

*Thoughts
On
The
Atonement*

*Wm. Doyal Thomas
&
Oscar B. Mink*

Thoughts on the Atonement

by

Wm. Doyal Thomas

and

Oscar B. Mink

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Thoughts on the Atonement

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Foreword

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:” (Ephesians 4:11-13).

Without attempting an exegesis of the above portion of Scripture, we will only comment that it is an evident scriptural declaration that those whose role is, **“for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ”** are divinely bestowed gifts unto the Lord’s churches.

It has been my personal experience to be greatly benefited spiritually in my walk before the Lord by two men who are exemplary patterns of those **“pastors and teachers”** whom God gave to His churches.

In His sovereign and omnipotent eternal decree, our gracious Lord ordained that this unworthy servant would be permitted to sit under the ministry of these two soldiers of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As a maternal uncle, Brother Oscar Mink was in our family before I was, and I knew him all of my life. Yet, it was about a year after the Lord revealed Himself to me that He led me to follow Him in baptism and added me unto one of His precious blood-bought churches, one which Brother Oscar pastored. At that point, not only was he my uncle and my brother in Christ, but he was also my Pastor.

Brother Oscar was a diligent seeker of the truths contained in God’s word and a studious reader of it and of those works which gave him a greater understanding of it. From my youth (as a babe in Christ), he instilled in me an appreciation for those resources which the Lord has made available unto His

people to assist them in their study of His inspired word. We spent many an enjoyable hour going to book sales and searching for ‘treasures’ for each other, as well as for ourselves.

As the Lord led me into a deeper understanding of His word through the ministry of Brother Oscar, my dear uncle and I shared many times of sweet fellowship around that word. Brother Oscar’s home was on my way (sort of) to work and, depending upon my shift, many were the days that I was late either getting to work or getting home from work.

I had the great privilege and enjoyment of driving Brother Oscar to Bible conferences around the country and, while attending those conferences, I was privileged to meet and to hear preach some of the many faithful ministers of the word.

The church that Brother Oscar pastored at that time in Mansfield, Ohio had hosted an annual Bible conference for many years. One of the frequent guest speakers was a Texas preacher who had been transplanted from Alabama by the name of Wm. Doyal Thomas.

The first time I heard this man preach, I was taught, blessed, and spiritually profited by him. At that first meeting, he impressed me as a man who was serious about the calling God had issued unto him and who desired to present the gospel of the Lord Jesus as frequently and with as much strength as the Lord enabled him to.

In the next few years, I became better acquainted with Brother Doyal as I attended various Bible conferences with Brother Oscar where he was one of the guest speakers.

The years went on and Brother Oscar was called to pastor a church in Texas.

Sometime later, I moved to Tennessee and began attending one of the Lord’s churches in Decatur, Alabama. The pastor, Elder Chester Skidmore, was declining in health and, as a result, was forced to retire from the ministry.

The Lord led the church to call Brother Doyal as their pastor. And as He had led in the call, so He led in the acceptance of that call. Brother Doyal faithfully served the Lord as Undershepherd of His flock in Decatur from 1997 until his retirement, due to ill health, in 2008.

These two brethren, who were also very close personal friends, were very much men of kindred spirits.

Both of these dear brethren counted their call into the gospel ministry to be the highest and most noble vocation known to a man. And both were determined to pursue that vocation, to whatever extent the Lord led them, with every ounce of strength they possessed and to discharge those heavenly-assigned duties with all the talents He had graciously bestowed upon them.

Both of these dear brethren refused to be content with or become complacent about the measure of biblical knowledge they had attained but throughout their ministries made it their common practice to heed the Lord's admonition found in **II Timothy 2:15**. "**Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**"

Each of these brethren amassed large personal libraries. Consequently they were able to present the messages which the Lord gave them in such a manner that their hearers were confident that they knew whereof they spoke.

Both of these dear brethren labored under the conviction that, when they stood in the pulpits which God had assigned them to, it was their divinely mandated responsibility to discharge their duties in accordance with the Lord's warning found in **Acts 20:28**: "**Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.**"

Both of these dear brethren were blessed with a burning desire to preach God's Word and rightly adjudicated that all of the truths contained therein were to be graciously presented to their hearers, deeming it not their prerogative to hold back anything which God had graciously recorded in that

inspired word. They deemed Paul's words to Timothy as also being God's words to them. **“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (II Timothy 4:2).**

Both of these dear brethren possessed a Spirit-imparted desire to see souls saved and then to see those redeemed saints serve the Lord through His precious blood-bought churches.

Through the years, both of these brethren were editors of and chief contributors to monthly gospel papers authorized and published by the churches which they pastored. Brother Oscar edited *The Sovereign Grace Advocate* and Brother Doyal edited *The Baptist Herald*.

Both of these brethren were well respected guest speakers at revivals and Bible conferences around the nation.

Brother Doyal was the primary speaker of the radio broadcast, *The Message of Grace*, which aired during his ministries in Texas and in Alabama. Thousands of cassette tapes have been distributed of those messages which declare the free and unmerited grace of God being bestowed upon ill-deserving sinners.

When the internet started to become a viable tool for disseminating the truths of God's Word, Brother Doyal encouraged the Lord's church in Decatur to utilize that mechanism to spread those precious truths around the globe.

Both of these dear brethren were gifted of the Lord with the capacity to be able to record their thoughts in printed form, so that not only their present hearers, but also future generations of saints, would be blessed and taught by them. Individually and collectively these brethren have written numerous God-honoring articles.

The Lord's churches have printed two of Brother Oscar's books, *The Baptist Bride* and *The Glorious Gospel*, and Brother Doyal's work on the

neglected truth of God's divine order and the Biblically-declared symbol thereof, *God Has Ordained Headship*.

So it is, in closing this somewhat synoptic view of these brethren, I take great joy in presenting to the reader a background sketch of the ministries the Lord assigned unto them and the faithful manner in which they discharged those duties.

It has been my great privilege to be taught and pastored by these brethren. In the many years that I was providentially enabled to sit under their God-assigned ministries, I observed a consistency in their Christian deportment and the performance of their ministerial duties that was in sweet harmony with the declarations of God's Word.

A few years before the Lord called Brother Oscar home, Brother Doyal and I traveled to Texarkana, Texas to visit with him. Brother Doyal and I enjoyed a great time of fellowship on that trip. And of course the time we spent with Brother Oscar was a joy of remembrances of blessings past and anticipation of the humanly unfathomable sweeter blessings yet in store for us. Little did Brother Doyal and I know that it was the last time we would speak with our dear brother on this side of eternity.

It is my prayer that the reader may be as blessed by this co-authored book, *Thoughts On The Atonement*, now being sent forth as those who have labored in its preparation were as they prepared and read it.

James Reynolds
Cornersville, TN
July, 2011

Chapter One

What Is Atonement?

Is it not all too common among men to become careless as we read and contemplate the language of the Bible? Do we all have a propensity to assume far too much as to our understanding, and as to the understanding of others concerning God's Book? I greatly fear that our answer must be in the affirmative. We are careless and we do assume far too much. This probably applies to us as we study on any subject, including the subject of the atonement.

There does seem to be a renewed interest in recent times concerning the atonement, as measured by the frequency of sermons preached and printed relative to this most wonderful and stupendous doctrine. And I rejoice in this activity among dear brethren of my acquaintance and close personal relationship. I praise God for His leading us toward a re-examination of our understanding of His perfect work that He has undertaken for His glory and for the good of His people.

Atonement is a foundation doctrine, and as such, it deserves our careful attention and our most valiant effort to enable us to arrive at the correct position of understanding. We must seek to know God's will and work in this matter, or suffer with the lack of true worship and praise that He ought to receive from creatures with whom He has dealt in such mercy and grace. He is to be adored and worshipped with all that is in us, but with faulty understanding, we will be unable to do so.

A careful reading of the Authorized Version (King James of 1769) of our English Bible will reveal that the word "**atonement**" appears only once in the New Testament. When my serious reading and meditating on the Scriptures began more than sixty years ago, this one appearing of the word I found to be quite astounding, as it was quite unexpected. "**And not only so,**

but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement” (Romans 5:11).

The Greek word from which “**atonement**” is translated in **Romans 5:11** is of a grammatical construction that is not found elsewhere in the Received Text, although a grammatical variant of the Greek root word from which it is derived is found ten other times.

That Greek root word from which those eleven grammatical variants are derived is **καταλλάσσω** - **katallassō**.

Some of the definitions given by various Greek lexicons for this Greek root word are:

‘... to change, exchange, an exchange, reconcile, to reconcile, be reconciled, become reconciled, reconciliation, restoration to favor.’

The following Scripture references are those wherein these variant Greek words are found.

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled (κατηλλαγημεν - katēllagēmen) to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, (καταλλαγεντες - katallagentes) we shall be saved by his life” (Romans 5:10).

(In his book, *Word Studies In The New Testament*, Marvin R. Vincent makes an interesting comment on the word (κατηλλαγημεν - the mystery of His will **katēllagēmen**) which is translated **reconciled (to God)** in **Romans 5:10**.

“The verb means primarily *to exchange*; and hence to change the relation of hostile parties into a relation of peace; *to reconcile*. It is used of both mutual and one side enmity. In the former case, the context must show on which side is the active enmity.”)

“And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement (καταλλαγην -

katallagēn)” (Romans 5:11).

“For if the casting away of them be the **reconciling** (**καταλλαγή** - katallagē) of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them be*, but life from the dead?” (Romans 11:15).

“But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be **reconciled** (**καταλλαγήτω** - katallagētō) to *her* husband: and let not the husband put away *his wife*” (I Corinthians 7:11).

“And all things *are* of God, who hath **reconciled** (**καταλλαξαντος** - katallaxantos) us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of **reconciliation**;**”** (**καταλλαγης** - katallagēs) (II Corinthians 5:18).

“To wit, that God was in Christ, **reconciling** (**καταλασσων** - katallassōn) the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of **reconciliation** (**καταλλαγης** - katallagēs)” (II Corinthians 5:19).

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye **reconciled** (**καταλλαγήτε** - katallagēte) to God” (II Corinthians 5:20).

“And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to **reconcile** (**αποκαταλλαξαι** - apokatallaxai) all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven” (Colossians 1:20).

The Greek word translated “reconcile” in Colossians 1:20 is a compound word made from two words **απο** - apo and **καταλασσω** - katallassō.

As we have previously listed some definitions of **καταλασσω** - katallassō we will only briefly comment on **απο** - apo.

One source said that **απο** - **apo** (which is a preposition) means, ‘forth, from, away from’, that it means, ‘to transfer from one state to another WHICH IS QUITE DIFFERENT.’ (Emphasis mine - WDT)

Another source noted that **απο** - **apo** signifies ‘completely’ and hence the compound word means, ‘to reconcile COMPLETELY.’ (Emphasis mine - WDT)

Is it not a wonderful thought to note how God has assured His people through His inspired Word that He has transferred them from one state (that of being justly condemned) to another state (that of being reconciled) which is completely different, and that such a transfer is ‘completely so’!

That there is close connection between the words atonement and reconciliation none can deny. The words are expressive of a change that has occurred on the part of one person toward another person. In the case of the passage in **I Corinthians 7:11**, the change of attitude is said to be on the part of the wife who has departed from her husband. She is to be reconciled to her husband, or else she is enjoined to remain unmarried to any other. In the other cases (**Romans 5:10; Romans 11:15; II Corinthians 5:18, 19, 20; and Colossians 1:20**), it is sinners who have departed from the relationship and fellowship with God who are to be changed in their attitude toward Him, and hence, are said to become reconciled to God.

This point now is vital to our correct view and understanding of the doctrine of atonement. Strictly speaking, God receives the atonement price, or the satisfying ransom price, while redeemed sinners receive the benefits of the atonement as a covering (c.f. **Leviticus 17:11**).

Never is God said to be reconciled to man, in the sense that He must capitulate, deviate, or moderate His holy, righteous, and just nature or stance in order to accommodate creature lack of either will or capacity to meet His just demands. God has not changed. His position has not been altered at all, for His essential attribute of holiness is immutably the same. It is man that has sinned and has fallen from his created estate. It is man that is estranged from God. It is man that must have atonement made for him, and it is man that

must be reconciled to God, or make satisfaction with God. (More on this later - WDT)

Take note that it is creature man that needs to be reconciled to God. Though man is not the sole sinning creature, he is the only creature for whom God has been pleased to make atonement, and to bring to a state of reconciliation unto Himself. And not all men are so blessed of the Sovereign to be so cared for and provided for.

Satan, fallen angels, and all unrepentant men will suffer eternally in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone. And their suffering will be just and retributive punishment which their sin has earned. The punishment meted out to them will be in accordance with the enormity of their heinous sins against the holy God. It will be deserved punishment.

And the judgment against them will indeed be punishment. It will not be corrective nor chastening in its nature. It will be penal. It will be punitive. Because the eternal burning will not be, and is not designed by God, nor intended by God to produce repentance unto life, it will not so produce. It will punish, and that eternally!

The rich man of **Luke** chapter **16** is seen in hell, and he laments, “**I am tormented in this flame.**” Yet, no mention is made of any purging effect upon his nature. He is not brought to repentance unto life so as to escape from this place, or to be released from hell’s confinement. What about a chastening “purgatory”, as is so evilly presented by the Romish system of Satan worship, so cleverly disguised as Christianity?

An examination of the Scriptures will reveal that when God preached the gospel of the grace of God to a congregation of three in **Genesis**, chapter **3**, no mention is made of His having made a “covering” (atonement) for the sins of the devil. And the reason that no mention was made of such a covering being provided was because there was no such covering provided, nor intended. God did not “offer” a way out for all sinners. Remember that of the gathered assembly here, all three of them, Satan, Adam, and Eve were creatures, and they were all sinners.

But, it is expressly declared in Holy Writ that, **“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them”** (Genesis 3:21). Search if there be any mention of, or any intention to, make a coat of skin and clothe Satan. There is none. God did not seek to recover Satan. He did not intend to extend to him redeeming grace in any form, measure, or degree.

Revelation 20:10 makes crystal clear the ultimate end that awaits God’s archenemy, Satan. And it will not be as the laughing, diabolical creature he is imagined to be by foolish men who view him as the ruler of a so-called “devil’s hell”. There is no such place. There is a hell, but it is God’s, who created it for the purpose of punishing those who have sinned against Him. **“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”** And God is glorified in this just act.

Does this sound like the future of the devil will be joyous? Is this a picture of one who is enjoying himself while others are being tormented? Unquestioningly, the devil is to be forever punished by God for his sins. And he will go right on sinning and heaping continuing punishment upon himself in endless duration.

And he is judged and sentence executed in full compliance with the declaration of God, his Creator, as expressed in **Genesis 3:14-15**. **“And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”**

God’s judgment of Satan then is sure and certain. There will be no stay of execution, and certainly no parole or early release from the confining and troublesome place designed for Satan, his angels, and all unrepentant men. Judgment is pronounced by God and it most surely will be carried out exactly as prescribed.

Consider also the destiny of all the angels that followed Lucifer in his rebellion against the Holy One. Search for opportunity provided them for restoration to their created state, and you will be assured that no such opportunity exists. That is, you will find no scriptural warrant to assume that a way to escape the justice of God is found for fallen angels. When one is shut up to the declarations of Scripture, all imaginations of men and traditional teachings of men collapse around him who makes such declaration. There is no salvation for fallen angels.

But that's the way it is with all the suppositions and imaginations of men. When they are brought to the Holy Scriptures, they are all weighed in the balance and are found wanting. They all simply fall into nothingness and disintegrate into an empty heap of rubbish. And all this is to the glory of God and to the vindication of His eternal will and pleasure.

Those angels that followed Lucifer in his rebellion were created beings just like those who were kept in their created estate and did not sin. There was no difference in them. The difference was only that God had elected certain of them to be preserved, while the rest were by-passed and allowed to sin.

In this act of choosing some while by passing others, was any injury done to those who were not chosen? How could there be? Did either the chosen, or those left have any claim upon God that required Him to act favorably toward some and unfavorably toward others? To say so would be to impugn the sovereign prerogative of God to deal with His own as He would (c.f. **Matthew 20:15; Romans 9:10-24**).

What do the Scriptures have to say about angels, fallen and kept? Concerning those chosen ones, God has said that they are "**elect angels**" in **I Timothy 5:21** and that they are to worship Him and to serve Him. "**And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire**" (**Hebrews 1:6, 7**).

Now concerning those angels that were not kept, but instead were left to their own way, God has said of them, **“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day”** (Jude 6). Note also this declaration: **“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; ...”** (II Peter 2:4).

So then, we are scripturally assured that Satan and his angels will be eternally punished for their sins in the lake of fire. They will be eternally PUNISHED!!! This tells us that no punishment was suffered in their room and in their stead by Christ, or by any other. They are still “in” their sins, as they are being punished “for” their sins in the lake of fire. Note; they are still “in” their sins.

But what of unrepentant sinners among men? Hear the Lord Jesus Christ as He speaks to such. **“Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins”** (John 8:21-24).

And what is this declaration, “ye shall die IN your sins”? Hear the conclusion of this matter. **“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire”** (Revelations 20:11-15).

This is what it means for man to die IN his sins. He dies eternally for sins unatoned for, and the punishment is in correspondence with the enormity of those sins.

Now, what is atonement? Atonement is not at-one-ment, as foolish and unlearned men have imagined and have expressed their pride in declaring. Men imagine that it is just a matter of bringing God and the guilty sinner together, which could lead one to further imagine that both have an active, producing part to play in the transaction.

Such cannot be the case however, because the coats that Adam and Eve wore were supplied by God. What part did they play in the attaining of suitable “covering” for their nakedness, and for their exposure to the judgment and wrath of their Creator? And we answer, “None at all.” They were, to be sure, the recipients of the covering that was provided, but they did not, in any way participate in its procurement, nor in its bestowal. Consequently, all the honor, glory, and praise connected with the atonement, or covering, accrues to God alone.

Atonement means, in its most basic terms, a covering under which there is security. It means that reconciliation now is done, because atonement has been made. It means that a ransom has been paid, whose price precisely, exactly and finally corresponds to the demand. It means that when atonement is made and reconciliation is brought about, there will never be further need to repeat, nor to augment this once accomplished and eternally-blessed act.

What is atonement? Atonement is Christ being made our Mercy Seat; our Covering. It is a complete and lasting transaction which God performs as He exercises His grace toward elect sinners. But what He does in this regard, He does on the basis of, and on the positive ground of what His dear Son has done. His Son propitiated Jehovah God. That is, He has satisfied God on the behalf of His own, so as to bring them into agreement with God and to appease the Lawgiver on their behalf.

Christ has accomplished atonement by His obedience to God and by His suffering the just penalty for our sins and disobedience. Both obedience and

suffering were required, and the suffering of Christ was effectual in that it satisfied God. His suffering was for others who had failed to positively obey God. His active obedience and passive suffering was in the room and stead of His people.

Had Christ only suffered our guilt and penalty we would have been restored to the state of innocence which Adam was in possession of before the fall into sin. But we would also be subject to another fall. What would we have that Adam did not have? What guarantee would there be that we would not likewise fall? Adam was in a state of innocence, wasn't he? And what is innocence except the lack of guilt?

The solution is that Christ suffered our guilt and penalty. That's what His suffering accomplished. He passively submitted Himself to the suffering our sins had earned and did not seek to be released from that suffering. He willingly submitted to our deserved suffering.

Have you not wondered why, when all the false accusations were made against Him, He did not speak to defend Himself? Why did He not open His mouth in His own defense? Surely He, the sinless Son of God was personally innocent of every charge that was, or could be brought against Him. But He opened not His mouth. Why?

We, for whom He stood Surety, were guilty. Thus, as He stood for us, He stood guilty in our stead. Not personally guilty, but legally guilty; accountably guilty, and that by imputation. Our sins were confessed over Him and legally laid upon Him. He was made ***“to be sin for us”*** (II Corinthians 5:21). ***“And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send *him* away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness”*** (Leviticus 16:21-22).

Now hear the prophetic declaration of the fulfillment of this typical scapegoat's role in the removal of guilt and penalty from the account of God's elect. **"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth"** (Isaiah 53:3-7).

We, being personally guilty of sin, were obligated to suffer the judgment of God against us. We were guilty! But Christ, our Substitute, assumed our guilt and took it as His own, opened not His mouth, and suffered our penalty. Thus, He passively submitted to our suffering. Remember, Christ died for our sins **"according to the scriptures"**, and died in complete harmony with their demands. He met our due death, and delivered us from its demands.

But He also actively produced for us a perfect righteousness, and then laid that righteousness upon us. He clothed us with His own righteousness which takes us far beyond the state of mere innocence and restoration to innocence that Adam had previously enjoyed, and that we now have been brought back to. We have positive righteousness from which state we will never, and can never depart. We are kept by the power of God. We will never again be subject to the fall that Adam experienced, and that we experienced in him, as we sinned with him.

This is the atonement that the Bible presents. This is an atonement that atones. This is a ransom paid that yields positive and eternal results. This is a redemption that truly does redeem those for whom it was intended. If the Lord wills, we will continue to look into the matter of atonement in future issues of *The Baptist Herald*. There is very much to this wonderful subject

that is yet to be presented. There is yet much to be studied, considered, and meditated upon. Please pray that each of us, writer and readers, will diligently look into God's Book for His instruction on this and all other matters.

We anticipate further study into the nature of the atonement, the intention of the atonement, and the results of the atonement. We want to know more about this foundation doctrine and to be enabled to apply its teaching and precepts to our understanding of all those matters that shall come before us from time to time in our study of the Word. Please pray for us and for the ministry of our church as we send forth each month *The Baptist Herald*.

(The Baptist Herald - June, 1990)

Chapter Two

What Is The Intent Of The Atonement?

Why does God save sinners? Why does He provide a covering for the sins of His elect and clothe them in the righteous robes which His Son procured for them? Why does He do it?

The answer to these questions will give us a clearer understanding of the wondrous subject of atonement. And failure to grasp these answers as scripturally provided will leave us in darkness on the matter and cause us to be unappreciative of God's marvelous purpose and work.

Please examine Paul's epistle to the **Ephesians**, and note specifically his assertion of motive in verses **6**, **12**, and **14** of the first chapter. I quote them here, and ask you to read the entirety of the discourse so that you may see their contextual setting. Verse **6**: **"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved"**, verse **12**: **"That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ"**, verse **14**: **"Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."**

To the praise of His glory is the repeated and constantly-stated purpose as to why God does what He does in the behalf of the Ephesian saints. Whatever God does for them, He does in order that His glory might be manifested. It is for His OWN glory!

In verse **6**, it is implied that those who have been made accepted in the Beloved have been so blessed of God above all those who have not been made accepted. But it was not done so that those blessed ones could or would desire to receive praise and glory. Rather, it was done so that all the glory and associated praise would be His alone. His alone? His ALONE!

God's action having been taken to make certain sinners accepted in His Beloved Son, secures its intended purpose. And this was done in accordance with God's own covenant that identified the saints as His chosen ones, **“according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world ...”** (verse 4).

God further states that the chosen ones **“should be holy and without blame before him ...”** (verse 4), and that He **“predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will”** (verse 5).

Now all this then is said to be **“to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”** And that's why He did what He did. It was to the praise of the glory of His grace.

Further study of the verses that follow will likewise yield good and wholesome instruction for the spiritually-enlightened, as we see that the great benefits that are the portion of those elected by God and predestinated unto the adoption of children are unfolded before us in verses 7 thru 11.

There is **“redemption through His blood.”** There is **“the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”** There is wisdom and prudence **“abounding toward us”**. There is the promise that God will make known unto us **“the mystery of His will,”** and the gathering **“together in one all things in Christ.”** Then there is the assurance that we **“have obtained an inheritance,”** and that we have been **“predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.”**

And why all this? **“That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ”** (verse 12). Why all this? It is to the **“praise of His glory”**. Ultimately, everything is to the praise of His glory.

Likewise then, verse 13 sets forth what the saints of God have been provided now, and have been assured of in a future time. Namely, when we were caused to hear **“the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation”**, we were **“sealed with that holy Spirit of promise”**. The Holy Spirit of promise is our present portion and is said to be the **“earnest of our inheritance until**

the redemption of the purchased possession” (verse 14), and it is still all “unto the praise of His glory.”

Now, we have been quite lengthy in this exposition of **Ephesians 1:1-14**, but we trust not overly so. We have sought to give scriptural proof of God’s own stated motive as to why He has chosen to undertake in behalf of His own. And again we ask, “Why did He?” And we answer, “for His own glory, and for the praise of that glory.”

I ask you to consider also in this matter one verse found in Jeremiah. **“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee” (Jeremiah 31:3).** “THEREFORE, or upon the basis of, or with the motive or INTENT to lovingly draw thee, I loved you eternally”, God said, “and for THAT reason, I have drawn thee unto Myself.” Why? For His own glory; that’s why.

We can correctly assert that the intent of the atonement then is ultimately and finally for God’s own glory, and for the praise that is His as His redeemed ones will forever and eternally offer that praise. God’s glory is the motive for His actions, and He has acted, and does act with intent. Therefore, His intent in providing atonement for His elect is His own glory.

Of old, God spoke to Israel, His chosen people, His representative people, and said unto them: **“This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise” (Isaiah 43:21).**

Even in creation, God’s action in bringing forth a people was with intent to get glory unto Himself and to reap praise unto Himself from His creatures. He has clearly stated His motive and His intent, and for any creature to imagine another motive or another intention is to imagine incorrectly. But men do so often times imagine otherwise.

The design of the atonement, or its intent, then, is to bring glory to God who purposed the atonement in grand and majestic eternal past. In solitary splendor, the Eternal Three entered upon agreement in all things to get glory,

honor, and praise. This agreement, or covenant was with Themselves, and it was in accordance with the Will that then was, and was to be exhibited to a then uncreated spectrum of creatures, and to a vast inanimate creation.

The creation, then, was to manifest the work of God in His intent to atone for the sins of His people, chosen unto Himself, but as then uncreated. The creation was to be the declarative arena from which God would get glory to Himself as He brings about the restoration of His elect to His moral image and likeness, from which they were seen as fallen, even before they were brought forth from the dust of the earth.

Had God determined to create an infinite number of men, but to keep His elect from falling into sin in Adam with all the rest, He would have gotten glory to Himself from them. He did keep a portion of the created angels in their first estate and did not permit them to sin. And He is now getting, and will get glory to Himself from them.

But He purposed to allow His elect from among men to sin with all the rest, and to fall from their created estate into a state of death in Adam. From this fallen state, His elect, along with all others, now need to be restored to that state of being in God's moral image and in His likeness, so that there can once again be communion and fellowship, as there was before Adam and they sinned and suffered the consequences of being separated from God.

Thus, God purposed their atonement with the intent of restoring His elect to Himself, and in so doing, to get greater glory to Himself than He gets from the angels that He kept from falling. He does get great glory from His kept angels. They do utilize the time now, and in all eternity will continue to serve Him, and to sing of His majesty. He does get glory from them, His angels.

But with the elect of men, God has always intended somewhat differently. He purposed to demonstrate that His foreknowledge of His people would be seen as He does all that He does for them. His foreknowledge of them being His forelove of them, He now manifests to them the vast scope of that love. He loved them; THEREFORE, He came for them

as Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, and entered their world to secure them to Himself. He came for them, for His own glory.

It is needless to say that many men and many religious systems put forth a hypothesis relative to the atonement that is different from what is here declared. The fact that there is great disagreement among men in this matter is evident. And we do not plan to delve into each of those systems of men. Rather, we want to be used of God to declare His purpose and intent, and then to rest upon His Spirit to produce whatever result in men as seems Him good.

We will, by His grace and Divine enablement, ask some pointed questions. We will, by His grace and Divine enablement, declare from the Scriptures what He has said and what He has done concerning the atonement.

Consider this: Were there spare bedrooms or other unutilized compartments in the ark that God told Noah to build? Did God permit Noah to design the ark to meet his own imagined purpose? Did Noah express his will in the design of the ark? Was Noah allowed to exhibit a selfish attitude and to provide space for his family only, to the exclusion of the multitudes who perished in the judgment flood?

Whose design was used in the construction of the ark, the place of provided safety? Look to Genesis for the entirety of the account of the flood of judgment and of God instructing Noah and in His dealing with him and with his family.

Please note that in **Genesis 6:14**, God tells Noah, “**Make thee an ark ...**” Then in the next several verses, through chapter **9**, God refers to this same ark as “**the ark**”, at least 26 times. The ark that God designed was first “**an ark**”. And from that point onward, it is simply “**the ark**”; never another ark, but “**the ark**”; the same ark; never another ark. Is that significant?

Next, take note of verse **18** of **Genesis 6**. “**But with THEE will I establish my covenant; and THOU shalt come into the ark, THOU and THY sons, and THY wife, and THY son’s wives with THEE**” (**Genesis 6:18**). (Emphasis mine - WDT)

Doesn't the preciseness of the language of God strike a wondrous note of assurance for us? Can you find fault with the exact terms that God chose to express His design, or intent, or purpose here? Did God know what He was saying? Did He make a mistake in His choice of words?

As you hear the positions of men and their systems concerning the atonement, you are, no doubt, led to imagine that if the thoughts of men are true, then those sinners who perished outside the ark did so with provision having been made for them and with space aplenty available for them inside the ark.

But is this the case? Read verse **18** again and then ask yourself these questions: Who was commanded to enter the ark? With whom did God establish a covenant? Do the answers to these questions surprise you? Do the answers to these questions startle you? Or anger you? Is God precise in His declarations? Is there assurance for you? I pray that there is. I pray that God will give you assurance of His love for you.

What was the stated purpose of the ark that God in meticulous, particular, precise detail instructed Noah to build? **“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear to the saving of his house; ...” (Hebrews 11:7a).** It was **“to the saving of his house.”** It was not to seek to save others. It was not to offer to save others. It was **“to the saving of his house.”**

This intent or purpose was so clearly stated that it seems to be totally foolish for anyone to miss the point. And yet, because of the darkened mind of men, there remains to this day great confusion within the realm of professing Christendom. There is uncertainty on every hand as to what God intended to do in the matter of atonement.

Especially is this true as to those for whom atonement was intended. Was it for all men without exception that Christ came and suffered and died? Many there are who say so, without considering what this would mean if indeed God's intentions were such. Have you thought this thing through to its

conclusion? What if it was God's intention that His Son would come and die for the sins of all men, without exception?

There is only one conclusion that could be rationally arrived at, were this true. And that is, God failed in His purpose or intent. We say this, not without reverence for God, and not with malice toward any man who says this is what God intended. We do not seek to be argumentative, for the sake of being argumentative. Rather, we say this desiring that all God's people everywhere have the truth.

If God intended that the sacrifice of His Well-beloved Son, the Darling of His Bosom, was to procure atonement, or reconciliation for all of Adam's race, then He was not successful in carrying out His purpose. All men are not saved, nor will they be saved.

Did Christ, in His glorious Person and in His grand work fail? Did He not declare, with strength unimpaired, "**It is finished**" (**John 19:30**)? Did He not dismiss His spirit and lay down His life of His own will? Or, was His life taken from Him against His will? Was His work finished, as He said; or was there remaining work that He needed to do, but didn't or couldn't do? Was there work for others to do?

The disturbances of the human mind would be endless had it been, as many men declare, that Christ came to render all men savable, but that they just will not let Him have His way. Were this the case, then there could never be rest and assurance. If Christ meant to die for all men, and did die for all men, then those in hell He died for too. Why are they in hell? Are they being punished for sins that He had previously and perfectly paid for? If He paid for them at all, then He paid for them perfectly, for He is perfect in all His ways and work. If the sins of those in hell were paid for, but somehow, imperfectly paid for, then it is not Christ who paid. Then who?

Were this the case, what assurance would there be for you and me? How could we be assured that His work was able to secure us for time and eternity? Could we preach and could we believe that Christ did for us what we needed?

If but one man - one son of Adam - can be scripturally proven to be in the judgment fires of hell, then only one of two possibilities exists concerning that man. Either he is in hell with his sins atoned for, and with God's intent and purpose in regard to him unmet, OR Christ did not pay for his sins at all.

“And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom” (Luke 16:22, 23).

If there be any who read these words who believe that Christ died for all men without exception, then you are saying that He died for the rich man of **Luke 16**. You are saying that this man is in hell with his sins atoned for. Why is he in hell? I know what you are thinking. You imagine that Christ died for all the sins of all men EXCEPT for the sin of unbelief. Isn't that your position?

Is unbelief a sin? Will one sin, even the sin of unbelief, constitute one a sinner? What is the end for sinners? Let's examine these three questions according to Scripture.

1. Is unbelief a sin? **“... for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23b).** What is faith? **“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1).** **“But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).** **“Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: FOR ALL MEN HAVE NOT FAITH” (II Thessalonians 3:1-2).** (Emphasis mine - WDT)

2. Will one sin, even the sin of unbelief, constitute one a sinner? **“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10).** **“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that BELIEVETH NOT is condemned already, because he hath**

NOT BELIEVED in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18). (Emphasis mine - WDT)

How many sins did Adam commit before he was constituted and denominated a sinner? Was Adam’s sin a sin of unbelief? What was the result of Adam’s sin? **“And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; AND HE DID EAT. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons”** (Genesis 3:6, 7). (Emphasis mine - WDT)

Was Adam’s action sinful? Had not God said, **“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”** (Genesis 2:16, 17).

3. What is the end for sinners? Note please that as soon as Adam did eat, (not when Eve had eaten), the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. The eyes of them both were opened when Adam sinned. They both were then made aware that they were naked in body, and they knew shame because of the sin of Adam. And they sought to cover their physical nakedness. They both knew because Adam was the federal head of Eve. She knew because she was represented by him, and when he sinned, she sinned. She had eaten before he ate; but she sinned when he sinned.

What they did not know, because sin had darkened their minds and rendered all their faculties impotent, was that they were exposed to the judgment of God against their sin that they had sinned against Him. And they, at that same moment, began to act like depraved sinners. They thought that if they could cover their physical nakedness they would be all right. They did not discern their actual condition as being exposed to the judicial pronouncement of God. **THEY DID NOT KNOW, THEY DID NOT BELIEVE!**

But remember that God had said, “... **in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.**” And die they did. That same exact day, they died spiritually. Therefore, they could no longer discern spiritual things (c.f. **I Corinthians 2:14**).

Again I ask, “How many sins did Adam commit before he died under the penalty that God had announced?” “One sin”, you say? And correctly you have said, “Just one sin.” And what was the nature of that sin that Adam sinned? Was it not a sin of unbelief, as all other sins against God are sins of unbelief when reduced to their lowest point? Unbelief and rebellion are the sins of men against God.

And what is the end for sinners? Separation from God is the immediate end for sinners. And separation and punishment is the lasting and permanent end for sinners, except they be reconciled to God; except they be brought back to God; except their sins be covered, or atoned for. Except God intervene, sinners are doomed to an eternal punishment in the lake of fire. Except God take up their case, they are doomed to a just and lasting banishment.

How can we be scripturally assured that each of God’s elect will receive the benefits of the atoning work of Jesus Christ? How can we know that we will not be left in our fallen state as captives to Satan and to sin? It is to this aspect of the work of Christ that we now turn our attention.

In the Old Testament, God has given His people positive assurance that He will, in mercy and grace, deal with their sin; perfectly paid for and as a consequence of His intent to deal with their sin, and of His actual dealing with their sin, He will deliver them from its bondage and penalty. He will set them free.

The book of Leviticus contains much discussion on the matter of redemption. Both the redemption of possessions and of persons is here spoken of, and the assurance given that God will undertake their redemption. He had said, “**For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it**

to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul” (Leviticus 17:11).

In **Leviticus**, chapter **25**, the details of redemption of possessions and of persons are clearly laid out for our instruction and for our edification. A kinsman may redeem, but only a kinsman, no other may redeem. A ransom must be paid by the kinsman; not just any ransom, but an exact ransom; a precise ransom.

This ransom that must be paid by the redeeming kinsman must exactly correspond to the obligation that was owed, or that would be owed when the final accounting or reckoning would take place. Reckoning must be made from the time that obligation or debt was first incurred until the final accounting time. That is, past debt, present debt, and future debt must be included in calculating this required corresponding ransom price.

When the calculated ransom price was determined, its value must be presented by the kinsman to the one to whom the debt was owed; to the one who held the obligatory note that demanded that payment be made.

On the day of accounting, or at the time appointed to effect redemption, the kinsman appeared with the suitable ransom price and, in the presence of acceptable witnesses, paid what was demanded. He paid the exact price that corresponded to the debt that was owed. He did not come short in the payment value, nor was more demanded of him than what was owed.

The reckoning had been completed, so that the obligations past, present, and future were included. Nothing that was justly owed was overlooked or neglected. No future charges that could possibly be brought up were ignored. All was accounted in the reckoning and the corresponding price was established. There was not lack. Neither was there over plus. The price corresponded to the demand.

The result of this reckoning and paying was this: When the ransom price was rendered, which corresponded to the debt, the captive went free. There was no doubt. There was no haggling. The captive went free. And this was

because, and only because, the ransom had been paid. No debt lingered, nor would there be future charges. The account was settled.

In the case of the sinners for whom Jesus Christ stood Surety, or Kinsman, their debt was charged to Him, and He assumed their obligation to pay. And their obligation was to God, against Whom they had sinned - thus incurring the debt. It was to the Father, Jehovah God, then, that Jesus Christ, God the Son rendered obedience and paid what was owed.

This is why we can declare without fear that each and every one of God's elect will be redeemed, purchased, ransomed, and set free. This is why Paul declared the security of the believer in **Romans 8:35-39**. If you will read **Romans 8:35-39** you will find this to be the case.

And you will also find when you read **Romans 8:28-34** why there is security. It is because redemption has been based upon God having determined to save His people from their sins. Here it is: "**For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?**" (Romans 8:29-31).

Since God had declared His intention to save His people by redeeming them, He has never wavered from that purpose, and He will not alter His purpose. For He is God; He changes not.

But you may ask, "When did God declare His intention to save His people by redeeming them?" And here is the answer: "**And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel**" (Genesis 3:14, 15).

By sending the “Seed of the woman” to bruise the head of the serpent, God has announced that He intends to overcome the sin that came upon His people. He has declared that He will get the victory, and that the power of His enemy, Satan, will be rendered impotent to withstand the Omnipotent One who will defeat him.

When the forerunner of the “Seed of the woman” came, he announced this same intent or purpose. He said, “**Behold the Lamb of God.**” And it was the Person of Jesus Christ, and none other, that the Baptist pointed to when he made that thunderous announcement.

Even before this event, God had sent His messenger to Joseph, the espoused one to the virgin, to give him comfort, assurance, and instruction concerning this One who was coming. The angel of the Lord said to Joseph, “**And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins**” (Matthew 1:21).

Now how, or upon what terms, does Jesus save His people from their sins? Do you remember, “**For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul**” (Leviticus 17:11)?

Upon the authority of God’s Word, we declare that the basis of the atonement is the blood. It is only upon the blood. It is upon no other basis. It is upon no combination of elements, or ingredients. It is solely and totally upon the blood.

The blood is given. It is the blood of Another. It is the blood of “the Seed of the woman”. The blood is given upon the altar, and this altar is the altar of God, where Sacrifice is made to effect appeasement and to pay the demanded and essential redeeming price. It is Christ dying for us as He sheds His blood in our behalf so that He might ransom, redeem, and purchase back “His people.”

What is the intent of the atonement? The atonement was designed and intended to atone for the sins of God's people. And there was in no sense any intent beyond this. There was no effort made, nor intent to provide that all men without exception would be offered opportunity to have a right standing before God. Atonement is not on the basis of "opportunity", but is on the basis of the sure mercies of God, in Christ Jesus.

It is true that all men of Adam's race were, and are in need. It is also true that all men of Adam's race were in need because they all were, and are sinners. But it is not true that God has done everything with the intent of recovering them all from their fallen state. Otherwise, we would be forced to the position of acknowledging that God failed to accomplish His intent or His purpose.

For the universal, unlimited or general atonement advocate, we say that were your hypothesis correct, then God would be a failure. Were you correct, then God would have attempted to make all sinners clean, but would have found himself unable to do so. Does this sound like God? Does this fit the declarations that God has made concerning Himself?

Let me ask you to consider this. When God instructed Moses to tell the children of Israel to shed the blood of sacrificial lambs, so that blood could be applied to the door posts of the houses where Israel dwelt in Egypt, did He likewise, or in any wise, tell Pharaoh or any other Egyptian to do so? Did He? Why didn't He? Was it God's intent to provide a blood sacrifice to make atonement for any except His people? Was it? Why wasn't it? Did He provide any blood sacrifice for any other than His own people? Why didn't He?

It is clear that God intended to save His people from their sins. It is equally clear that He had no intention of seeking to save any others. God acted with intent when He, by eternal covenant stipulation, caused His Son to stand as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. God acted with intent. God acted upon purpose, and what He has done is exactly what He intended and purposed to do.

Conclusion

The atonement is a stupendous doctrine. It is wondrous in its scope and in its accomplishment. It is so, because it is God's work and because He has determined to do that great work to bring back His people to communion and fellowship with Himself.

Now there are only two possible positions that one can take concerning the scope of the atonement. One of these positions is that God provided a universal atonement, but found it to be only partially successful, for not all men are saved. The only other position that one can be brought to is that God intended to make atonement for the souls of His people and for them only. This is the correct position.

The atonement that God provides truly does its work and actually atones for the souls of those for whom it was intended. It does not come short of its design and purpose. It does not find itself impotent, but rather it is able to accomplish its design. Thank God for His Atonement. Thank God for Jesus Christ, our Passover, and our Mercy Seat.

(The Baptist Herald - August, 1990)

Chapter Three

What Is The Nature Of The Atonement?

“For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul” (Leviticus 17:11).

The fact that sinful man is in grave need of a suitable garment to cover his sin and consequent exposure to the wrath of God is evident. Or at least it should be evident, since God has so clearly declared, **“The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him” (Ezekiel 18:20).**

Upon the pronouncement of God, sinners are under His just condemnation. Their guilt is clearly established, and just punishment awaits them. And it is right that they suffer the consequences that are brought to them, for they are worthy to be punished. They ought to be punished. They must stand to be punished, for they have sinned against the holy and righteous God.

The banishment to the eternal burning in the lake of fire is the just and proper end that sin has earned. This assignment is more than a mere separation from the joy that is felt by those who are related to God, and it is more than being denied His presence. It is not limited to this lack of fellowship with The Sovereign.

Punishment for sin is just that. It is punishment for sin. It is not the chastening of a righteous Father, although it is in righteousness that God acts toward those who would not have Him to rule over them in this life. Remember that chastening is directed toward sons, legitimate sons, and not toward those who are not sons.

No basis can be found to suggest that the fires of punishment are intended to be purging in their character. They are indeed fires of punishment. They are so designed, and it is with intent that they inflict punishment. Therefore, we see that the nature of the atonement is punitive.

Because the sin of man is an open and direct affront to the holy, righteous nature of God, nothing less than a total and absolute rendering of an exact, distinct, and suitable ransom price must be paid in order to satisfy the just claim that God demands, and that the sinner rightly owes to Him, which just debt **MUST** be paid.

Thus, we read, in prophetic language that is undeniable, **“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture”** (Psalm 22:14-18).

And this: **“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed”** (Isaiah 53:4, 5).

And this also: **“Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man *that is* my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones”** (Zechariah 13:7).

And then this as well: **“Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification”** (Romans 4:25): and, **“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all ...”** (Romans 8:32a).

The punishment that God inflicts is of infinite severity and scope, for the sin against His holiness is infinite in severity and scope. His holy justice demands, and rightly so, a punishment that is infinite in severity and scope; and man, who has so grievously sinned against Him is destitute of means as well as will to render such payment. So apart from a Substitute, a Surety, to pay what justice demands, a lost sinner must eternally pay and be punished everlastingly in the lake of fire.

Not only must the atonement meet the requirement that punishment be dispatched, it must also be substitutive in its nature as well. By this, I mean that One must atone for the sins of another, since the sinning one is, because of his unworthy nature, disqualified to atone for himself. He cannot redeem himself, because sin has rendered his blood to be unsuitable and unacceptable to be offered to a holy God.

When we look closely at the stipulated requirements that God specifies in **Leviticus**, chapter **25** concerning the redeeming of possessions and persons, we find this to be so. In this chapter, God makes it very plain and clear that **ONLY** a kinsman can redeem, and that this kinsman must have suitable ransom price to pay in order to redeem.

It is true that man could be said to be his own kinsman, thus apparently rendering himself as his own redeemer. However, because man is a sinner, his redeeming element, the life, or the blood of himself is in no way acceptable to make atonement for his own soul. His life, as it is seen to be in his blood, is corrupt and evil in its own nature, and will not be suitable as a ransom. And it is sin that has done this. The same sin that brought about the need for man's redemption has disqualified man from being able to save himself or another. Man cannot save himself, and a mere man cannot save another. Kinsmanship alone will not enable a man to redeem. There must be kinsmanship as God has specified, and there must also be suitable price. And since man has no acceptable price to bring, a substitutionary price must be paid if man is ever to go free. Substitution, therefore, is the nature of the atonement.

But substitution that is said to be vicarious is what is demanded by God, and graciously supplied in the Person of Jesus Christ. In order for suffering to be vicarious, it must be suffering that is not only borne in the place of another, but also, and essentially so, in the stead of another.

If one should willingly offer himself to suffer in the place of another, this act would indeed be substitutionary in its nature, but that act would not in and of itself meet the holy demands that God's justice requires.

Let me explain what I mean. If one agrees to stand in the place of another, he is agreeing to suffer in behalf of the other, or for his immediate benefit. But if the "stand in" is to be also vicarious, then it must also be done in the stead of the one for whom it is suffered.

Our Substitute or Surety who in full accord with the will of His Father must stand in compliance with the stipulations of the Covenant to which the Godhead has agreed and confirmed in eternity, in which the Father hath chosen and to which the Son agreed (covenanted) to stand as Surety in their place, room, and stead. This means that in eternity Jesus Christ stood as the Surety for our sins' debt (infinite debt) when as yet we had no debt, seeing as how at that point we had no sin, nor were we even a being, for we were not yet created.

In time, having been created and having sinned and fallen in Adam, we became obliged to pay the price of our sin or have a Surety, to whom the charges had already been laid, and to whose account retribution would be demanded and in due time paid, who would vicariously and substitutionarily stand in our stead.

We had sinned, and He stood in our place to be punished; in our stead, He bore all our guilt and penalty, clothed us in His righteous robe, and will present us to the Father, spotless.

Now also, we see that the atonement must be expiatory in its nature. The atonement, in order to be effective, must expiate sin. It must provide whatever is necessary that sins be dealt with, both in guilt and in removal and restoration to a previously held state of perfection, as at creation.

The spot and stain of sin must be done away. Else, there will remain the odiousness of it. The sinner must be cleansed from all semblance of sin. It must be put away, or it will most surely remain.

Remembering that man is actually a “double-dyed” sinner, we understand that he must be fully cleansed before he can stand in the presence of God. He cannot even approach God so long as there remains any trace or evidence of sin ever having contaminated him.

By “double-dyed,” we mean that man sinned in Adam and then sinned in himself. He is guilty of original sin that has condemned Adam and all his seed. He is also guilty of the sins that he has committed in himself, even from his departure from the womb of his mother (c.f. **Psalm 51:5; 58:3**).

The fiber of man is stained and dyed by original sin. The fabric of man is dyed afresh as man goes forth as a sinning sinner. In both warp and woof, man is a desperately wicked sinner, and he must be completely cleansed, or else his sin remains.

This awful condition makes it clear that, in order for man to be justified with God, his guilt must be removed and he must also be restored to the state of moral perfection that Adam enjoyed from the Hand of his Creator until sin ruined him. Both removal and restoration, therefore, must be accomplished.

Expiation must take place, and only Christ in His willing substitution of Himself in the stead of His guilty people can insure that this circumstance takes place. **“For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (II Corinthians 5:21).**

Since sin must be expiated by the rendering of a suitable and exact ransom price, and since man, because of his utterly depraved nature that has left him totally destitute of the means and will to pay that he owes, stands helpless before his creditor to whom he owes the debt. He is hopelessly unable to satisfy his obligation, and therefore found worthy to be eternally punished for his sin(s) that he has willfully committed against the holy God.

But Christ, in His suffering that was both vicarious and substitutionary in its nature has fully and totally expiated the sin of those for whom He stood Surety, as a Lamb slain in their room and stead. He has completely and everlastingly removed their sins from them as far as the East is from the West, and they are forever gone, never to be remembered against them.

Expiation is the work that Christ accomplished in His suffering and it has reference to the work which accrued manward. It is what He has done for us. It is His gracious work of taking our sin upon Himself and removing it from us.

Then too, the atonement must be propitiatory in its nature. It must produce and provide satisfaction unto a holy God, Who has been sinned against. For if God is not propitiated, then sin still remains. And were this to be the case, then sinners would still remain under the condemnation, and God's wrath would still be upon them. God must be propitiated (satisfied), and when He is satisfied, then those sinners who have satisfied Him must go free.

Please take note of this last statement above. When sinners have satisfied God, then they go free! But sinners do not and cannot satisfy God with their evil, corrupt, and imperfect offerings. However, Christ can and does satisfy God in their stead. Thus, it is clear that the elect sinner satisfies God, not in himself, but in Christ. That is where satisfaction is found, and no place else. It is in Christ Jesus that sinners satisfy God.

Now when this glorious satisfaction is done, they go free! They go free! They **MUST** go free, for satisfaction has been made. When satisfaction is made, it is unthinkable that those for whom satisfaction has been made will remain as slaves to sin and Satan. They have been freed by the Stronger than the strong man; thus, they go free.

The atonement is, and must of necessity be, a work that is federal in its essential nature. There must be and must have been a connection between the persons who required that satisfaction, or atonement, be made and the Person who stood from eternity as the Effectuator of the needful satisfaction. There

must be a federal connection between Jesus Christ and all those, each and every one of those, whom He willingly and graciously represented.

When the Scriptures speak of a covenant people, they speak of a union, indeed a covenant union, between God and a people. For example, we read of a people that are seen as in Christ as in **Galatians 3:16**, “**Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.**”

Clearly the seed of Abraham is Christ, just as surely as “the seed of the woman” in **Genesis 3:15** foresees Christ. And so, the covenant that God has made with Abraham has the far-reaching beneficial effects on not just Abraham, but extends even unto all the seed that are referred to, in Christ.

This covenant union, this oneness with Christ, is a union of legal requirement and it surely bears legal consequence. When Christ covenanted to stand for and in the stead of His covenant people, He covenanted to not only legally bear their sin and the required vicarious suffering, but to die as the result of His Suretyship to do so.

William Shedd, writing in about 1889-90, said of this matter: “When, in the Old Testament, the elect are spoken of as the party with whom God makes a covenant, they are viewed as in Christ and one with Him. The covenant is not with them as alone and apart from Christ. This is taught in **Galatians 3:16**: ‘**To Abraham and his seed were the promises made; but this seed is Christ.**’ The elect are here (as also in **I Corinthians 12:12**) called ‘Christ’, because of the union between Christ and the elect. And in like manner, when Christ, as in **Isaiah 42:1-6**, is spoken of as the party with whom the Father covenants, the elect are to be viewed as in Him. As united and one with Him, His atoning suffering is looked upon as their suffering: ‘**I am crucified with Christ ...**’ (**Galatians 2:20**).”

And James Haldane, in his work, *Doctrine of the Atonement*, wrote this: “Christ is not only the Substitute but the Surety of His people. The Gospel is founded on the fact that Adam and Christ are covenant heads and representatives of their respective families. Hence, they are termed ‘**the first**

man' and **'the second man'** (**I Corinthians 15:47**), as if there had been none other but themselves, for the children of each were entirely dependent on their head. In Adam all die; in Christ all are made alive (**I Corinthians 15:22**). The first all includes every individual of mankind, the last all is explained by the apostle to mean 'they that are Christ's'."

So, in summation of all this, we conclude that the federal nature of the atonement - or satisfaction that God's holy nature demands and that He in the Second Person of the Holy Trinity provides - is as much a necessity as all the other of His holy demands and gracious provisions.

What is the nature of the atonement? The atonement is punitive (penal) in its nature. The atonement is substitutive in its nature. The atonement is expiatory in its nature. The atonement is propitiatory in its nature. And the atonement is federal in its nature. All the elements express what the atonement is, and what it was designed and intended to accomplish, as God purposed eternally.

What is the nature of the atonement? The nature of the atonement is displayed in that of an atonement that actually and completely atones. It is able to do exactly what God intended for it to do. It atones, or fully satisfies each and every righteous demand that His holy nature requires. Success is assured because the atonement, or covering, or Mercy Seat, is provided. He, Jesus Christ, becomes our Mercy Seat and He has truly made atonement for His people. Praise God, we have an Atonement that atones!

Chapter Four

What Are The Results Of The Atonement?

- Reconciliation -

To the blessed and quickened soul, the results, or the consequences of this stupendous and marvelous atonement, are beyond naming and most assuredly beyond all capacity to fully comprehend and appreciate as they so richly deserve. It is simply beyond human capacity to grasp the complete and perfect work that our Great God has purposed and prevailed to perform to the perfect degree that is commensurate with His divine and holy Being. To each who are so blessed, all that we are capable of exclaiming is simply that He and His perfect work are awesome beyond words. And so we declare.

As we fain to look into this great issue of results, we must have, or be brought to, a fundamental knowledge of our state of being in a fallen Adam. In Adam, we sinned against our Creator God and against His holy and righteous character. We sinned against Him! In our federal head, Adam, we sinned along with Adam as we, all his posterity, were seen as being legally in him, as we are biologically, semenally, in him as well. We were one with him, and when he rebelled and sinned, we actively participated in that awful and fatal act. **“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”** (Romans 5:12). Also, the painful, yet inescapable acknowledgement that our guilt and its penalty are expressed here: **“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive”** (I Corinthians 15:22).

In respect to the clearly declared act and its consequences of both Adam and Christ as stated in **I Corinthians 15:22**, we have already seen in other portions of these stated *Thoughts on the Atonement*, that all those who are seen as **“in Adam”**, as his federal headship declares them to be, did indeed sin when he sinned and, as the stated consequence of that act specified, they

died when Adam died, spiritually and the fellowship and sweet communion that Adam had been blessed and most assuredly privileged to enjoy with God was fatally marred and terminated. To be sure, Adam lived 930 years on the earth in his mortality, but he died spiritually after only a relatively brief period from his having been created and brought forth to the position and privilege that God had been pleased to assign. Adam's act, or actions, led to his loss and were the sole source of such loss, as is now his portion.

Note the expression, "... **as in Adam** ...," and then note also in the same text, "... **even so in Christ** ..." (I Corinthians 15:22). So assuredly, and with no room to dispute, the enlightened (quicken) sinner is led to gladly and joyfully acknowledge that the federal headship that exists with Adam and all his posterity, or in other words, all that he represented, is a reality that is positively countered by "... **even so in Christ** ..." so that the gladsome pronouncement rings out that federal headship is also a wondrous and gracious reality as seen as "**in Christ**." Amazing wonderment it is that all of the elect are seen as "**in Christ**" from eternity, and He stood as their Substitute and Surety even before they had being or need!

So, who were seen as "**in Adam**"? All of Adam's posterity, or all of human mortality. And who were seen as "**in Christ**"? All, each and every one, and all of them without exception, that He had been given by the Father. "**I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word**" (John 17:6). Clearly, this teaches us that this eternal union was because of a covenant relationship that God, in solitary and eternal majesty, entered into with Himself. The Divine Trinity are the Covenant Makers, and this covenant relationship is on the basis of certain and definite stipulations that seemed good and appropriate to Themselves to enter upon and agree to perform to absolute perfection.

When the inspired penman, the apostle John, in his gospel account, recorded the proclamation of John the Baptist, "... **Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world**" (John 1:29), and then also in his record of the Revelation of Jesus Christ recorded; "**And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of**

the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, ...” (Revelation 5:6), he was most assuredly identifying the Lord Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity, as the Covenant Maker who did, in His appointed time, become man so as to live and die as man in order to accomplish His covenant stipulations to effectuate the atonement in behalf of those whom He represented.

We briefly spoke on the matter of reconciliation, or the translated word that is from the same root word that is translated “**atonement**” in **Romans 5:11**, in the beginning of these articles, or *Thoughts on the Atonement*, when we were dealing with the subject, “What is Atonement?” In that article, we made mention that God is not said to be reconciled so as to effect any change in His Nature or Character, but that sinful man must have his fallen nature and his woeful character changed in order for harmony and communion to be restored between God and fallen man. We now return to that discussion and examination.

When we speak of the results of the atonement, we are referring to the consequences that accrue to the recipients of this great atoning, or reconciling work that Jesus Christ has graciously and wondrously accomplished in behalf of the elect from among men. Remember that “... **in Adam all die ...**,” but “... **in Christ all shall be made alive**” (**I Corinthians 15:22**).

One of the cardinal and essential results, or consequences, of the work of atonement is this: Reconciliation is accomplished; enmity is slain. God’s wrath is stayed and communion, or friendship, is restored.

Consider this: Has enmity and lack of communion or friendship always existed? Was there ever a time when enmity was not and when communion was enjoyed? Was there ever a time when God and man were not at odds, or when there was no variance existing between God and man?

The scriptural, and therefore the actual, answer to this first question is no. The answer to the second and third questions is yes. Emphatically, yes!

At man’s creation, he was found to be “just and upright,” as is recorded for our information, instruction, and acknowledgement as here: “**Lo, this**

only have I found, that God hath made man upright; ...” (Ecclesiastes 7:29a), and here also: “So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; ...” (Genesis 1:27), and here: “And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good ...” (Genesis 1:31).

With no doubt or question, when Adam was created, or brought forth from the dust of the earth, as God has clearly, distinctly, and undeniably said, he was found to be “just and upright” in God’s sight and by His pronouncement.

By “just,” we understand that there was no wickedness or evil found in Adam. There were no charges of violation found to be in him. He was guilty of no wrongdoing. By “upright,” we further understand that his will, inclination, or propensity to sin did not exhibit swaying toward such action, nor even leaning to do so. There was no variance in his conduct or character that would make him to be at enmity against God, nor offensive to God. They were at peace, and sweet fellowship and communion existed, as is suggested by the fact that God customarily came to him and fellowshiped with him in the garden which God had prepared and into which God had placed him to dress it and keep it, and to enjoy the beauties and provisions of it.

But, “... **they have sought out many inventions” (Ecclesiastes 7:29b).** But, sin came as the result of Satan’s interjection of rebellion into God’s creation and to man in particular. Adam sinned, and the previous state of innocence and peace was ended; Adam fell and all his posterity, including the elect of God from among them, fell also. And now there is enmity, for God has been grievously and shamefully offended. His Holiness has been offended. He has been sinned against by the very man that had previously enjoyed perfect bliss and quietness of life in the garden.

Now, when we examine the Scriptures, we find that the issue of federal headship again comes clearly into our view, and in this we can and do rejoice and are glad. Let’s look again at this grand truth.

“For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (I Corinthians 15:21, 2).

As we previously declared, this federal headship of Adam encompasses all, or the totality of created mankind; not angels or other created entities, but all of mankind. Note: “... **as in Adam all die** ...” Adam is the federal head of all of mankind, for he is their God-ordained representative. So, when he sinned, they sinned. And they fell when he fell; all of them.

“**Even so in Christ** ...,” or in like manner of representation, for all that are seen as “**in Christ**,” God has likewise ordained or appointed Him (Christ) to be their federal head or representative, so that they are also to be “**made alive**” because He is alive evermore.

With these lessons brought to us again, we must conclude that all were surely seen eternally by Omniscience as being “in” their respective representative heads: all that were “**in Adam**,” and all that were “**in Christ**.”

So, this makes crystal clear the fact that there was sin in Adam, and therefore sin in all his posterity; and Omniscience eternally saw them as such, even prior to the creation of either him or them. God saw them as sinners and in desperate need, even before they were.

Even so, or in like manner, He saw all of His elect as in Christ, even before they had actual being and certainly before they sinned and fell in Adam, and had therefore the guilt and need of deliverance even then. Even then!

Clearly then, we must conclude that there was, in the mind of Omniscience, a point when God saw the finished work and complete deliverance of the elect by the work that their Surety, His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ would surely complete; and so saw His own as being in a state of conciliation, or in agreement, with Himself prior to any difference, variance or enmity on their part or wrath on His part.

Therefore, when His work was completed on their behalf, but to magnify His honor and glory, then their status, or standing, was brought back to what it was before sin had marred the relationship; and they are now said to be reconciled to God, or their enmity defeated, being replaced by friendship - and He is reconciled to them, seeing as how His wrath against them as sinners was satisfied by the perfect and peerless work of His Son, when He met His demand for them. Thus, an atonement that does not just cover, but one that defeats the enmity on man's part and appeases wrath on God's part, does indeed cover, but also does it bring about a complete and final reconciliation. God, in Christ, reconciles the elect to God by replacing, by defeating the enmity that they had toward God; and not only turning aside His just wrath against the sin and the sinner, as seen in His elect by His acceptance of them in Christ, but He is also said to be reconciled to them.

Never did the animal sacrifices and blood offerings do more than cover the sins and transgressions of the offerer. A remembrance was made again of the sinners' need each time that a typical animal was sacrificed and its shed blood offered and applied. A remembrance was made, not a removal of sin or a restoration to favor and privilege. So, every year, at least every year, a new sacrifice was required and a new offering given. This is clear from this: **“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”** (Hebrews 10:1-4). And then this: **“... but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself”** (Hebrews 9:26b).

Typical sacrifices never put away sins, but provided a covering for them and a remembrance of them, so that the sacrifice and offering were required to be repeated, and that on a continuing and recurring basis. The basis of reoccurring necessity would, and did, continue until, **“... once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of**

himself” (Hebrews 9:26b). And this as well: “**So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation**” (Hebrews 9:28). And this too: “**But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;**” (Hebrews 10:12). Typical sacrifice never could, nor was such ever intended, to put away sin. So, they were an atonement, but did not produce reconciliation.

Perhaps the words penned by John Owen can be seen as a clear description, in but a few words, of this wonderful and God-honoring work of reconciliation. “God loved us, in respect of the free purpose of His will to send Christ to redeem us and to satisfy for our sins; He was angry with us, in respect of His violated law and provoked justice by sin.” “...**God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation**” (II Corinthians 5:19).

In looking in retrospect, before reconciliation was an actuality, we see man in a state of condemnation; and even before the condemnation, we see God and Adam at peace with no enmity on Adam’s part and no just wrath on God’s part. The sublimity of it all is perhaps best expressed, (as humans could express it), when the 17th century puritan Thomas Manton wrote: “God and man were once dear friends. Adam was the Lord’s favorite. Till man was made, it was said of every rank and species of earthly creatures, ‘**God saw that it was good.**’ But when man was made, ‘**God saw everything He had made, and behold, it was very good ...**’ (Genesis 1:31). God expressed more of His favour to him than to any creature, except the angels: man was made after His own image (Genesis 1:26). He was fitted to live in delightful communion with his Maker. Man was His viceroy (Genesis 1:27). God entrusted him with the care, charge, and dominion over all creatures; yea, he was capable of loving, knowing, and enjoying God. Other creatures were capable of glorifying God - of setting forth His power, wisdom and goodness - objectively and passively, but man of glorifying God actively.”

Chapter Five

What Are The Results Of The Atonement?

- Remission of Sin -

The atonement that God purposed and that He provided is not just to reconcile, as an open-ended or casual transaction for satisfaction apart from all its component parts, but rather reconciliation is effected because it is based upon the remission of the sins that necessitated satisfaction to God for the uttermost farthing of debt that sin had incurred.

Remission of sins must be accomplished in order for the righteous Judge to acquit the guilty. He acquits none on any basis except full reckoning and full payment be made of the just debt that sin has incurred. Full reckoning and full payment must be rendered and accepted. On no other basis are sins remitted.

We see this wondrous transaction in glorious satisfaction rendered as Paul, in his second epistle to the Corinthian saints proclaims with full assurance to these and all saints who are blessed to have their understanding opened to this truth. This he so clearly declares thus: **“And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”** (II Corinthians 5:18-21).

These words teach the quickened sinner that the basis that brings about reconciliation is the same as is the basis of sins’ pardon. When God says that

He does not impute (or lay to the account of) their trespasses unto them, He makes this judicial declaration, because He has from eternity laid those same sins to the account of (or has imputed these sins and trespasses to) their Surety, Who has rendered full payment. And when full payment of sins has been paid, the account is appropriately said to be, and is, marked as paid in full. No further payment can or must be paid and no debt lingers. Their account is settled and pardon is accomplished.

God therefore is satisfied with the work that His Dear Son has accomplished and sets the debtor free, because, and only because, the debt is paid.

Does this then mean that the sinner whose debt has been paid will no longer be capable or guilty of further sin? No, not for an instant should such an evil thought be considered, for man in his depravity is still capable of sin, and all too often exhibits such grievous and heinous conduct to the dishonor of God and to his own detriment and hurt.

What it does mean is that “... **not imputing their trespasses unto them ...**” (**II Corinthians 5:19**) assures the guilty sinner that, even though God does not charge these daily and frequent sins to the sinner, yet they too, these same sins that the quickened sinner still commits, must be and have been fully paid, in that their Surety, Jesus Christ Himself, has eternally had charged to His account these grievous, shameful, and heinous sins, and He has paid the last mite for their pardon. The sinner’s past sins, his present sins, and his future sins have all been imputed to the account of the Surety, and He has fully discharged His covenant stipulation to bear them all in His own body and has completely paid the incurred debt and set the captive sinner free. Now, let us beware lest our frailty and our depraved heart would convince us - that because our sins, past, present, and future, are already charged and payment rendered - then we are no longer culpable for them and for their satisfaction; that we, being declared free, then are licensed to live without regard to God’s proper and strict code of conduct.

God’s word denounces such thought and action and condemns in practice any and all indulgence in such deviant and ungodly behavior. We are

not our own to do as the flesh would like and dishonor God in the doing. Note these admonitions: **“Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”** (II Corinthians 5:17). **“Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men”** (I Corinthians 7:23). **“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s”** (I Corinthians 6:20). **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”** (Romans 12:1, 2). **“If ye love me, keep my commandments”** (John 14:15).

Sinners who have had their sins imputed to, and just punishment borne by, their Substitute have in actuality satisfied the just claims that God had against them, and all such claims have been by Him fully and completely offered and accepted by Him. And thus, the sinner is seen in the judicial eye of Omniscience as being without sin, and therefore they stand in His sight as acceptable, because they stand accepted in Jesus Christ.

We must stand amazed and in great awe of God’s holiness, as well as His demanding justice, when we pause in our contemplations on such a great and stupendous reality that God took our dreadfully wicked and wretched sins against Himself that we have so carelessly, and yet deliberately, committed and laid them all upon His Son, and exacted equivalent and just punishment for those sins from Him, and so pardons us.

“Who *is* a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in* mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” (Micah 7:18, 19).

Truly, our sins have been, and are, pardoned on the basis that just and equitable Satisfaction has stood in our room and in our stead and has fully

and completely borne the guilt and penalty that those sins have properly incurred. He pardons the sinner, because the Surety has been appropriately punished. The exact punishment that these sins have merited has been meted out upon the Person Who has eternally stood to receive such punishment.

Rest assured that the righteous Judge has not and will not disregard those sins, nor will He lessen or modify the punishment that they have earned. **“God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth *wrath* for his enemies. The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked*: ...”** (Nahum 1:2, 3). And: **“If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity”** (Job 10:14).

Clearly, God has affirmed that sin and iniquity of all stripes shall be appropriately dealt with. And what is the prescription that God has declared as being the proper, the suitable, the appropriate, and the only acceptable price to be exacted for pardon; for acquittal? Death is the pronouncement that the righteous Judge has deemed to be the price. Nothing less is demanded. And nothing less will be sufficient, nor accepted. **“And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”** (Genesis 2:15-17).

Was Adam capable of heeding the clearly stated commands that his Maker had given to him? Yes! Adam had full faculty of mind, reason, and will; not only to hear, but also to heed and obey. He had no lack of capacity to obey God. He was able to hear, heed, and obey. He also had full capacity to recognize the stipulations and conditions, as well as consequences of these commands that God had distinctly and unequivocally spoken to him by way of absolute command. God did not merely suggest. Rather, He commanded, with full authority to command and hold accountable the man to whom He commanded.

Note: “... **Of every tree of the garden thou MAYEST freely eat**” (Genesis 2:16b). (Emphasis mine - WDT) The terminology “**mayest freely eat**” distinctly gives Adam permission to take freely and, by implication, plenteously, or as his need or desire would be, and to do so with good results or consequences to be expected and enjoyed. It would be for Adam’s good and for his enjoyment.

The second command that God spoke to Adam was equally distinct and clear, and there was nothing in this second command that impeded or otherwise hindered Adam’s capacity to likewise obey, explicitly obey, for it came from Him Who possesses absolute authority in the second case, as in the first. “**BUT of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou SHALT NOT eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die**” (Genesis 2:17a). (Emphasis mine - WDT)

Please take care to recognize and to acknowledge that the permissive command of “**THOU MAYEST**” was spoken by God, and the prohibitive command, “**THOU SHALT NOT EAT OF IT**”, was likewise spoken by the same God, and His words were directed to the same creature, who was Adam. God commanded Adam.

And also take full awareness that the same God that spoke by commandment to Adam also spoke the appropriate penalty that God Himself attached to the second of these two commands. “... **for in the day that thou eatest thereof THOU SHALT SURELY DIE**” (Genesis 2:17b). (Emphasis mine - WDT) A lawful and proper command was enjoined to a lawful and proper penalty.

And so we read, “**He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? *It is God that justifieth***” (Romans 8:32, 33).

Gladsome proclamation this! How grand and wonderful it is that men such as you and I, though dreadful sinners (whom God in His infinite mercy and grace has not only chosen in Him, but has also effectuated our full pardon

by bearing the full and complete punishment for us), have been freely issued a full and complete pardon.

Chapter Six

What Are The Results Of The Atonement?

- Redemption -

We have looked into the matters, as being based on the Scriptures, of the reconciliation that has been effectually worked out by the actions taken by Omniscience to secure it, and by the specific work of meeting all the legal requirements that delivered reconciliation; namely, that sin which was the cause that brought about a severance of the conciliation, or breach of communion between God and man, has been legally and bindingly satisfied in Christ, and therefore those causative sins of the elect of God have been remitted.

No longer are there charges pending against any whose sins have been put away; they are never to appear on the docket in the legal and judicial halls of God and penalty demanded for their payment. Payment in equivalent suffering has been exacted in reckoning and rendering by the imputation of those sins to the account of the Substitute Surety, and He has paid the utmost farthing, or very last mite, so that legally the sins being remitted, reconciliation has been secured.

Without doubt, there is a close connection between reconciliation and remission. That none can deny, nor should attempt be made to do so. The scriptural reality is that God and His created man Adam were brought back to a state of friendship and fellowship by the reconciliatory work of Jesus Christ, which slew the enmity that Adam's sin produced and the consequences of that breach. These actions also satisfied the justice and the demands against Adam that had triggered God's holy wrath against him. And the basis of the reconciliation is this: the sins have been remitted, and penalty has been turned aside.

Now, we turn our thoughts to another principal result, or consequence, of the atonement; namely, that of redemption. To begin, let our attention be drawn to the writings of another for a brief moment as we seek to be directed to the subject of redemption. These words were penned long ago, but they are still most timely and pertinent.

“The term redemption is borrowed from certain pecuniary transactions among men, as the release of an imprisoned debtor by liquidating his debt, or the deliverance of a captive by paying a ransom. These are transactions with which mankind in general, and especially the Jews and primitive Christians, have been perfectly familiar. Accordingly, both in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, the deliverance of man from sin is frequently represented by language borrowed from such negotiations. The term before us is of this nature. It involves all the ideas included in atonement. It supposes sin, which is the cause of imprisonment or captivity. It supposes deliverance by a substitute, the captive or debtor being unable to effect his own escape. And, of course, it supposes also a clear emancipation or restoration as the result of the ransom being paid.” (Wm. Symington)

According to the scriptural particulars as they are set forth in Moses’ writings of **Leviticus**, chapter **25**, and confirmed each time the subject of redemption, both of possessions and persons, is under examination, harmony and agreement are evident, since all the scriptural accounts are from, and of, God, and do not or cannot be contradictory or at odds or at variance with themselves.

Let us prayerfully seek to be led by the Spirit to read and meditate upon the Scriptures so as to be reassured and wondrously comforted as to our standing before God and of our standing with Him; and so, in this submissive and humble attitude, carefully look into the Book where we find such assurance and inward peace as is illustrated by these passages.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained

before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God” (I Peter 1:18-21).

This New Testament record is most gloriously and wondrously received and believed by God’s children, and in their new relationship with God, are made to rejoice with unspeakable joy and ardor for Him Who has covenanted, by purpose, such a manifestation of His love for us as His chosen, His elect; and then has perfectly prevailed to accomplish such redemption for us.

Now, we also look into the Old Testament and find that what God has purposed and provided was foretold long before it was brought to fruition. **“For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of *him that was stronger than he*” (Jeremiah 31:11).** And this also: **“I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: ...” (Hosea 13:14).**

Both a ransom and a redemption are clearly taught in God’s Book, and we must not imagine otherwise, or suppose one without the other. The rendering of the stipulated, required ransom will produce a redemption. The ransom, which is the payment in full of the debt that has been incurred, while, when paid, results in the liberty, or setting free, of the afore-condemned debtor or prisoner. The debt being paid, the captive goes free.

Because sin incurs a debt, we need to be clear as to who the creditor is, and who the debtor is. Now, sin does, without doubt, create a debt. (Remember **Genesis 2:17**?) And because God had pronounced suitable penalty upon the violator of His command, then the violator is inescapably identified as the one who is obligated to pay the awesome debt that his violation has earned. And the debt that is owed is death. **“... for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”** The sinner owed the infinite debt; hence, he is the debtor. And since his sin and the associated

debt for that sin is owed to God who commanded and holds accountable, then only He can be the Creditor, He to whom the debt is owed.

And so, a clear picture comes into our view as we reflect upon the verity of God's threatenings and His promises. When sufficient and suitable ransom has been paid, then the one for whom it was paid is redeemed.

O, such grace and mercy are on display, when we see the wonders of what God has done! For in His infinite capacity and will, He has loved and provided Himself to be both Ransom and Redeemer. He has given His life "**a ransom for many**" and He has, in so doing, redeemed His people unto Himself. He has redeemed, He does redeem, and He shall yet redeem His people from their sins. Hallelujah! What a Saviour!

God has redeemed His people in a three-fold way in that He has "... **delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;**" (II Corinthians 1:10). This great passage teaches that He has delivered us (His people) from the awful guilt and from the dreadful penalty for that guilt; that He presently is delivering us from the power and dominion of sin that still lives and acts in our mortal bodies; and that He will one glad day deliver us from the very presence of sin into a Realm where sin will never follow or appear.

So, with these assurances, we are to seek His gracious enablement to not only recognize the scope and far reaching benefits that His great redemption has, and is doing, for us; but also that such redemption will produce in us a manifestation of the reception of His righteous robe in which He has clothed us. May we submit to Him and live for Him, and thus show forth the great magnitude of what His redemption has accomplished.

"Redemption, as well as creation, must also be a purely sovereign determination of the Divine will. This is required by the necessities of the case, as well as plainly declared in Scripture. No doctrine of Redemption that in any way casts the slightest shadow over the high mountain of Divine Sovereignty can be tolerated for a moment. All theologies that in any manner teach or imply that there was any obligation upon God to do this or that for

fallen, rebellious subjects of law are unscriptural, unreasonable, if not blasphemous. Divine sovereignty is to be recognized as determined to save any fallen ones, in determining who should be saved, in ‘choosing,’ ‘raising up,’ and ‘delivering up’ the Saviour, and in the Saviour’s giving of Himself; but this Sovereign Redemption once determined, was wrought out under law, and in exact accordance with law.” (J. Armour, writing, “Atonement and Law,” 1917)

“Herein was the emphasis of Divine love to us, that He ‘**sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins**’ (I John 4:10). It was love that He would restore men after the fall; there was no more necessity of doing this than of creating the world. As it added nothing to the happiness of God, so the want of it had detracted nothing from it. There was no more absolute necessity of setting up man again after his breaking with God, than a new repair of the world after the destructive deluge. But that He might wind up His love to the highest pitch, He would not only restore man, but rather than let him lie in his deserved misery, would punish His own bowels to secure man from it. It was purely His grace which was the cause that His Son ‘**tasted death for every son,**’ (Hebrews 2:9).” (Stephen Charnock, 1635)

Chapter Seven

What Are The Results Of The Atonement?

- Righteousness -

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For THEREIN IS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD REVEALED from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:16, 17). (Emphasis mine - WDT)

“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and RIGHTEOUSNESS, and sanctification, and redemption:” (I Corinthians 1:30). “I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with THE ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, as a bridegroom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels” (Isaiah 61:10). And here: “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their RIGHTEOUSNESS *IS* OF ME, saith the LORD” (Isaiah 54:17). (All emphasis mine - WDT)

These and numerous other Scriptures are an unmistakable pronouncement of God, in His abundant mercy to reassure and comfort His people, that the great atonement that He has made to secure their eternal standing before Him has indeed done so. He has met every need in the Person and Work of Atonement that has reconciled and has redeemed by offering and receiving a suitable and appropriate ransom. And this great work culminates in the restoration of God’s likeness in those recipients to the moral image and likeness in which Adam came forth from the hand of his creator.

When Moses wrote of the account of man's creation, he wrote the very words of God on that matter, as in **Genesis 1:26, 27** where it is recorded: **“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:”** (**Genesis 1:26**) and also, **“So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them”** (**Genesis 1:27**).

The words, **“Let us ...”** God was speaking of BEFORE He created. And His intent was to create so that the creature would exhibit moral likeness to Himself. And when His intent to so create was fully met in the product or person of His intended creation these words verify: **“So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him ...”** Without question or doubt, God did precisely as he had intended to do. Adam did come forth in the image of God, and after His likeness. He was made and declared to be “just and upright before God,” as **Ecclesiastics 7:29a** tells us; just and upright before God!

Now a return to that created standing is desperately needed by sinful man, as a breach has occurred that caused that great chasm to exist over which man cannot bridge or evade. And to this need appears the Eternal Surety to reconcile, to redeem by remission of sins, and to produce a righteousness that qualifies the redeemed and restored sinner to have access and communion. Someone has said concerning this matter that the only way for a creature to go to heaven and stand in the presence of God is for that person to be as good (righteous) as God Himself - OR to have standing in Someone who is. And so it is. No intrinsic and qualifying good is found in sinful and fallen man, to be sure, but in the Person of the Great Surety, qualifying goodness resides and is put to the account of the elect sinner so that the elected and regenerated sinner is now welcomed into the very presence of God, for he is clothed in the righteous robe of the Lord, Jesus Christ. He, in Christ, is qualified. He, in Christ, is seen as worthy and is welcomed.

We must not only rejoice and be glad in that we who are saved have been made to be, and are indeed, accepted in the Beloved; we are also told that the transaction of quickening or regeneration has made us to be “new

creatures,” or creations in Christ; and as new creatures, we have been restored to that moral image in the likeness of God, as we were in Adam, and were declared to be by our Creator God Himself.

Our awareness of this great truth, that Jesus Christ, by His vicarious suffering and the consequent death that He bore, has produced our justification before God, (so that from a judicial or legal stand point, He is pleased to pronounce us free of guilt and guilt’s associated penalty). He has also produced for us a righteous standing before Him, and the manifestation of the new and restored nature, which His work has produced for us, is to be most wonderfully displayed in us.

“Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (II Corinthians 5:17). “For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (II Corinthians 5:21). “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good (righteous - WDT) works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk **IN THEM” (Ephesians 2:10). (Emphasis mine - WDT) “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:” (Ephesians 1:4). “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).**

These and numerous other scriptural citings could be added, but sufficient proof has been presented to cause each of us to clearly discern God’s directions for His own. We who have been graciously quickened are expected and directed to reflect the great restoration work that He has done for us in the manner of life that we live before God and men, even now; even now, and not just - as we may wrongly imagine – in our future conduct at a future time.

Perhaps we should meditate upon the admonishments of the Apostle Paul’s words to Titus (and to each of us as well), when he wrote, **“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching**

US that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, WE SHOULD LIVE soberly, righteously, and godly, IN THIS PRESENT WORLD: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us FROM all iniquity, and PURIFY unto himself a peculiar (purchased - WDT) people, zealous of GOOD WORKS” (Titus 2:11-14). (All emphasis mine - WDT)

Clearly, Peter was led also to speak “**to the strangers scattered**” abroad on the same matter, when he unmistakably taught them, exhorted, and admonished them to be submissive to God’s instructions and with humble willingness to follow His path. He wrote: “***Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?***” (II Peter 3:11-12).

Here, Peter was speaking of a future time when definite and certain occurrences would be witnessed (and these are yet, as of this time, future), but he was also teaching those quickened souls as to the “**manner of persons**” they ought to be NOW in this life; what manner of persons, even while looking forward to, and gladly anticipating the yet future “**coming of the day of God.**”

How should the new creature reflect his newly assigned nature? How should the child of God live now, and how should the world of unbelievers all around him see his manner of life?

The Scriptures are filled with good and wholesome instructions for God’s people, and have for all ages been the portion that God has assigned them. His very nature has been the source of these instructions, as exemplified by Peter’s words, “**Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy**” (I Peter 1:16), and he was but rehearsing for the scattered abroad redeemed strangers the words that had been spoken to those before them in the book of **Leviticus in 11:44.**

God's precious, blood-bought saints should recognize that He demands of us that we walk pleasingly before Him. He is our God and our Master, and we are obligated to reflect this wonderful relationship which He has given us, and seek always, with all that is within us, as the new creations that He has declared us to be, to indeed manifest an association with Christ by a state of fellowship; to manifest thereby that such a relationship does indeed exist and what it should produce. We should walk in His glorious fellowship because of the relationship. Remember, we are His. Should not we show forth that relationship to Him by the life that we live that demonstrates association or fellowship?

Meditate upon, and then daily seek to act upon the clear teachings of the Scriptures as to how we are to exhibit in our lives the great admonition, **"If ye love me, keep my commandments"** (John 14:15).

"There are few questions of more importance than the one which has reference to the way in which a sinner becomes perfectly righteous before God. If he be not completely righteous, he cannot enter heaven." (J.C. Carson).

"... If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17).

"There is the same need of Christ's obeying the law in our stead, in order to the reward, as of His suffering the penalty of the law in our stead to our escaping the penalty; and the same reason why one should be accepted on our account, as the other. This is certain, that that was the reason why there was need that Christ should suffer the penalty for us, even that the law might be answered; for this the Scripture plainly teaches. This is given as the reason why Christ was made a curse for us, that the law's threatening a curse to us: (**Galatians 3:10, 13**). But the same law that fixes the curse of God as the consequence of not continuing in all things written in the law to do them (v-10), has as much doing those things as an antecedent of living in them (v-12). There is as much of a connection established in one place as in the other... We have not eternal life merely on the account of being void of guilt,

but on the account of Christ's activeness in obedience and doing well.”
(Jonathan Edwards)

The Atonement

Concluding Thoughts

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement” (Romans 5:6-11).

And so we have returned to the same point upon which we had, long ago, begun our *Thoughts on the Atonement*. In this portion, we will attempt to draw some obvious conclusions, point out some not so obvious conclusions, and provide some additional thought that others before me have expressed. We will, by God’s grace and Divine enablement, encourage everyone to meditate, contemplate, and adore with godly fear and reverence for Him, prayerfully study, and examine those things which have been presented.

In the passage that we have cited as we begin the ‘thoughts’, we seek to point out by expositional means some most vital details, some of which are plainly in view and others perhaps by inference are seen with less clarity.

To begin, verse **6** of **Romans 5** clearly declares, first, that it is Christ who died; secondly, He died in due time, or in the appointed or predetermined time, declared to be ‘**in due time**’, at the proper time; and thirdly He died for some who were without strength (or as God had described them when they were dead, as being ‘**ungodly**’).

And then in verse **8**, we see these for whom Christ died as being denominated as ‘**sinners**’; He died in behalf of, or with regard for, sinners. He did not die for those who were not sinners, for none qualified. **“Wherefore, as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”** (Verse **12**). And in verse **8** we also learn why Christ died for us, as sinners. Sinners we were to be sure, and Christ died for us to manifest the commendation of ‘**his love toward us.**’ He undertook for us, because He loved us. And why did He love us? Because He wanted to! He loved us because Divine prerogative He exercised, as Sovereignty chose to exercise prerogative. He was not in any way bound to act favorably in regard to those who were, by sin, in a state of enmity against Him and hated Him and hated His holy law.

And because of their sin, His righteous wrath was kindled toward them, and they stood condemned and liable to the wrath being unleashed against them. But, He loved them, for again we read that God commended His love toward us, even when we were at enmity against Him.

“The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore (or in respect to My love for you - WDT) with loving kindness have I drawn thee” (Jeremiah 31:3). To be sure, the immediate context of the verse is Jeremiah, then God’s elect among Israel, and His elect from among every nation, people, kindred, and tongue. He loved them, and in loving kindness has, is, and shall draw them, because He loved them!

He loved them, and in the appropriate time has drawn (and will draw) them. But not by random, capricious, uncertain, or indefinite means, but by His Surety for them and for full Satisfaction in the peerless, perfect work of that Surety, whose sinless blood would be required by God, and shed by God, and received by God as the Reconciling Atonement in Jesus Christ. And His love would prevail and His own would be redeemed and gathered unto Him to be in full accord with Him once again and that for the ceaseless ages of eternity. By His blood we are justified to stand before Him without sin or any vestige of it. Hallelujah, He is our “Redeemer, Deliverer, Reconciler, Mediator, Intercessor, Advocate, Attorney, Solicitor, our Hope,

Comfort, Shield, Protection, Defender, Strength, Health, Satisfaction and Salvation.” (William Tyndale 1494-1536)

“There is one question which underlies all theological controversy: and as we approach the crisis, it is coming more and more to the surface. The question in it all really is: whether God or man is to be the supreme; whether the glory of God or the supposed interest of man is the center around which all is to revolve; whether the will of God is to be supreme and unquestioned, or whether every expression of it is to be brought to the bar of human reason; and whether everything in theology, as in morals, is to be judged by its reasonableness and its apparent usefulness to man. Those who claim to be the most advanced theologians and moralists, exalt human nature to the place of the sovereign arbitrator of truth and right, and seek to apply their favorite maxim regarding earthly governments to the Divine government also: that it exists only for the sake - as yet they would scarcely have the hardihood to say by the consent - of the governed.

“This fundamental question of Divine or human supremacy underlies the views that men adopt of the inspiration and authority of Scripture. On one side, the question is simply, what is written? On the other side, a right is claimed to decide what ought to be written - the very presumption which Satan taught our first parents regarding what God had said. When this claimed right is exercised, little of revelation is left unmodified. One of the first points on which proud reason comes into conflict with what is written, is the natural condition of man. Nor need we be surprised if it should revolt against the Divine estimate of fallen man, and against the sentence under which he lies as by nature a child of wrath, dead in trespasses and sins, vile, polluted, helpless, and hopeless in himself. It is only the Spirit of God that can convince a man of sin in the Scriptural sense; and so long as the appeal is to human reason, the Scriptural view of man’s condition must be rejected. Though it cannot be denied that the facts in the case, whether in the history of the individual or of mankind, most painfully corroborate the Scriptural view, and though the most humbling descriptions of human depravity in the Word of God seem to be only history condensed, there is a wonderful facility in offsetting these sad realities by an ideal excellence, and in covering them up by glowing delineations of the possibilities of human progress. The power of

self-deception and self-flattery in the human heart is amazing. The admirable sentiments which are elegantly expressed in the writings of men whose lives were very far from exemplifying them, serve to cover up the deep and general depravity of the age in which they lived. Their modern admirers estimate themselves rather by their admiration of these virtuous sentiments, than by what they know themselves to be in life and character. Never is this power of self-deception and self-flattery more signally illustrated than when it comes into the sphere of Christianity, substituting the Sermon on the Mount for the discourses of heathen moralists, and reckoning all the graces of the renewed man, if not the living perfections of the Word made flesh, among the possibilities of human cultivation. That man is fallen, may not be denied; but we are taught that the evil is incidental, not inherent, and may be traced to physical degeneracy, the influence of disordered world, of bad example, and defective education. While undeveloped and dormant in the soul, there is inherent nobility, the germ of all excellence, which only needs to be aroused and cherished, until it expands into a perfection which renders it meet for inheritance of the saints in light.

“Such views of the natural condition of man lead to a corresponding modification of the Scriptural doctrine of regeneration, which, according to our liberal theologians, is but the awakening of the dormant excellence of man, giving a new turn to misdirected affections and powers, and is the first step in the development of his inherent nobility. The testimony of Scripture as to the utter ruin of man, and the necessity of being born again, in the singularly emphatic terms used with reference to the one as well as the other, might seem to present an insuperable objection to the self-exalting scheme; but an evasion of the objection has already been provided for in a theory of inspiration which permits everything in Scriptures which is irreconcilable with their theology, to be explained away as the exaggeration of enthusiasts or the daring imagery of Eastern poets.

“In such a system of doctrine the mission of Christ can have no place, except as it provides for the moral development, or aids it. For, first of all, in the daring exaltation of man, the revealed character of God is tampered with; His perfections are rendered tributary to the supposed interests of His creatures; His righteousness, holiness and truth are resolved into

benevolence; so that there are no claims of justice to be satisfied, no holiness and truth to be vindicated, and sin is only to be taken cognizance of in so far as it may interfere with the well-being of the creature. The humiliation, suffering and death of the Son of God furnished but an impressive spectacle, by which the evil effects of an unconditional pardon of sin might be averted, and by which the heart of the sinner might be melted and conciliated. The life and death of Christ, in short, are the moral influences by which the dormant excellence of the soul is aroused, love to God and man engendered, by which the wanderer is to be won into the path of virtue. The ‘influence’ of the Holy Spirit, rather than His personal agency, now comes in to give effect to the truth and to aid the moral development, just as in the natural world the influence of the sun’s rays change the desolation of winter into the verdure of spring.”

These foregoing powerful words, that we have, at great length provided verbatim, were penned in the latter half of the 19th century by James Inglis, as he wrote in *The Waymarks of the Wilderness* on the subject, “The Atonement.”

We can in no way expect to improve of what Inglis wrote, nor would we desire to do so. We can, and do urge each and every person who reads *Thoughts on the Atonement* to do so with a genuine desire to know the truth and to be, thereby, set free from the grievous errors and perversions of men who have knowingly or ignorantly espoused a denial or an ignoring of these most God-honoring and sinful pride-destroying doctrines. May each of us be truly blessed and edified.

Since we by no means wish to declare or to imply that what we have written is only our own personal or private thoughts, we now include some thoughts written by others over many years past.

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (Romans 5:10).

Robert Haldane, in his great classic entitled *An Exposition of Romans*, said when commenting on this verse, “The word rendered ‘reconciled’ signifies to change the state of matters between persons at variance, by removing their grounds of difference. The Divine word and declarations, as well as the Divine perfections, forbid us to imagine that God will clear the guilty. In order then, to reconciliation with God, satisfaction must be made to His justice. What is meant here, is not our laying aside our enmity to God, but God laying aside His enmity to us, on account of the death of His Son. It is true that we lay aside our enmity to God when we see that He has laid aside His enmity to us, and never till then will we do so; but what is meant is, that God is reconciled to us. In Scripture this is spoken of as our being reconciled to God. We are reconciled to God, when He is pacified towards us through His Son, in whom we believe.”

Haldane further stated, “All men being sinners, are in themselves, while in unbelief, under the displeasure of God, who cannot look upon iniquity, **Habakkuk 1:13**, and are by nature children of wrath, or of the judgment of God; but as viewed in Christ, and in relation to His death, the elect are the objects of God’s everlasting love, and this love in His good time takes effect. He sends His Son to be a propitiatory sacrifice for them - thus making satisfaction to His justice, and removing every obstacle to His being reconciled. He unites them to the Son of His love; and in Him, clothed with His righteousness, they become the children of God, and them in themselves the proper objects of His love. The ministry committed to the Apostles is called the ministry of reconciliation. Men are besought to be reconciled to God from the consideration of His having made Him to be sin for His people who knew no sin. Here is a double reconciliation, namely of God to men, and men to God. The latter is urged from the consideration of the former, and this reconciliation is effectual for all for whom the reconciliation was made. The whole of this reconciliation is through the death of His Son. Thus does God call His people with a holy calling. He invited them to friendship with Himself, through an all-sufficient atonement; and they lay aside their enmity to Him when they see that God has laid aside His anger against them. They are reconciled to Him through the death of His Son.

“What, in the preceding verse, is spoken of as the blood of Christ, is here spoken of as His death. These varied terms are useful to express the idea in such a manner that it cannot be innocently evaded. Christ’s blood was an atonement, as it was His death. This shows that no degree of suffering would have been sufficient as an atonement for our sins without the actual death of the sacrifice, according to the original sentence against man. Jesus Christ might have suffered all that He did suffer without a total extinction of life; but He must not only suffer - He must also die. This phraseology, then, is calculated to meet the error of those Christians, who, from a desire of magnifying the efficacy of the blood of Christ, have said that one drop of it would have been sufficient to save. Had one drop been sufficient, two drops would never have been shed.”

Charles Hodge, who, while he taught at Princeton Theological Seminary for 56 years (1822 to 1878) on the Pauline Epistles, concerning the passage “**For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son ...**” (Romans 5:10a) wrote: “This verse contains nearly the same idea as verse 9, presented in a different form. The word enemies is applied to men not only as descriptive of their moral character, but also of the relation in which they stand to God as the objectives of His displeasure. There is not only a wicked opposition of the sinner to God, but a holy opposition of God to the sinner. The preceding verse presents the former of these ideas, and this verse the latter most prominently. There, it is said, ‘though sinners, we are justified;’ and here, ‘though enemies, we are reconciled.’

Hodge further comments; “To be reconciled to God, in such connections, does not mean to have our enmity to God removed, but His to us taken out of the way, to have Him rendered propitious, or His righteous justice satisfied. This is evident because the reconciliation is ascribed to the death of Christ, or His blood, verse 9. But, according to the constant representations of Scripture, the death of Christ is a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, or to propitiate the favor of God, and not immediately a means of sanctification. The former is its direct object, the latter an incidental result. This is the very idea of a sacrifice. The most liberal commentators, that is, those least bound by any theological system, admit this to be the

doctrine of Scripture, and of this particular passage. Thus Meyer: “The death of Christ does not remove the enmity of men towards God, but as that which secures the favour of God, it removes His enmity towards men, whence the removal of our enmity towards Him follows as a consequence.” So also Ruckert: “The reconciled here can only be God, whose wrath towards sinners is appeased by the death of His Son. On man’s part nothing has happened; not internal change, no step towards God; all this follows as the consequence of the reconciliation here spoken of.” And DeWette also says “... the Greek word rendered ‘reconciliation’ here used must mean the removal of the wrath of God, and consequently the reconciliation is of God to man which not only here but in **Romans 3:25; II Corinthians 5:18, 19; Colossians 1:21; Ephesians 2:16** is referred to the atoning death of Christ.”

And so, we conclude with the assurance that these *Thoughts on the Atonement* are fully supported by the writings of many others as well as that of ourselves. Most surely then, we conclude and are settled in the matter that God’s word has so said, and has settled the matter.

The Atonement

Postword

The work, *Thoughts on the Atonement*, was originally written as stand-alone articles in the early 1990's, and the first three were sent forth in a monthly journal, *The Baptist Herald*. The others were never published.

In later years, updates / upgrades were undertaken with the entire series completed in 2011 and combined into the present form that is now sent forth, with the same motive as was originally intended, and that is, for the glory of God and for the edification and encouragement of His dear saints.

It is our prayer that each one who reads this work will do so with the desire to be taught of God, seeing as how He only is the real Teacher and Guide. May He be pleased to open our understanding, so that His Word truly does find lodging in our hearts, so that we do not sin against Him, and that our every action pleases and praises Him.

About the Author

William Doyal Thomas was born on November 28, 1932, the third of seven children born to James and Bessie Thomas, in Bear Creek, Alabama. He graduated from Phillips High School in 1950, as valedictorian of his class. During a revival meeting conducted by, as he refers to him, “a little stoop-shouldered man,” the Lord graciously saved Doyal at age 17. His call to the ministry came a year later. He married the love of his life, Corene Bishop, at age 19, and they have just recently celebrated 59 years together.

Doyal enlisted in the United States Air Force during the Korean War in 1953, attending basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, in San Antonio, Texas, and electronics training at Northrop Grumman in Los Angeles, California. His career serving his country was not what could be termed as “exciting,” in that he didn’t travel the world, as many military personnel do. He was always an instructor, with many years of involvement in the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile program. In the whole of a 20 year career, he was only stationed at five different bases: Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi; Amarillo Air Force Base, Amarillo, Texas; Eglin Air Force Base, Valparaiso, Florida; Tyndall Air Force Base, Panama City, Florida; and Sheppard Air Force Base, Wichita Falls, Texas.

Education has always been paramount in his mind, and he could not be satisfied until he had earned the following degrees: Associate in Applied Science, Cooke County Jr. College, Gainesville, Texas; Bachelor of Science, University of North Alabama, Florence, Alabama; Master of Religious Education, Landmark Baptist College and Seminary, Hayward, California; and Doctor of Theology, Landmark Baptist College and Seminary, Hayward, California.

While stationed at Sheppard Air Force Base, Doyal served as a Sunday School teacher for many years at Calvary Baptist Church, in Burkburnett, Texas. During his military career, he only had one overseas deployment, that being a one year period on Johnston Island, a very small island located in the

South Pacific. While stationed there, he took the lead in Bible study classes. In January 1972, it was Calvary Baptist Church that ordained him, setting him apart to the gospel ministry and licensing him to preach. In 1973, he retired from military life after 20 years.

Shortly after retirement from the Air Force, Doyal began pastoring Baptist churches. He was privileged to serve as the undershepherd of some of the Lord's churches in Alabama, West Virginia, and Texas. He was the voice of many radio broadcasts sponsored by various churches he pastored. From 1990-1997, he was editor of *The Baptist Herald* while pastor of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Seguin, Texas. Also during his pastorate in Seguin, he was President of Sovereign Grace Baptist Schools, which included Sovereign Grace Baptist Institute and Seminary and Sovereign Grace Baptist Academy. Later, he served as Dean of Landmark Baptist College, sponsored by Landmark Missionary Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas. He has had the pleasure of preaching at revival meetings and Bible conferences coast-to-coast. The pastorate being his lifelong calling, he continued in this capacity until declining health brought him to retire from that noble vocation in late 2008.

Doyal and Corene's union was blessed with three children, all of whom (along with their spouses) have been mercifully dealt with in salvation. The Lord has seen fit to place all of them into the Philadelphia Baptist Church, Decatur, Alabama, where they serve Him together. Between the three children, the Thomases have been given 12 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Now 78 years old, Doyal is still actively striving to faithfully serve His Master by writing, regularly teaching Sunday School, and preaching as the Lord allows. He long ago stated that it has always been his desire to be "used up" of the Lord until he hears that call to come home. Truly, this is a man who has "**walked with God**" (**Genesis 5:22**).

Terry Thomas, Rhonda Thomas Gilbreath, and Regina Thomas Jones

June, 2011

Section II - Oscar B. Mink

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Introduction

(Romans 5:11) - “And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

Voluminous are the writings of sovereign grace advocates under the heading of limited atonement or particular redemption, and this is as it should be; for in this great truth, God’s attributes of omnipotence and omniscience are gloriously manifested. There is near to perfect accord in the school of sovereign grace as to the salvational effectuality of the atonement, but there is at the same time a disconcerting measure of discord in the ranks of sovereign grace believers as to the extent of the sufficiency of the atonement. Was Christ’s expiatory sacrifice sufficient to remit the sins of mankind, or was it restricted in atonement sufficiency to those chosen of God from the Adamic race? This question poses a dark enigma to many, and has been the basis of much debate throughout the history of Christendom. Nevertheless, our feeble efforts in this treatise shall be expended in an attempt to magnify the truth as relates to the question. If by God’s grace our endeavor is rewarded with a small token of success, a proportionate measure of darkness will be lifted from the question and our efforts amply recompensed.

Some brethren whom I esteem very highly, and whose friendship I am determined to keep in constant repair, espouse what I consider an unorthodox view of the sufficiency of the atonement; namely, atonement sufficiency is equal in extent to human evil, but not in intent. This view is commonly referred to by theological scholars, as, the sufficiency-efficiency view of the atonement, and is today, by far, the most popular view being propagated by Calvinists and Baptists. However, there are today among God’s elect people, as there have always been, and shall ever be, a large and concerned number who take a more conservative view of the atonement of Christ; that view being, all that was wrought in and by the atonement was and is limited to the elect of God. This view magnifies the Majesty of God more than the other, for in it there is no undersigned sufficiency.

The position on atonement sufficiency, which I contend is the scriptural one, and which I purpose to defend in this writing, can in brief be described thusly: Atonement sufficiency and efficacy are equal in extent and application. “This position”, some would say, “allows for deficiency in God, in that He was not able to provide a sufficiency adequate to the Adamic transgression.” Inability and deficiency are incongruous to the nature of God, for with Him all things are possible, and they who would charge us with teaching that God’s throne has a dim shade of insufficiency over it need to learn that it is the “design” of atonement sufficiency we are concerned with; and that the sovereignty of God’s sufficiency has never been questioned by New Testament Baptists. The deficiency-in-sufficiency supposition is an absurdity that needs no further refutation or consideration.

I will strive vigorously for scriptural accuracy in this treatise, but it is needful to be understood by all, that the ultimate literary skills this side of Divine inspiration can only, with so great a theme, develop an abstraction of it. However, an abstraction can be more than the sharing of theory. It can be and should be an enlargement of face, and this is my aim, and by Divine enablement, the end which shall be accomplished. So, let us embark henceforth.

To effect the purpose of this treatise, as stated above, the following three sub-headings are prescribed:

1. The Design of Atonement Sufficiency.
2. Scripture Typology and Atonement Sufficiency.
3. A Passive or Inoperative Sufficiency is Alien to the Attributes of God.

In the following the above order, let us first consider:

Chapter One

The Design of Atonement Sufficiency

In introducing this point, I will set down a maxim, i.e., God is the only absolute infinity. Therefore, all things are subject to metamorphosis or transformation except the essential glory of God. God's essential glory is not capable of more or less. Addition and diminution have to do with God's manifestive glory, and not with that glory which is inherent in His nature. All of creation is sovereignly appointed to serve God's intrinsic glory, but some things of creation are designed by Him to declare or display a greater manifestation of His glory than are some others.

The stars of heaven are an infinite host, but God knows “**the number of the stars; he calleth them all by *their* names**” (Psalm 147:4). The universe is an infinity, but to the dismay of the pantheists, it is not the absolute infinity; for only God is omnipresent and non-dimensional. Atonement efficiency and sufficiency are infinite, but both are limited in design by the covenant of redemption (Hebrews 13:20). This covenant knows nothing of sufficient grace that does not suffice.

In the eternal covenant, God decreed to save a number of Adam's fallen posterity by the vicarious sufferings of Christ, and the rest He left in their sins to their just condemnation. Seeing that this covenant is eternal, that there can be no new thought with God, and what He does He always determined to do; I ask, “Why would God make Christ's atonement sufficient for those whom He had already passed over in the covenant of eternal favor? What is the purpose of a sufficiency beyond that of Divine satisfaction?” The design of the sacrifice of Christ was to reconcile the elect unto God, and the sufficiency of that glorious and infinite sacrifice was limited to that infinite sum, beloved of the Father and given to the Son in the covenant of redemption.

The value of the blood of Christ is not diminished by what it does not do. It did not procure repentance and faith for all men, it did not stay the retributive justice of God against the non-elect, and it did not provide salvational sufficiency for all men. The preciousness of the work of the Holy Spirit is not lessened because He does not once convict the non-elect of their sins, and does nothing to alter their hatred of God, but leaves them in their utter rebellion against all that is holy, just, and good, which culminates in their eternal suffering.

What is the value of the blood of Christ? Surely, no redeemed person would say it is less than infinite, but it borders on Arminianism to contend that the blood of Christ sufficiently atoned for the sins of mankind. The blood of Christ cannot be overvalued, but in the thinking of finite creatures, its value can be misapplied; and this is precisely what the universal sufficiency theory does. The atonement of Christ cannot be denuded of any of its parts, and neither can it be made to bear more than what omniscience designed for it to bear.

The blood of Christ was shed to satisfy the just demands of the law brought against the elect people of God, and when satisfaction is attained, it asks no more. God's atoning love is equal to the condemnation of His people, and when His justice was satisfied, He had no further quarrel with the elect. God's law is the basis or standard of His judgment, and the demands of the law levied upon the elect have been substitutionarily satisfied by the death of Christ, and the righteous Judge has taken His legal pen and has written "justified" on their record, (**Romans 8:33**). But the atoning sufficiency of Christ's death was not redundant. It did not exceed what was necessary to satisfy the debt which His people owed to His law, and now Divine justice looks for satisfying sufficiency beyond the covenant of sovereign mercy and finds none, except in merited damnation of the non-elect.

Thus, the equitable and incontestable verdict rendered by the court of Heaven against all who die in their sins reads: "... **I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity**" (**Matthew 7:23**). They were fully known by God's omniscience, but they were total strangers to the covenant of

love; and their names being omitted from the Lamb's book of life, no redemptive sufficiency was provided for them by the atoning blood of Christ.

A sufficiency which satisfaction does not require is alien to His Scriptures and to the experience of all rational creatures. So it is, in realizing satisfaction, sufficiency and efficiency are co-extensive; for sufficiency is measured by the effect it renders. The old adage which says: "It is better to have too much than too little" is true in the general sense, but it can never apply to God, for He never has too much or too little; just the perfect measure.

The value of the blood of Christ is infinite, but it is a divinely pre-assigned infinity, and is restricted in its atoning worth and utility to the elect of God. Wherein is the wisdom in purchasing a sufficiency for a people whose sins are inextinguishable and were reprobate before the foundation of the World? Wherein is the wisdom of God in extending the value of the blood to those whom He hated before the ages were born? Wherein is the wisdom of God in subjecting His beloved Son to infinite suffering in order to purchase a sufficiency for a people who would never receive the least benefit from it? Most certainly we would not think of questioning the wisdom of God, but the universal sufficiency view is a mooted one, and raises many questions.

God did not, by the shedding of Christ's blood, obtain a universal sufficiency for the curse of sin, but His sacrificial blood was the means of ratifying the covenant of redemption (**Hebrews 13:20**), which covenant beneficially precluded the non-elect.

1. The design and sufficiency of Christ's intercessory prayer is limited to the elect of God (**John 17:9**).

2. The design and sufficiency of Christ's imputed righteousness is limited to the elect of God (**Romans 4:6**).

3. The design and sufficiency of Christ's atoning love is limited to the elect of God (**Jeremiah 31:3; John 17:23; Romans 9:13**).

4. The design and sufficiency of Christ's justification is limited to the elect of God (**Romans 8:33**).

5. The design and sufficiency of Christ's meditorial office is limited to the elect of God (**Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25**).

6. The design and sufficiency of the eternal covenant is limited to the elect of God (**John 5:21; 6:63; II Timothy 1:9**).

7. The design and sufficiency of regenerative grace is limited to the elect of God (**John 17:6; Hebrews 13:20**).

8. The design and sufficiency of Heaven is limited to the elect of God (**I Peter 1:2-4**).

The term "sufficiency" in the eight postulates enumerated above could be replaced with the word "efficiency" and it would not change the design or results in the least. As defined by Webster, both terms mean adequacy. The primary distinction between the terms is chronological, for sufficiency begets efficiency; but God is the author of both, and He, being omniscient, would not appropriate a sufficiency beyond the suitability of His designs for efficiency.

Jesus bled, suffered, and died as the substitute for His people, and the value of His blood was equal to their sin debt, for the Father would not charge one farthing more than that which was owed. "... **The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin**" (**I John 1:7**). Forgiveness cannot extend beyond the offense; and the blood of Christ, though infinite in value, did not procure a sufficiency beyond that which was equal to the sinfulness of His people. "**Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound**" (**Romans 5:20**), but this abounding grace has not to do with a redemptive sufficiency for the non-elect, but with the bestowal of sonship on the atoned-for ones, whereby they become "**joint-heirs with Christ**" (**Romans 8:17**).

There is no question as to the capability of God. He could have, had He been pleased, provided satisfaction for the devil and his angels; but we know this was not His pleasure. It is the design of God's sovereign grace we are concerned with, and redemptive sufficiency is a product of the omniscient

Designer. To talk of atoning sufficiency without forelove runs counter to the tenor of Scripture. Such terms as “uncovenanted mercies,” “heathen virtue,” and “universal sufficiency,” should arouse infinite skepticism in the minds of all who hold the truth of God’s sovereign grace.

It was God’s eternal design to “**bruise**” His Son (**Isaiah 53:10**) and by His infinite suffering provide atoning sufficiency for all whom He represented in His suffering. Therefore, Peter, in speaking to the elect, says: “**Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy**” (**I Peter 4:13**). Are the non-elect in any sense or measure partakers of the suffering of Christ? To affirm the universal sufficiency view of the atonement is to say Christ’s substitutionary suffering was at least in part for the reprobate world, for there can be no atoning sufficiency apart from the sufferings of Christ.

The atonement of Christ is a very special and infinitely gracious work which is limited to the elect (**John 10:11**), but a general sufficiency which is common to all mankind would destroy the particularistic nature of the atonement and put a wider dimension on the atonement than is scripturally warranted.

God’s love for His people is infinite, yet it is a fixed love; and it can never be more or less than what it has eternally been (**Jeremiah 31:3**; **John 13:1**; **Hebrews 13:8**). God’s infallible justice has drawn a demarcation line between the elect and the non-elect, and His love honors the line and limits which He has set for it. God is not divided in Himself. God’s love will not manifest itself, even infinitesimally, toward any person whose name is not written in the Lamb’s book of life. “Why then”, I ask, “take atoning sufficiency and set it apart from God’s love? Why make Christ’s atoning sufficiency to go beyond His sufferings, beyond the covenant of redemption, and beyond God’s restrictive design for it?” The answer is simply because the universal sufficiency doctrine is ill-conceived.

Chapter Two

Scripture Typology and Atonement Sufficiency

“All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, ...” (II Timothy 3:16).

This text most assuredly includes the Old Testament and its many and various types, for the New Testament was not yet in existence. A type has been aptly defined as “A Divinely appointed illustration of some spiritual truth.” A better definition would be hard to come by and because of the sameness of meaning of type and symbol; I will use them interchangeably in this writing. Typical teaching permeates the Scriptures. Everywhere we turn in the Bible we are confronted with types, and they are there for our profit.

A.) First let us look at the Ark of Noah, a vivid type of Christ. **I Peter 3:20-21** is a clear and unmistakable reference to Noah and the Ark passing through the judgmental flood in connection with the atoning death and justifying resurrection of Jesus Christ. The design of the Ark was given to Noah in minute detail by the omniscient Designer and Architect of the universe (**Genesis 5:14-16**). Now the question is, was the ark sufficient in size to accommodate all who were living on the earth at that time? Surely, this question is answered in the asking.

It was not the divine purpose to save all the antediluvian posterity of Adam in the Ark, but only Noah and his family, and seeing there is no negligible quantity in God, all the space and sufficiency sovereignly vested in the Ark for flood survival was fully and gloriously utilized. Noah was “**a preacher of righteousness,**” and “**while the ark was a preparing,**” Noah preached Christ by symbol and sermon; for to preach righteousness is to preach Christ, for He is the believer’s justifying righteousness (**I Corinthians 1:30**).

No doubt, during this exceeding period of one hundred and twenty years of Ark preparation, Noah warned others as he was warned of God (**Hebrews 11:7**). However, only seven believed his report and they were of his own house (**Genesis 7:1**). Then God brought judgment upon the world of the ungodly and they perished in the flood (**II Peter 2:5**). The Noachian family is a type of the household of God (**Ephesians 2:19**), and Christ, the antitype of the Ark (**Acts 4:12**) and Head “**over His own house**” (**Hebrews 3:6**), has made sufficient room for His family and none else. Christ is the Sovereign Sufficer, and having eternally loved His family, He made room for them and them alone in the storm-swept citadel of His grace. The Ark as a type was not given to us in shorthand, but in minute detail, and every detail speaks of Christ.

Atonement sufficiency is anchored in God’s forelove, and Christ loves only those who were given to Him by the Father in the covenant of redemption (**Jeremiah 31:3; John 13:1; 17:6; Romans 8:37**). In the redemptive scheme there is no such thing as uncovenanted love, and hence no universal atonement sufficiency.

The Ark was a divine provision made before the waters of judgment fell from heaven, and in construction of the Ark, Noah followed the heavenly specifications with unvarying exactitude. “**Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he**” (**Genesis 6:22**). There was not one extra cubic inch in the fullness of the Ark, nor was there any unused or wasted space. The sufficiency of the Ark was according to God’s purpose, and His elective purpose was to save only eight souls from the flood (**I Peter 3:20**).

Likewise, Jesus Christ was provided by God before the foundation of the world to deliver His people from the storm of judgment upon sin (**II Timothy 1:9**). Christ’s mission to this earth, as with the Ark, was according in every detail to the need of His people, and not one thing wrought by the atoning death of Christ was extended beyond those for whom He died. The sufficiency and efficiency of Christ’s sacrifice was eternally shut up to the elect of God, and there was no redemptive sufficiency left over. The purpose of atoning sufficiency must be measured by its accomplishments, and it has

none beyond **“the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand ...”** (**Psalm 95:7**). To contend otherwise is to argue for an unsure curse upon the sins of the non-elect, for who can say how long a sovereign sufficiency will remain in protraction? The universal sufficiency theory has the rudiment of universal restoration of mankind in it.

BEWARE!

B.) The second type we want to consider is that of the Passover Lamb of **Exodus 12**. The pure, free, and infinite grace of God provided Israel with the Passover lamb; and in this sacrificial lamb was their redemption and sufficiency. However, let it be clearly understood that the taking of the lamb from the flock, the slaying of it, and the roasting of it with fire was not sufficient to save Israel from the imminent judgment upon Egypt. The blood must be sprinkled upon the posts and lintel of the door of each Israelitish home. God emphatically declared that **“When I see the blood, I will pass over you”** (**Exodus 12:13**). This He said to Israel, and not to Egypt.

It is the common concurrence that Israel in slavery to Egypt is a type of God’s elect in their pre-regenerate state, in which state they **“walked according to the course of this world”** (**Ephesians 2:2**), or like ancient Israel in bondage, walked according to the course of Egypt. It is also uniformly held by students of the Scriptures, that Egypt is a type of this present evil world, a tyrant to whom man in his native state pays perfect allegiance. However, the powerful tyranny exercised by the world over man does not in any degree lessen his responsibility to denounce the world and come out of it.

Christ said of all who have owned His Lordship over them, **“They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world”** (**John 17:16**). There is no spiritual commonality between the regenerate person and the world, and Divine sufficiency is certainly spiritual. Redemptive sufficiency is a product of God’s love and was purchased by Christ’s sacrificial blood. In view of this glorious truth, I ask, **“Does God’s atoning sufficiency extend beyond His love? Are they not both co-extensive, retrospectively and prospectively, and have as their objects the same number of people, i.e., the elect of God?”**

The Apostle Paul said, speaking of the antitype of Israel's Passover lamb, "... **For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us**" (**I Corinthians 5:7**). To universalize the pronoun "us" in this text and make it apply in any sense to the reprobate world is to bedim the glory of the atonement. A sufficiency, the generality of which is such that it makes no distinction whatsoever between the people of God and those of the devil, is far too general for the Scriptures. God does not deal with the non-elect world through sufficient grace, but with sufficient and unadulterated justice, which provides no measure of atoning sufficiency, but eternal and merited suffering.

God's counsel is eternal and so are all His decrees. Thus, the decree of unpardonableness against the sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit is eternal (**Matthew 12:31-32**). Does it not follow then, seeing that contradictory decrees cannot emanate from God, that He would not decree an atoning sufficiency for a sin that He decreed never to forgive? Pharaoh is an unmistakable type of Satan. He was bent on the elimination of Moses, a type of Christ, and on the annihilation of Israel, a type of God's elect. His reprobation was glaringly manifest, and it was God's eternal intention to drown him in the Red Sea (**Romans 9:17**); as it is God's purpose to cast Satan, the antitype of Pharaoh, into the lake of fire (**Revelation 20:10**).

In view of this, I ask, "Did the atoning sufficiency of Israel's Lamb extend unto Pharaoh?"

"... **The Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel**" (**Exodus 11:7**). This "**difference**" which distinguished Israel from Egypt was the Passover lamb. God did not give Egypt a Passover lamb, and consequently, no atonement sufficiency was provided for Egypt. When atoning blood is denied a people, they are left to themselves, and people left to themselves have never been objects of atonement sufficiency. Sufficiency is a vital part of God's redemptive purpose for His people, and that purpose and sufficiency corresponds precisely with the number of names eternally registered in the Lamb's book of life.

Knowledge of the importance and purpose of the lamb was limited to Israel. Sprinkling of the blood of the lamb was limited to Israel. The promise

of God, wherein He said, **“When I see the blood I will pass over you,”** was limited to Israel. All redemptive or atoning benefits, including sufficiency, were limited to Israel. Conversely, the death curse of the firstborn was visited upon the household of Pharaoh and all the land of Egypt (**Exodus 12:29**). God’s infinite holiness and inflexible justice sees the non-elect as unatoned-for sinners, and has provided for them smiting rather than sufficiency. The only thing God ever does with sin is smite it, and God’s atoning Lamb was not smitten with as much as one stripe for any beyond the limits of His shed blood.

Christ, the antitype of Israel’s Passover lamb and antitype of Israel’s High Priest (**Hebrews 9:7**), having obtained eternal redemption for His people (**Hebrews 9:11-12**), entered into the tabernacle not made with hands. In the heavenly tabernacle behind the veil, the blood of Christ was sprinkled and accepted to the full satisfaction of the Father for the sins of His covenant children (**Hebrews 6:19; 10:24; 13:20**). Therefore, the guilt of God’s elect is forever removed from heaven’s court docket and the sovereign verdict now reads, **“Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more”** (**Hebrews 10:17**).

Peter, speaking of the glorious and exclusive offering of the blood of Christ within the veil of heaven’s tabernacle, says **“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace be multiplied”** (**I Peter 1:2**). “Grace” and “peace” are blessings purchased for the elect by the shed and sprinkled blood of Christ, and every other purchase made by the vicarious sufferings of Christ shall be realized by the elect of God, and by them only; for His intercession on the cross was eternally and sovereignly restricted to them. **“... the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep”** (**John 10:11**). In no sense did He die for the goats.

Every blessing the redeemed of God shall ever experience in time and eternity was procured for them by the sacrificial blood of Christ. On the other hand, all the suffering and grief which the non-elect shall ever know, is

owing to their infinite hatred of the blood of God's Lamb (**Hebrews 10:29**), and not to an ill-supposed sufficiency.

What is typically true of the lamb of **Exodus 12** is equally true of all the God-ordained animal sacrifices of the Old Testament, for they all were typical of the all-concluding sacrifice which God would make upon Calvary. The institution of animal sacrifices must reach its terminus, for the offended and infinite justice of God could never be satisfied with the blood of a beast as the means of expiation for the sins of utterly-depraved men. Every sin is an infinite insult to the honor and holiness of God, and when the offense is infinite, so must the sacrifice be, by which the sin is expiated. Hence, the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ. Christ "... **appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself**" (**Hebrews 9:26**).

"For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (**Hebrews 10:14**). **"Sanctified"**: i.e., set apart by the covenant of eternal redemption. The saints' perfection is not of personal character, but of legal standing before the bar of God's inflexible and just law. The saints' perfection has not to do with personal righteousness, but with imputed righteousness which was appropriated for them in the covenant of eternal and unconditional election, and merited not by them, but by the precious blood of Christ (**I Peter 1:18-20**).

The justification or declaration of the saints' legal righteousness is eternally anchored in the sovereign, holy, and active love of God. The love of God is infinite, but exclusive. It does not reach all mankind, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Thus it is seen that Christ is God's beloved Son, and singular channel of His blessings. All the blessings of the atonement come to the elect of God through Christ, the Mediator of the covenant of grace; and no good thing shall be withheld from them for whom it was purchased.

Most surely, atonement sufficiency is infinitely good, and no good thing wrought by the propitiation of Christ shall ever be voided. Therefore, atonement sufficiency is limited to the elect, and they are made more than conquerors through Him that loved them (**Romans 8:37**). All that was

purchased by the atoning blood of Christ will be infallibly applied to all those for whom the purchase was made. To say otherwise is to charge God with vanity, and the universal sufficiency view of the atonement gives credence to this baseless allegation. **BEWARE!**

The Passover Lamb of **Exodus 12** is not a picture of universal sufficiency, but of particular protection. Atonement sufficiency equals deliverance from the curse. Christ did not die to provide a sufficiency that would go eternally wanting for a people to protect, but His shed blood has provided a covering for the people of God, and Paul says: “**Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered**” (**Romans 4:7**). It irrevocably follows: all whose sins are not covered, Calvary’s atonement has no value for them.

Chapter Three

A Passive or Inoperative Sufficiency is Alien to the Attributes of God.

“... the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified of them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified ...” (Leviticus 10:3).

“... My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure” (Isaiah 46:10). All of God’s purposes and pleasures are rooted and grounded in His determination to glorify Himself. God has never done anything, nor shall He ever do anything that is not subordinated to this one supreme end; that is the manifestation of His personal glory.

God manifests His attributes, and in so doing magnifies His person. God is holy; so are all of His works. God is infallible; so are all His designs. God is omniscient; so all of His works are perfectly wrought. God is just; so are all His ends. “If my soul was sent to hell, God’s righteous law approves it well.” God is immutable; so His sufficiency changes not. God is sovereign, and so is His sufficiency.

Maxim: There is no such thing as a powerless power. God has sent forth His sufficiency, not inertly, but with power to achieve His purpose for which it was sent. Salvational sufficiency is a product of Divine love, and God’s love cannot be other than effective. God’s love is sovereign and so is the sufficiency which is sent to manifest that love. There is no such thing as an unmediated or purposeless sufficiency emanating from God, as would be the case with salvational sufficiency for the non-elect; for it never suffices. Neither God’s love nor His sufficiency can fall into a void, and neither of them know any disturbing influences, but run sovereignly to the goal appointed of Him **“Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will” (Ephesians 1:11).**

What worth is atoning sufficiency to a people who were already in hell when the price of it was paid? Abel's lamb had no sufficiency for Cain, Moses' lamb had no sufficiency for Pharaoh, and most certainly the blood of Calvary's Lamb did not provide salvational sufficiency for those who were already in hell when Christ died. To contend for the universal sufficiency view of the atonement is to charge God with designing a sufficiency to no avail, and raises the question: "How can God be just and withhold from any person that which was purchased for them by the precious blood of His own Son?"

The universal sufficiency theory and Christ's words, wherein He said; "... **I pray not for the world ...**" (**John 17:9**) have an element of incongruity in them. This incongruity causes some to wonder why Christ would not pray for those for whom He would suffer the shedding of His blood to provide them with salvational sufficiency, and what the design of that sufficiency is, seeing that the blood-purchased sufficiency does not prevail in behalf of all its objects.

The exclusiveness of Christ's mediatorialship, both on the cross and on the throne, was and is solely for the elect of God. Christ's mediation cannot be empty or futile, and all for whom He interceded on the cross, He now intercedes for with the crown of all majesty. There is in God a sufficiency toward the non-elect, but it is one of indignation, and not salvation. God says: "... **Esau have I hated**" (**Malachi 1:3; Romans 9:13**), and God's hatred knows nothing of salvational sufficiency, but only eternal damnation. If this truth seems harsh, it is not in the least so; for truth cannot adorn itself in any defective robe.

I have often read the following analogy from various sources, and in every instance it is set forth in an effort to support the erroneous doctrine of universal sufficiency of the atonement. The analogy: "The sun necessarily gives off as much heat even if only one plant is to grow; Christ necessarily suffered as much even if only one person was to be saved." This analogy brings honor to God when properly considered, but when used to try to support the contention that the atonement of Christ purchased salvational sufficiency for the non-elect, it breaks down.

The analogy is expounded thereby: Christ would have suffered as much for one of His elect as He did for all of them. He would have also suffered as much for one elect person had his sin been but one (**James 2:10**). Sin in any measure or nature is an infinite insult to the holiness of God, and therefore an infinite atonement is necessary to reconcile the sinner unto God. If the “plant” of this analogy is one of God’s planting, then the grace of God’s Son will shine just as brightly, as if he were the only one whom the Lord planted. But the truth is: Christ never suffered in any degree or sense for the non-elect, and the salvational sufficiency of the Son has never shined upon any plant the heavenly Father has not planted (**Matthew 15:13**).

The analogy, if applicable at all, must be restricted to God’s elect people, for the solar sun does nothing for rocks, but hardens them, and the salvational sufficiency of the Son of God does nothing for spiritually reprobate rocks, but hardens them. The “**stony ground**” hearers of **Matthew 13** were not benefited by the gospel seed, for the simple reason the gospel was not endowed with sufficiency to convict them of their sins, and they were left with their hard and stony hearts. “**Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth**” (**Romans 9:18**). The conviction sufficiency of the gospel is by omniscient design restricted to the elect of God.

Every part and parcel of atonement favor was a ransom paid, i.e., the blood of Christ. Surely it is agreed that sufficiency, as well as efficiency, was purchased by the vicarious punishment of Christ. How then can the non-elect be objects of salvational sufficiency, seeing no ransom was paid for them? Only the sins of the elect were imputed to Christ, and only for the elect “**many**” did He give His life as a ransom (**Matthew 20:28**). Therefore, the ill-supposed atonement sufficiency for the non-elect adds up to a universal zero.

There cannot be efficiency without sufficiency, and there can be no atoning sufficiency or efficiency without the suffering of Christ upon the cross. Therefore, it unavoidably follows that the advocates of the universal sufficiency theory of the atonement have Christ suffering for the non-elect on the cross, a most grievous error!

It is readily and gladly admitted that the power of Christ's blood is greater than all sin, yea, of angels and men. However, we need to remember that His atoning blood is the "**blood of the everlasting covenant**" (**Hebrews 13:20**), and that it is shut up in redemptive exercise to all whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of life (**Revelation 13:8; 21:27**). Surely, none would say that Christ in His atonement purchased salvational sufficiency for the fallen angels, but if not, why not, seeing the power of His blood is greater than all sin? The answer is simply that God never intended to save the fallen angels nor reprobate men, so He limited the atoning power of Christ's shed blood to His elect.

To say God's love is greater than all the fires of hell is to speak the truth, but it does not mean that God loves a single person who is in hell, or that shall ever go there. God's love for one of His elect is as great as it is for all of His elect, for His love is never less than perfect, and every elect person is as a "**firebrand**" plucked from the burning by the love of God. God's love is sufficient to quench every infernal blaze, but all who enter those dread gates enter because Christ in His substitutionary and loving death merited no atonement sufficiency for them. The Apostle John, speaking of the atoning death of Christ, says: "... **Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end**" (**John 13:1**).

Christ went to Calvary with infinite love for His people. He suffered their infinite penalty, and in so doing, He purchased for them a sufficiency that is infinitely superior to the infinite condemning power of sin. "... **Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound**" (**Romans 5:20**). The Lord laid upon Him all the iniquity of all His sheep and He, in His death, atoned for their every transgression, but He did not take to Calvary one sin of the infinite sum of the sins of the non-elect, and He suffered not in any sense or measure for the sins of the goats. Consequently, no blessing was purchased for them by the blood of Christ.

Christ made no satisfaction for the sins of the non-elect, so their sins remain; and the atonement sufficiency which some claim for them is of no value to them; and the proponents of the universal atonement sufficiency theory are left with a sovereign and omniscient sufficiency which has lost its

way. Perish the thought! Wherever divine efficacy is limited, so is divine sufficiency. Even the thought of a sufficiency which affects not its designs is ridiculous, for sufficiency manifests itself by the fruit it produces. There is no such thing as a fruit without root, and there is no such thing as a sufficiency without fruit.

Over and over in the Scriptures, Christ is metaphorically referred to as the “**root**” of His people (**Isaiah 11:10**; **53:2**; **Romans 15:12**). And by inspiration, Paul says: “... **If the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches**” (**Romans 11:16**). But of the non-elect, the Lord says: “**These have no root**” (**Luke 8:13**). Saying they “**have no root**” is equal to saying “they have no Christ”, and saying this is to say they have no atoning sufficiency, for this sufficiency is of Christ. Paul says to the church at Corinth: “... **Our sufficiency is of God**” (**II Corinthians 3:5**).

There is eternal and perfect harmony between all of God’s attributes. His love never interferes with His holiness, for His love is holy. His justice has no argument with His grace, for it is by His grace the elect are justified (**Titus 3:7**). His sufficiency and His efficiency know no variance. His sufficiency is not more or less than His efficiency and vice versa. They are equal in strength and design. Salvational efficiency makes manifest the trophies of God’s sovereign and sufficient grace, but they travel hand in hand in bringing to pass this glorious end, for where one is, so is the other.

It is a true premise from God’s Word that the expression of one thing excludes all else unless otherwise specified by the Scriptures. Many illustrations could be cited from Scripture which affirm this premise, but I will refer only to the all-important one, and that is blood redemption. The blood of Christ is the biblically-specified remedy for sin. Therefore, every other pretended remedy has been precluded by the blood of the everlasting covenant, and is nothing more than satanic quackery. Hence, all but the elect of God are excluded from the sufficiency of the atonement, for nowhere in holy Writ is it even inferred that the blood of Christ was shed to make an atonement for the non-elect. So that which follows is not universal atonement sufficiency, but a limited atonement; for God will not provide a sufficiency

for sins apart from the shed blood of His Son (**I John 1:7; Hebrews 9:22; Revelation 1:5**).

There are no passive attributes in God. His love is ever reaching forth to bless its objects. His love and His redemptive sufficiency cannot be separated, and His love and redemptive sufficiency infallibly follow the lines set out for them in the covenant of election. Jesus was the personification of I truth. He said **“I am the truth” (John 14:6)**. However, He said to the reprobate Jews: **“... My word hath no place in you” (John 8:37)**. The Lord’s salvational sufficiency cannot be separated from His truth.

The Lord’s inflexible justice never quits its search for satisfaction. Therefore we read: **“Be sure your sin will find you out” (Numbers 32:23)**. God’s loving sufficiency provided a substitute for His people in the person of Christ (**II Corinthians 5:21**), and His just law, yet looking for satisfaction from all those who were not represented by Christ on the cross, provided hell to serve that end. Salvational sufficiency and condemnatory sufficiency have had, by eternal decree, two classes of people to work with in satisfying God’s justice, i.e., the elect and the reprobate; and these two distinct functions of God’s sufficiency are never frustrated.

God is holy. **“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts” (Isaiah 6:3)**. Salvational sufficiency is holy sufficiency, and clothes the people of God with robes of righteousness (**Isaiah 61:10**), but leaves the non-elect destitute of the prescribed garment (**Matthew 22:12**). The military wardrobe of salvational sufficiency has provided every piece of armor the elect shall ever need in their warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil; and makes them more than conquerors through the Captain of their salvation (**Romans 8:37; Ephesians 6:11; Hebrews 2:10**). However, no salvational sufficiency is provided for those not subject to Holy Spirit conscription (**John 5:40, 6:44; Romans 8:7-8**), and consequently, no protection from the penalty of the just and holy law of God.

As defined by Webster, both terms, sufficiency and efficiency, mean “adequacy.” The synonymy of the two terms is so exact that a distinction between them is virtually nonexistent, and if a distinction would be allowed,

it would be one of chronology rather than design. However, let us remember that God is not subject to chronology as finite men are. He is not such a one as we. God is not subject to the rules of mathematics, and more often than not, the equations of men run counter to the omniscient counsel. The chronology of Holy Spirit regeneration comes under the heading of language accommodation, for with God there are no prerequisite functions in bringing to pass the new birth of His people.

In the eternal mind, atonement sufficiency and efficiency have never known a distinction in design, function, or results. God is the sovereign and omniscient author of both, and He would not appropriate a sufficiency beyond the suitability of His designs for efficiency. The universal sufficiency theory does not as much as produce one straw of mercy upon the infinite ocean of God's everlasting judgment, but this lack of favor toward the non-elect does not in any wise vitiate the sufficiency of God, for it is immune to negation.

Let me reiterate. Every person whom God intended to be saved by the atonement shall be saved. So it follows by inevitable deduction, that God never meant the infinite power of the atonement would prevail for or provide a propitiatory sufficiency for the non-elect, seeing, none of them are ever saved. Both the unlimited power and design of the atonement are seen by the fact that some of every kindred, tongue, and people are saved.

All the elect are made willing by the power of God (**Psalm 110:3**), but all who are left to their own will are eternally beyond the scope of God's atonement designs. God is the sovereign discriminator, and the difference He has put between His people and those of the devil (**John 8:44**) is manifested by atonement sufficiency and efficiency. This divinely-placed difference allows for no spiritual communion between the saved person and the world, for there is no communion between light and darkness (**II Corinthians 6:14**). And atonement sufficiency being spiritual, it cannot be held in common by all mankind; for all are not included in the covenant wherein atonement sufficiency is mandated.

Abraham's lamb (**Genesis 22:13**) had no atoning sufficiency for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, for they had already perished under the fiery indignation of God (**Luke 17:29**). Did Israel's typical sacrifices picture a general sufficiency which included the pagan nations round about Israel? If so, it was a vain sufficiency, for they perished in their own ways (**Acts 14:16**).

What good is the digging of a sixty foot well, when the same measure and quality of water may be had at thirty feet? The answer of course is, none. God is infinitely wiser than the wisest of His creatures, and He would not send forth a universal atonement sufficiency when a particular sufficiency would accomplish the same end.

What good is a belt and buckle that never meet? What good is an atonement sufficiency for a people who are never benefited by it? Are reprobates divinely appointed to both eternal wrath and eternal sufficiency? Or could it be that the sufficiency purchased for them by the atoning death of Christ finally exhausts itself? Perhaps this atonement sufficiency loses interest in some of the people for whom Christ died in order to procure it for them, and finally enters an abeyance that can never be broken. Atonement sufficiency is a benevolent work of God, and there is not, nor shall ever be, such a thing as a disinterested benevolence emanating from God.

I do not mean to satirize or to try to rationalize the Scriptures, and would never knowingly tamper with the Word of God, but it is my purpose and aim to alert the reader of this treatise to the fact that in many cases what we want to believe is not necessarily the truth. Where is the one among us who does not love broad and spacious theological horizons? Is not the doctrine of the universality of the gospel appealing? Surely it is, and rightfully so.

Is not the doctrine of the universality of God's family appealing? Surely it is, and rightfully so. Is not the doctrine of the universal sovereignty of God appealing? Surely it is, and rightfully so. But where is the one among us who will not say that the doctrine of the universal sufficiency of the atonement that

does not suffice for all whom Christ died to provide it is appalling? Surely none, for so it is.

The atonement sufficiency of Christ is definite and absolute; and it is limited in its designs, operations, and effects. To say this is not to question the sovereignty of God's sufficiency, nor is it to question His omniscience from which the redemptive scheme was formulated. But it is said to magnify both God's sovereignty and omniscience; for a sufficiency which is particular, and infallibly accomplishes all of its designs, is more honoring to God than an atonement sufficiency which leaves part of the people for whom it was purchased to perish in their sins.

No doubt what I have said herein will become grist for the mills of theological controversy, and some polemicists may seem to turn it to their advantage, but that disturbs me not. It might be at the mercy seat of Christ, I will say; "I wish I had not written that." But until I look upon the face of Him who atoned for my sins upon the tree of Calvary, I am confident I shall be contented with the position contended for in this treatise. One thing for sure, the sending forth of this writing has for now erased all the wonder as to whether I should have written it or not.

Either way, I am convinced that the disturbance of theological quiet is more honoring unto God, than what some dear brethren refer to as: "Respectful Silence."

About the Author

Oscar Bryan Mink was one of ten children born in a small town in Eastern Kentucky to a coal miner father and a stalwart mother. He grew into a tall, lean handsome young man. He worked in the CC Camps in Minnesota and when the war came, he was determined to join and fight for his country. This was a difficult task, as he had lost the sight of one eye at birth and the Army kept rejecting his requests. With persistence, he continued applying and finally the Army said, "Yes." He spent his war years as a Sergeant serving in the Philippine Islands.

When the war ended, he returned to the hills of Kentucky and pursued many colorful and sometimes erroneous paths, seeking fulfillment. With the marriage to his beloved wife, Fay and the birth of his first daughter, he thought he should seek a more reputable career path. Leaving his small family behind, he soon found himself attending refrigeration school in Pennsylvania. Little did he know God had a greater plan in the works.

While attending school, he would often walk past a church and on occasion would stop in for a quick listen. One particular day he stopped, he listened, and the Holy Spirit performed a mighty work in this occasional listener. His new life began.

Returning to his family, he decided to accept a job in Ohio, but soon was restless for the Lord. God sent the call and Oscar Mink answered. He preached his first gospel message on May 4, 1955 and did not stop until nearly fifty years later. He preached, researched, wrote, executed the office of pastor, and raised a family of three very grateful children always with a humble prayer on his lips.

Oscar B. Mink was a true Gospel warrior. His words reflect the awe, honor and love he proclaimed for our Master, Jesus Christ.

Zee Mink Fuller
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