

Atonement — The Lamb

Text: Hebrews 9:1-14

- o burnt offering (Lev 1),
- o grain offering (Lev 2),
- o fellowship offering (Lev 3),
- o sin offering (Lev 4-6)
- o guilt offering (Lev 7).

1. *Drawing near*
2. *Laying on of hands*
3. *Killing animal*
4. *Application of the blood*
5. *Burning on the altar*
6. *Disposal of animal*

Advantages

- o seriousness of his sin
- o to enjoy fellowship with God, rituals had to be followed
- o valuable expression of religious feeling
- o element of cost (2 Sam 24:24)

Disadvantages

- o Spiritual significance of what they were doing was lost as it became an empty ritual.

Atonement

“God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith.” (Romans 3:25)

“For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.” (Heb 2:17)

1. Atonement as Love

- i. Moral-influence theory

- o Abelard - cross demonstrates the love that God has for humankind.
- o Cross does not pay a penalty or win a victory, other than symbolically.
- o God's great love moves us to love Him and one another in return.

2. Atonement as Victory

i. Ransom theory

- o Because of sin, people rightly belong to Satan, but God offered his Son as a ransom, a bargain the evil one eagerly accepted.
- o Christ's atoning work means victory - the devil and all the hosts of evil are defeated. Sin is conquered.

Flaws

- o the devil is credited with more power than he has.
- o the cross was seen as a divine transaction - the ransom.
- o the concept of God performing a deception is not in line with the God who is revealed in Scripture.

ii. Satisfaction Theory

- o Anselm - God's honor and justice has to be satisfied
- o man is sinful, he cannot pay this debt,
- o debt has to be paid for God's honor to be upheld.
- o No-one can make the satisfaction, but God Himself

3. The Atonement as Bearing a Penalty for Sin

i. The Substitution Theory

Jesus, in our place, bore the penalty for our sin, He bore the curse, that we sinners should have borne.

- o takes seriously the biblical understanding of God's holiness and righteousness
- o takes seriously the biblical description of man's depravity and inability to save himself.
- o takes literally the statements that Christ died in man's place (Ex 13:1-16; Lev 16:20-22; Isa 53:4-12; Mk 10:45; Jn 3:17; Gal 3:13).

ii. The Sacrifice Theory

Significance of the blood

“For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life” (Lev 17:11)

“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” (Eph 2:13)

It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God’s presence. Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own. (Heb 9:23-25)

- the sacrifice of Himself means an infinitely better sacrifice than anything before.
- it was a sacrifice done ‘once and for all’ - it is final. (Hebrews 10: 1-14).
- Our lives need to be a sacrifice of service.

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.” (Rom 12:1)

How do we offer that sacrifice?

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. (Heb 13:15-16)