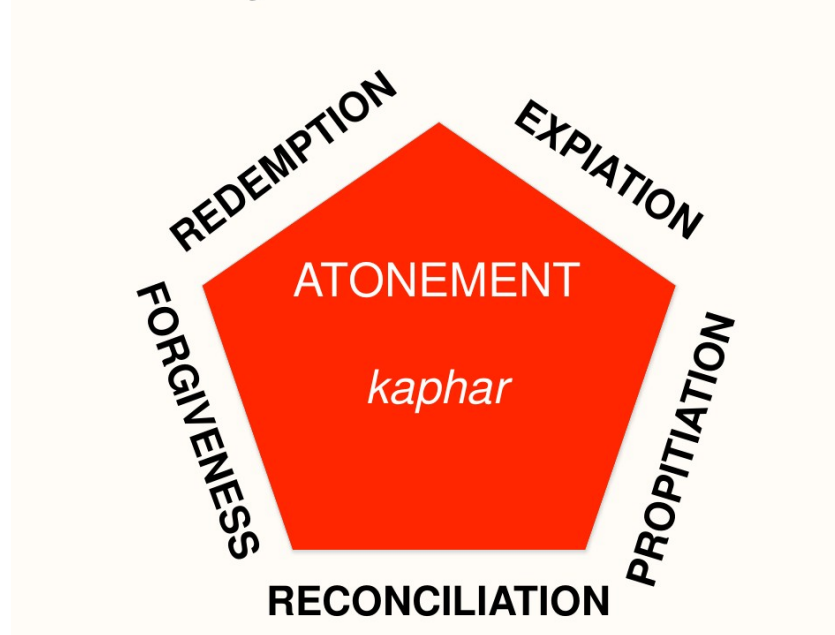
Romans 3:25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

The topic that needs to be covered is “redemption.” What is it and why do we need it?

But...before we get to that topic, there is a context within which “redemption fits.” The umbrella topic is “atonement.” Robby Dean depicts the relationship of atonement to other pertinent doctrines in a nice illustration²:

² <https://www.deanbible.org/dbmfiles/slides/2018-Ephesians-210b.pdf>

The Many Facets of Atonement



As a result, we must first delve into the topic of atonement before we proceed to the other important doctrines related to the cross work of Christ.

You note that Robby has “*kaphar*” in the middle of “atonement.” That is the transliteration of the Hebrew word for “cover” or “cleansing.” That is based upon the Levitical sacrifices and what they accomplished. That requires us to touch on some other topics to bring us up to speed. You see, we westerners are ignorant of the nuances of the Temple sacrifices. There are words and phrases we need to become familiar with: “blood,” life of the animal, “kaphar” as meaning “cleansing.” Then we can get to redemption, propitiation and reconciliation.

Leviticus chapter 1 is a good place to start to get an idea of the elements of the sacrifice.

Now remember. The Bible is not written to just people who are well educated and hold PhD degrees. The Bible is written for common people like you and me. That is why the NT is written in the Koine or common

Redemption
Romans 3:24

Greek. You remember Isaiah 64:6. Or the sex in the Song of Solomon. Or the “dung and urine” passages in Jeremiah. The Bible communicates important and powerful information that is tailored for YOU.

Leviticus 1:1 Then the Lord called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying,

Leviticus 1:2 “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When any man of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of animals from the herd or the flock.

A person brings an offering of an animal to the Lord. There is an implied relationship here between man and God. The offering is something of value. Brings. Right away, there is a word group that is repeated in various forms.

Brings. Comes from the basic word meaning to approach. Verb.

Offering. Comes from the basic word meaning to approach. Noun.

Biblehub.com has some help putting this word group in focus:

The verb³:

“**Usage:** The Hebrew verb "qarab" primarily means to come near or approach. It is used in various contexts, including physical proximity, relational closeness, and ritualistic or spiritual nearness. In the Old Testament, "qarab" often describes the act of drawing near to God, whether through worship, sacrifice, or prayer. It also refers to the approach of people or objects in a more general sense.”

3 <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7126.htm>

Redemption
Romans 3:24

“Cultural and Historical Background: In ancient Israelite culture, the concept of drawing near to God was central to religious life. The Israelites believed that God dwelled among them, particularly in the Tabernacle and later the Temple. Approaching God required ritual purity and was often mediated through priests and sacrifices. The act of "qarab" was not merely physical but also spiritual, symbolizing a heart posture of reverence and submission to God's holiness.”

The noun⁴:

Usage: The term "qorban" refers to something brought near to God as an offering. It encompasses various types of sacrifices and gifts presented at the altar, including burnt offerings, grain offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings. The concept of qorban is central to the sacrificial system outlined in the Torah, serving as a means for the Israelites to express worship, gratitude, atonement, and dedication to God.

Cultural and Historical Background: In ancient Israel, the sacrificial system was a vital aspect of religious life, serving as a tangible expression of the covenant relationship between God and His people. The offerings were conducted at the Tabernacle and later at the Temple in Jerusalem. Each type of qorban had specific regulations and purposes, reflecting the holiness and justice of God, as well as His provision for reconciliation and fellowship with His people. The practice of offering qorbanot (plural of qorban) was deeply embedded in the cultural and religious fabric of Israelite society.

This reminds me of the first paragraph of R. B. Thieme III master's thesis:

4 <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7133.htm>

Redemption
Romans 3:24

“The Bible speaks of God as dwelling with man (Lev.26:11-12; Jn.1:14; II Cor.6:16). This divine presence is a guarantee of the covenant blessings promised in the Old Testament (Lev.26) and of the "unfathomable riches" of invisible assets provided for every church age believer (Eph.3:8; cf. Col.1:27). But, between Israel and the Church there is an obvious difference in the manifestation of that presence. Yahweh is presented as a tabernacling God who first dwelled in a tent in the wilderness, and subsequently in a series of sacred buildings. The incarnate Christ dwelled with His people in a body which He described as a temple. In the Church Age the Holy Spirit indwells the temple of the believer's body. In spite of these changes in residence the continuity of God's presence is readily discernible. Is, therefore, the dwelling presence of God a unifying theme between the Old and New Testaments?”

Whether in the Garden of Eden or in the Old Testament or New Testament or now, God seeks fellowship with mankind. If we approach Him, He approaches us for fellowship.

Leviticus 1:3 If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer it, a male without defect; he shall offer it at the doorway of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the Lord.

Male without defect is brought to the doorway of the tent of meeting with the intent of being accepted “before” the Lord. The word for “before” is literally “to the face of the Lord.” This is personal.

May be accepted. It can mean something like “satisfied.” God is satisfied with the offering. Propitiation is another word for “satisfied.” So right here in Leviticus God is propitiated by the offering.

Redemption
Romans 3:24

The Hebrew verb for this is explained by Biblehub.com⁵.

“**Usage:** The Hebrew verb "ratsah" primarily conveys the idea of being pleased with or accepting something or someone favorably. It is often used in contexts where God expresses His pleasure or acceptance of offerings, sacrifices, or individuals. The term can also imply satisfaction or delight, indicating a positive response or approval.”

“**Cultural and Historical Background:** In ancient Israelite culture, the concept of divine acceptance was central to religious life. Offerings and sacrifices were a primary means through which individuals sought to gain God's favor. The acceptance of these offerings was seen as a sign of God's pleasure and approval. The term "ratsah" reflects this cultural understanding, emphasizing the importance of aligning one's actions with God's will to receive His favor.”

Leviticus 1:4 He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf.

By laying his hand on the sacrifice, the man is identifying with the animal. The animal is substitute for the man.

“Accepted” comes from a word that means to find favor or to satisfy. We dealt with the basic meaning previously. To get another perspective to help us understand this verb look at another usage in Genesis. Jacob is meeting Esau. He wants Esau to forgive him for his trickery in stealing Esau’s birthright.

Genesis 33:10 Jacob said, “No, please, if now I have found favor in your sight, then take my present from my hand, for I see your face as

⁵ <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7521.htm>

Redemption
Romans 3:24

one sees the face of God, and you have received me favorably.

Genesis 33:11 Please take my gift which has been brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me and because I have plenty.” Thus he urged him and he took it.

Received me favorably. Satisfaction. Here is the doctrine of “propitiation.” The sacrifice of Jesus which is a type of the Levitical sacrifices “satisfies” or propitiates God. And here it is already in the Torah. Interesting that Jacob brings in God in this context of satisfaction.

Leviticus 1:5 He shall slay the young bull before the Lord; and Aaron’s sons the priests shall offer up the blood and sprinkle the blood around on the altar that is at the doorway of the tent of meeting.

In order to have fellowship, meet with the Lord, the man must sprinkle the blood which represents the death of the animal on the altar.

Leviticus 1:6 He shall then skin the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces.

Leviticus 1:7 The sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire.

Leviticus 1:8 Then Aaron’s sons the priests shall arrange the pieces, the head and the suet

**Redemption
Romans 3:24**

over the wood which is on the fire that is on the altar.

Leviticus 1:9 Its entrails, however, and its legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall offer up in smoke all of it on the altar for a burnt offering, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the Lord.

Soothing aroma to the Lord. It is acceptable to the Lord. It satisfies or propitiates the Lord.

Throughout these verses in Leviticus are words, nouns and verbs, based upon the verb “to approach.” The offering, is offered in order to approach God. Fellowship. As we go through these verses and explain the words, you may get an inkling of how the New Testament writers got the concepts and words to write about the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Not stated here is the fact that imperfect sinful man must require atonement through a blood sacrifice in order to approach God for fellowship. This is done at the door to the tent of meeting on an altar with an animal which is a substitute for the offerer. The result is that the offerer is “cleansed.”

The animal to be sacrificed costs a lot of money. It is valuable. Jesus Christ is valuable to God the Father. The animal is “slayed” or killed. It pays with its life for the offerer who places his hand on the head of the animal, identifying the man, the sinner, with the unblemished animal. The blood of the animal is the evidence of the death, of the payment. It is presented to God on the altar. As a result, God accepts the offering because he is satisfied, propitiated. The offerer can approach God in fellowship because his status has changed from enemy to family. He has been reconciled to God.

Redemption
Romans 3:24

Jesus makes an oblique reference to this when washing the disciples feet.

For me, there is a logical sequence:

Redemption: Jesus Christ paid the penalty of sin at the cross receiving God's judgment. This had to happen before God could be propitiated.

Propitiation: As a result of the work of Christ on the cross, God is satisfied with the payment, called the Blood of Christ.

Reconciliation. Man's status is changed from enemy to family.

I started to copy parts of Herman's doctrine of redemption. This is a preview of next week's "episode."

1. Definition and Description

A. In the Doctrine of Soteriology, Salvation, there are three key words: redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation. The phrase "the blood of Christ" applies to all three doctrines.

- 1) Redemption is toward sin. There are three theological words that actually describe this concept: redemption, expiation, and unlimited atonement. These always deal with sin as a problem in our relationship with God.
- 2) Reconciliation is always directed toward mankind. Man is reconciled to God by the death of His Son.
- 3) Propitiation is directed toward God, meaning that the Justice and Perfect Righteousness (+R) of God the Father is satisfied with the work of Christ on the cross.

When I read and reread some of the Bible passages I am reminded of the little girl in the video of John 3:16. "Wow!"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5beoRa_HR8o

**Redemption
Romans 3:24**