

GREAT BIBLE DOCTRINES - LESSON 8 THE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT

Introduction: "The soul that sins shall die" (Ezekiel 18:20). Once a person sins, he deserves the punishment of eternal death, he passes into Satan's ownership as a slave, and he becomes the enemy of God and of other people, separated from God (Isaiah 59:1, 2). All this is brought about by Satan who introduced sin into the world and captures people to serve sin. Christ came to restore the good that God intended for man, and to destroy the things Satan has done (1 John 3:8). The work of Christ in restoring man to his original relationship with God is called atonement.

1. God's just sentence against the sinner had to be satisfied by a "propitiation" (atoning sacrifice).
 - A. God, as the righteous judge of the universe, could not just pass over sin. Sin dishonors God's righteousness and is destructive. It has a just penalty. "A government which never punishes offense is a contradiction--it cannot exist" (Watson). If God is to govern His universe in righteousness, he must justly punish sin - Romans 2:5-11; 6:23; Ezekiel 18:20.
 - B. But God is also perfect love, and he takes no pleasure in the sinner's destruction, but in His salvation - Ezekiel 33:11; 2 Peter 3:9. Since man could not provide for himself an atoning sacrifice for his sins, God provided one - 1 John 2:2; 4:9,10; Hebrews 10:12; Romans 5:17,18.
 - 1) Christ volunteered freely to go to earth and to atone for our sins on the cross - Hebrews 10:5-7; John 10:17, 18; Philippians 2:5-8.
 - 2) Christ took our place and was punished with the punishment that we deserved - Isaiah 53:4-6; 1 Peter 2:22-24; 2 Corinthians 5:21.
 - 3) In this way God could both be just and also the justifier and savior of sinners - Romans 3:23-26.
 - 4) Due to the atoning sacrifice of Christ, we are no longer condemned - Romans 8:1, 33, 34; 5:1.

2. The atoning self-sacrifice of Christ was the ransom price that redeemed us from Satan's ownership and the bondage of sin - Ephesians 1:7.
 - A. Every unsaved sinner is a slave of sin and belongs to the devil - John 8:34, 44; Romans 6:16; Ephesians 2:1-3.
 - B. Without the grace of God in Christ, the law always stood against us, condemning us for our sins, and Satan could legally accuse us and condemn us - Romans 3:20; 2 Corinthians 3:6-9; Galatians 3:13; Colossians 2:13,14; Revelation 12:7-10. Through the cross we are now under grace and free of Satan's legal claims on us - Romans 6:14; 8:1.
 - C. The price of our redemption was the blood of Christ - 1 Peter 1:18, 19.
 - 1) There is no forgiveness without the shedding of blood - Hebrews 9:22.
 - 2) Man had nothing to offer with which to redeem himself - Matthew 16:26; Romans 5:6. (All of the good works we might do are already owed to God and cannot go to repay past deficits of obedience).

- 3) The blood of animals could not really take away sin, since an animal's life is not worth that of a man - Hebrews 10:4.
 - 4) Christ alone had not forfeited His life by sinning (Hebrews 4:15), and was therefore able to offer a sufficient payment in His blood - Hebrews 9:12, 14; John 1:29; Matthew 26:28.
- D. Our redemption in Christ includes salvation from:
- 1) The guilt of sin, through God's forgiveness - Romans 3:21-24; Acts 2:38.
 - 2) The power of sin over us - Romans 6:14; 7:14-25; 8:13; Galatians 5:19-23.
 - 3) The physical and spiritual death that came by sin - 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22; Romans 8:11, 23.
- E. We are redeemed from the service of sin so that we can serve Christ in righteousness - Titus 2:11-14; Romans 6:1-18.
3. God created us for fellowship. Christ's atonement results in our being reconciled to God - Colossians 1:19, 20.
- A. When man and woman sinned, their fellowship with God was broken - Genesis 3:8-10; Isaiah 59:1, 2. In our sin and rebellion we are enemies of God - Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:21.
 - B. Christ's death removed our offenses and restored our peace with God - 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19; Romans 5:9-11.
 - C. God calls us to peace through the gospel - 2 Corinthians 5:19, 20; Ephesians 6:15; Luke 2:13, 14.
 - D. Christ's atonement enables us to receive the Holy Spirit, through whom we have fellowship and communion with God - Matthew 3:11; Ephesians 2:18; 6:18; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Romans 8:26, 27.
 - E. Having peace with God through the cross, people who were enemies with each other, such as Jews and Gentiles, are also reconciled to each other - Ephesians 2:11-18; Matthew 22:36-39; John 15:12.

Conclusion: No one else but Jesus could have brought us back together with God and given us peace. Let's thank and praise God continually for the love which caused Him to give up even His own beloved Son to save us. Let's thank and praise Jesus continually for obeying God even to the point of dying for us, rather than to leave us without hope. With such revived potential for our lives, and with such an unlimited future hope provided by Christ's atonement, we are of all people the most blessed!

8 By G.B. Shelburne, III (except for any graphics and scripture quotations). May be reproduced for non-profit, non-publishing instructional purposes provided document content is not altered and this copyright notice is included in full. Format may be altered. South Houston Bible Institute, 14325Crescent Landing, Houston, TX 77062-2178, U.S.A., tel. 281-990-8899, email <shbi@shbi.org>, web site <www.shbi.org>. Scriptures, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the HOLY BIBLE: NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION 8 1978 and 1984 by the New York International Bible Society, used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.