

**Victorious living.** We have a spiritual adversary who attempts to cause us to fail, but Christ's death at Calvary dealt him a crushing blow. (See Hebrews 2:14-15; Revelation 12:11.)

**Eternal life.** Because of the Atonement, believers will be united with Christ throughout eternity. (See John 3:16.)

### ACCESSING THE ATONEMENT

The fact that Jesus died for the sins of humanity does not mean that individuals are no longer separated from God. Each person must come to God personally in order to receive pardon from sin. When repentant sinners come to God acknowledging their need, confessing their sins, and believing that Christ's atoning work at Calvary avails for them, they will experience reconciliation with God. (See Hebrews 11:6; Ephesians 2:8-9.)

Have you availed yourself of the benefits that are available through the atoning work of Christ? If not, you can find deliverance from sin and power to live a life without sin from now to eternity. There truly is wonder-working power in the Blood of Jesus!

### APOSTOLIC FAITH CHURCH

World Headquarters  
5414 SE Duke Street  
Portland, Oregon 97206 U.S.A.  
[www.apostolicfaith.org](http://www.apostolicfaith.org)

TR49-0223

# THE ATONING BLOOD

WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

**T**he atonement of Jesus Christ is a theme that runs throughout the entire Bible—it is at the very heart of God's purpose for humanity. In secular usage, the word *atonement* refers to reparation for a wrong or injury. It infers doing what is necessary to reconcile two alienated parties through making amends or providing compensation for a transgression, wrong, or injury. In effect, it levels out an imbalance created by wrongdoing.

In Christian theology, *atonement* refers to the substitutionary work of the incarnate Son of God, accomplished through the giving of His life at Calvary in payment for sin. It makes forgiveness for sin possible, and therefore is fundamental to the Gospel message.

### WHY ATONEMENT IS NECESSARY

Sin made atonement necessary. When God created the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, they enjoyed perfect fellowship with Him. However, God made them free moral agents—they had the ability and liberty to choose to obey or disobey Him. God gave them only one prohibition: they were not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In spite of knowing there was a penalty for disobedience (see Genesis 2:17), Adam and Eve chose to defy God's directive. They ate from the forbidden tree, and as a result of this act of deliberate rebellion, sin entered into their

hearts. Since God cannot tolerate sin, they were immediately estranged from Him.

The descendants of Adam and Eve—every person born into this world—inherited the sinful nature of their ancestors. (See Romans 5:12.) Instead of being born with a desire to do right, every individual is born with an innate predisposition toward evil. Thus, sin is not only a series of committed transgressions, but also the inbred condition or nature out of which acts of sin originate.

Sins may be obvious or subtle, flagrant or hidden, but they always separate from God. God has absolute antipathy and holy revulsion for sin. He cannot tolerate it in any degree because God's perfect moral nature can never be stained by complicity with or allowance for unrighteousness. (See Isaiah 59:2; Romans 1:18.)

The immediate result of sin is spiritual death and separation from God, while the end result of sin is death and separation from God for eternity. Paul explained, "For the wages of sin is death"—physical death, spiritual death (separation from God), and eternal death (forever separated from God with no hope of ever experiencing His saving grace). However, he went on to add, "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). In God's infinite love and mercy, He provided a way of salvation through the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ.

## FOREORDAINED AND UNIVERSAL

God, in His foreknowledge, was fully aware that Adam and Eve eventually would sin. Before the world was created, Christ understood that He would take upon Himself the disobedience and rebellion of humanity, thus providing an atonement for sin. (See Revelation 13:8.)

The atonement of Christ is a universal provision—it is for all people everywhere. This is made evident throughout the New Testament. For example, Paul wrote, “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11). He asserted that God wills “for all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” and that He “gave himself a ransom for all” (1 Timothy 2:4, 6). While Christ died to make atonement available to all, receiving the benefits of the atonement depends upon each individual’s acceptance or rejection of God’s offer.

## THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT

The words *redemption*, *substitution*, *propitiation*, and *reconciliation* illuminate the nature of Christ’s atonement.

**Redemption:** The concept of redemption, as explained in Leviticus 25:47-49, has to do with setting free one who is enslaved, through the payment of a ransom price or penalty. Jesus’ death paid the price for all who were “sold under sin” (Romans 7:14).

**Substitution:** Although the words *substitute* and *substitution* do not appear in Scripture, the principle of replacement is clearly seen in what Christ did upon the Cross. There, as our Substitute, He bore the awful judgments of God against sin. (See 2 Corinthians 5:21.)

**Propitiation:** In New Testament writings, the word *propitiation* points to Jesus’ atoning sacrifice as the means by which God’s judgment against sin is appeased or placated. (See 1 John 2:2.) God is eternally righteous, so He cannot overlook sin or excuse the guilty—justice demands that a penalty be paid for an offense. Christ’s death paid that penalty so that God could remain righteous when He pardons a sinner.

**Reconciliation:** Adam’s sin alienated humanity from God, but Jesus’ death made reconciliation available and possible for all. (See Colossians 1:21-22.)

## OLD TESTAMENT FORESHADOWING

Throughout the Old Testament, blood was set forth as the means of atonement. Leviticus 17:11 indicates why blood is necessary: “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 life that maketh an atonement for the soul.” That point is reiterated in New Testament teaching: “And without shedding of blood is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22). Since

the wages of sin is death and life is in the blood, blood is required to pay the wages of sin.

This was first demonstrated in the Book of Genesis when God created a covering for Adam and Eve—a covering necessitated by their act of sin—based on the shedding of the blood of innocent animals. Later, God accepted Abel’s blood offering, while Cain’s offering of the fruit of the ground was rejected. Noah offered animal sacrifices when he came out of the ark after the Flood. Abraham was known for the many blood sacrifices he made unto the Lord.

On the eve of the day the Israelites were released from Egyptian bondage, the blood of a lamb without blemish was applied to their door frames. That sacrificial lamb looked ahead to the time when Christ, the “lamb of God,” would be “sacrificed for us” (John 1:29). Soon after, God gave Moses the Law, which contained explicit instructions to atone for sin with animal sacrifices. These also prefigured the death of Jesus Christ as the Perfect Sacrifice—they were “a shadow of good things to come” (Hebrews 10:1).

The Old Testament also contains over one hundred distinct prophecies about Jesus, and a number of these deal with His atoning death. For example, Psalm 22:14-16 describes the Messiah’s suffering when He was crucified for the sins of mankind. Isaiah chapter 53 is especially known as the great prophecy of the Suffering Servant, describing the passion

of Christ in detail. Ultimately, all the types, shadows, and Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament culminated at Calvary when Christ “suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18).

## BENEFITS OF THE ATONEMENT

The power of the atoning Blood is not limited to salvation; believers enjoy many other benefits through the Blood of Jesus. These benefits include the following:

**Joy and freedom from guilt.** The Blood of Jesus Christ can set one free from the bondage of sin and eliminate all condemnation and guilt. (See Proverbs 28:13; Romans 5:11, 8:1).

**Sanctification.** Christ’s atonement provides for entire sanctification, a second work of grace by which the inbred nature of sin is removed, making the saved individual pure and holy in heart and motive. (See Hebrews 13:12.)

**Divine healing.** Whether our need is physical, spiritual, or emotional, divine healing is provided by the Atonement. (See Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 8:16-17; 1 Peter 2:24).

**Power in prayer.** The atoning Blood is of primary importance in intercessory prayer. When we are living in obedience to every known command of God and find ourselves in need of protection, deliverance, or strength, we have access to God through the Blood of Jesus. (See Hebrews 10:19, 22; Romans 8:34.)