

THE W. K. B. S. VOICE

"I am a voice."—John the Baptist

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THE SINNER AND THE ATONEMENT: ITS NEED

No more important doctrine can engage our thought than the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the heart of the gospel, the climax of Jesus' work, the wonder of angels, the hope of men, and the delight of God. In it love reigns, justice is sustained, sin and self are slain, salvation is obtained, and Christ and His cross are proclaimed.

Our one authoritative source of information is the Word of God. Scripture declares the fact with its significance. Therefore, it rests on the best of historical grounds. Enlightened experience may aid our understanding of the Scriptures on the atonement but our opinions must be shaped by the external revelation instead of by the internal experience.

Every thorough study of the atonement supposes three things; first, a moral relation between God and man; second, a blameworthy disturbance of this relation; third, an adequate effort to adjust this relation. We must have, therefore, an adequate conception of our moral relations to God, what disturbed them, what is the relation now, and what are the obstacles to their adjustment.

We offer this definition of the atonement as adequate at this stage of our investigation: The atonement is God's method of dealing with the sin problem in adjusting the wrong between Himself and men. It follows that the parties affected both in sin and the atonement are God and the sinner. This article is confined to the relation of the sinner and the atonement.

We must begin right if we would construct a Scriptural view of the atonement. Spiritual doctors must be good diagnosticians if they would be good prescriptionists. Error in the first leads to error in the second; the fate of the patient is involved. If nothing is needed either Godward or manward, especially Godward, the nature of the atonement must conform thereto. If no moral and legal hindrances stood in the way, the atonement cannot be vicarious, expiatory, and propitiatory. "The sum of His relation to sin is that He died for it," Denney.

1. Man as God's creature owed the law perfection.

(1). THE LAW AS A RIGHTEOUS STANDARD. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good," Romans 7:12. This is true because the law is an expression of the perfect righteousness and holiness of God's character. It is no arbitrary standard but the very embodiment of what God is. It could not require less than perfection because God is absolutely perfect. The requirement could not be changed because His perfection of character is unchangable. The law did not merely make a thing right or wrong; the principle of right is as eternal as God Himself. The law is an expression of this eternal righteousness for the direction of the creature.

(2). MAN AS AN OBLIGATED CREATURE. "All things were created for Him." What was the supreme design of man's creation? Not primarily the happiness of the creature but the glory of God, and man's highest happiness is found in bringing the highest glory to God.

"The intention of the Agent is the law which governs the thing made," Buck. If God made man to honor Him, the law of man's being is to honor Him. Man was skillfully made and capacitated to fulfil this design of the Creator in honoring Him and reaping happiness. It was just as easy for unfallen man to love and honor God as to live and move and have his being in God. If God did not create man, man is not duty bound. This is the bane of evolution; its fruits can be seen in its devotees. For logically follows that, if man is independent of the Creator, he is under no obligation to obey God. "Man had no right to employ his time, person, or talent for any other purpose than that for which he was created," Buck.

2. Man as a transgressor incurred the penalty of the law.

(1). MAN IS A TRANSGRESSOR. "Sin is the transgression of the law," I John 3:4. The Revised Version, "Sin is lawlessness." In transgression man throws off the obligation to obey and rebels against the divine mandate. Sin is spiritual anarchy; it is high treason against the King of the moral and spiritual realm.

(2). THE GUILT OF SIN. Man in Eden stood under a covenant of works. Obedience merited reward; disobedience merited punishment. If guilt and penalty are unjust, how could reward for wel-

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doing be just? The requirement, the reward, and the penalty are equally parts of one law. To destroy one part is to destroy all parts; to call one part unholy is to call all the parts unholy. Even for fallen man, the original design of the commandment must be revoked to destroy responsibility. If man is not responsible to repair the breach, so God is not responsible to reward man for obedience. Breaking the law does not repeal the law but calls for its enforcement.

Why does sin make one guilty? No arbitrary will of God said it should be so. Violation of the legal relation brings guilt because sin opposes the immutably just and holy nature of God. "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and thou canst not look on perverseness," Habakkuk 1:13. Sin excites the wrath of God; sin alone does, for sin alone has moral demerit. Wrath is not vindictive but vindicative of His perfect character. A God who could smile alike on obedience and disobedience is a moral imbecile. A king who would not oppose rebellion in his kingdom would be a moral weakling; a God who would let sin go unpunished would be no better. "Wrath against sin and love for sinners are perfectly consistent." Pendleton. We feel thus, why not God?

But why punish sin? Three answers have been offered—corrective, exemplary, and penal. The first and second are primarily for the good of the creature. We have shown conclusively that the supreme design in creation was the glory and honor of God. The offended design and honor must first be upheld in the penalty. Penal punishment alone does this. It must be to vindicate slandered and offended justice, to punish the awful evil of sin. Therefore, because of what God is, just and holy, and because of what sin is, rebellious and evil, sin must be punished.

(3). DEPRAVITY A RESULT. Growing from or connected with the penalty for guilt is moral corruption and pollution. Sin that would besmirch the spotless character of God does really corrupt the nature of man.

Our discussion thus far has consid-

ered two conditions and two acts. The pairs stand related as cause and effect; separate parts of the pairs furnish striking contrasts. Man is in a condition of unvarying obligation because of the act of creation. Man is in a deplorable condition because of the wilful act of transgression. Man's malevolent act of disobedience is in direct contrast with God's benevolent act of creation. Man's righteous condition of duty is in definite contrast with his self-inflicted condition of guilt.

3. Man as guilty and depraved is wholly unable to satisfy the righteous demands of the law.

(1). GUILT AND DEPRAVITY

A. THEIR RELATION. A faulty system of thought makes depravity first and foremost. When man sinned, he became guilty, depravity resulted. Guilt is the Godward aspect, bringing reproach on God; depravity is the manward aspect, bringing ruin to man. Man is guilty before God; he is depraved in himself. Guilt takes to hell; depravity keeps out of heaven. Guilt merits punishment; depravity fits man for punishment. Guilt is the opposite of righteousness; depravity is the opposite of holiness. Man is guilty in standing, depraved in state.

B. THEIR EXTENT. With regard to the human race, guilt and depravity are universal. "All sinned and came short of the approval of God," Romans 3:23. "By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Romans 5:18. With regard to the individual, guilt and depravity are total. No man is partly guilty and partly justified. Every part of the natural man is depraved. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," John 3:6.

(2). THE NATURE OF DEPRAVITY. The threefold nature of depravity is seen in our condition in ourselves, our attitude toward God and all that is right, and in our practice in sinning.

A. The CONDITION of one who is depraved.

(A). SPIRITUAL DEATH. Sinful man is absolutely destitute of even a spark of spiritual life. No sinner has any more spiritual life than a corpse has physical life. "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life." I John 5:12. (Death, as a picture of the condition of the sinner, is only one of the descriptions of his condition. It must not be pressed to mean inactivity but only destitution of life and spiritual separation from God. An army of rebels represents lost men as truly as a cemetery. Men cannot do right; but they accelerate in doing wrong.)

(B). SPIRITUAL DARKNESS. Natural men are absolutely destitute of spiritual light. Sin drove all light out

and closed every opening for the entry of spiritual light. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," I Corinthians 2:14.

(C). SPIRITUAL CORRUPTION OR DISEASE. Every fiber of the spirit of man is decayed. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately (incurably, Hebrew) wicked," Jeremiah 17:9. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint," Isaiah 1:5. They that are sick need the Physician, even Jesus, Mark 2:17.

(D). SPIRITUAL WEAKNESS OR HELPLESSNESS. Sinners are wholly lacking in strength to do even one thing that is pleasing to God. "Without strength," Romans 5:6.

(E). SPIRITUAL SLAVERY OR CAPTIVITY. Sin and Satan have sinners bound beyond self-recovery. Satan is the strong man in the heart of the sinner and has him in captivity. Mark 3:27; II Timothy 2:26.

B. The ATTITUDE of one who is depraved. Man is wrong in what he feels as well as in what he is.

(A). SPIRITUAL DISAFFECTION OR HATRED. Man cherishes and loves sin. "Men loved (set their affections upon) darkness rather than light," John 3:19.

(B). SPIRITUAL ENMITY OR OPPOSITION. Sinful man is set on doing wrong and opposing right. "The carnal mind is enmity against God," Romans 8:7. "When we were enemies," Romans 5:10.

C. The PRACTICE of one who is depraved. Man is wrong in what he does as well as wrong in what he is and feels.

(A). SPIRITUAL ANARCHY. "Sin is lawlessness," I John 3:4. Every sin is an act of rebellion.

(B). SPIRITUAL SERVICE. The sinner serves sin and Satan instead of God as he was created to serve. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin," John 8:34.

(C). SPIRITUAL STRAYING OR WANDERING. He is actively going away from God's way of right into sin's way of wrong. The straying sheep as well as the corpse represents the sinner. "All we like sheep have gone astray," Isaiah 53:6.

(3). SELF-SALVATION IS IMPOSSIBLE. Man cannot remove either his guilt or his depravity. Law requires restoration of what has been taken away or repair of the breach as though it had never been done; man can do neither. "Man can never exceed in duty the requirements of the law of his being," Buck. If man could have done more,

more would have been required. Future obligations consume all his time and energies; none is left for paying the past debt.

If God cannot require of us what we cannot do, neither can He require it of our Substitute. Otherwise, Christ Jesus did on the cross nothing for man that man himself could not have done. God's acceptance of Jesus' suffering proved that He still demands perfection from fallen man; otherwise, the claims of justice are the claims of injustice.

It would require similar skill and purpose to restore fallen man to the sanction of the law as it took to place him there by creation. Even if man could do this, the legal and moral obstacles would forever doom him to hell.

Therefore, man is both wilful and weak, weak and wilful. These stand doubly related as cause and effect. He cannot save himself if he desires it; he does not desire it if he could. "He could not if he would; he would not if he could." Herein is the task of one who would make atonement. Jesus Christ alone can, wills to, and does make atonement. The atonement of Christ alone can bring God back to men and bring men back to God for blessing.

WHAT OTHERS SAY OF THE SCHOOL

The boys from the Bible School know the Book—A layman.

Not been able to work much for sometime and all I could do was to ask God's blessings on the W. K. B. S.—From Arkansas.

I wish some of your young preachers were out here preaching and holding meetings and teaching the people the woman's sphere in the church. It seems as if our spineless, sissified preachers want to turn the whole work, ministry as well, over to the women.—From Texas.

The more I preach the more I realize the service you are rendering. The time is upon us when we Baptists must know and preach the Word.—From a central Kentucky pastor.

MONUMENT FUND

The committee appointed to receive funds and erect a suitable Memorial to Brother H. B. Taylor's grave is very anxious to bring this matter to a close, so if there are other friends who desire to do this work of love, please attend to this at once. At present the fund is not sufficient.

E. B. Hoiland
H. E. Wall
N. F. Lassiter

Subscribe for the W. K. B. S. Voice

SOME TESTIMONIES

From North Carolina a brother writes: "With your big surprise this morning I am a 100 per cent better Baptist. I wonder why I received the book 'Why Be A Baptist.' I have read some of it already and I sure find it worthy. I would love to know that every Christian has it. You can have the assurance that this little book is going to be a real blessing to my community and church. I am grateful to you for it."

A brother from Texas writes a letter of thanks for his copy of the book and enclosed postage for the book to be sent to two of his preacher friends.

A brother from Colorado writes his appreciation of the reception of the book and says he will make good use of it.

From Daytona, Florida comes this card: "Acknowledging the glad receipt of booklet, 'Why Be A Baptist.' Have for many years studied our position and reviewed many publications, pamphlets. Handbooks, and what not of similar topic but none of my notice so complete as this book."

From Lawtey, Florida, this comes: "I want to thank you for the book, 'Why Be A Baptist.' Oh, it is so fine! and I intend to get some orders for copies of it."

—Arranged by Mrs. Taylor.

ARTICLES ON THE ATONEMENT

Elsewhere in this issue you will find the first of a series of articles on the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. THE NEED OF THE ATONEMENT shows that man guilty and depraved needed and could not be saved without it. THE NECESSITY OF THE ATONEMENT arises from the requirements of divine justice and the demerit of sin. THE VALUE OF THE ATONEMENT is infinite and grows from the qualifications and dignity of the One Who made atonement. THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT is threefold—vicarious, expiatory, and propitiatory. THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT is special for the elect and general for all men. THE DOCTRINAL RELATIONS OF THE ATONEMENT touch every important phase of Christian truth. THE BAPTIST POSITION ON THE ATONEMENT declares the need and necessity of the atonement to be imperative and absolute, the nature and value to be propitiatory and infinite, and the extent to be special in securing the salvation of His people and general in its provision and proclamation to all men.

This session closes April 26 with two graduates. Next session opens September 24.

MARCH FINANCES

Receipts

Anonymous	\$ 46.00
Anonymous, for student help	10.00
Scott's Grove Church, for Hampton	10.86
C. W. D., for E. P. Weaver	1.00
C. W. D., for W. L. Hampton	4.00
Perryville Church, Perryville, Tennessee	2.50
Hopewell Church, Trigg County	4.00
Carmack Church, Lyon County50
Mount Zion Church, Tennessee	1.00
W. H. M., Big Clifty, Kentucky	5.00
Miss C. B., Paducah, Kentucky	10.00
S. C. H., Fort Smith, Arkansas35
First Church, Russell, Kentucky	9.00
E. R. P., New Kensington, Penn.	80.00
Total receipts	\$178.71

Disbursements

Individual designations	\$ 15.86
Lights and water	4.66
Mrs. H. B. Taylor, for teaching	25.00
Janitors, Neal and Hampton	15.00
W. W. Dickerson, for teaching	10.00
R. O. B.,	50.00
Coal one ton with tax	5.87
Estle Weaver, student help	2.50
Ed Chandler, student help	2.00
Carl Crosby, help on board	10.00
Henry Rowland, help on board	4.00
April issue of "THE VOICE"	6.00
Total paid out	150.69
Balance in treasury	28.02

Why Be A Baptist Fund

Mrs. W. C. Pierce	\$ 5.00
Miss Alpha McGough75
Elder Roy Mason	25.00
Mrs. Z. T. Conner	15.00
Elder Joshua Gravett	2.00
A man in Memphis	1.00
Elder C. W. Dickerson	8.00
Mrs. John Melugen	1.00
Mrs. Belle P. Davis10
Mrs. Carrie Bichon	1.00
Herman Jones50

This money is used to pay postage on a copy of the book to each Baptist preacher in the Southern Baptist Convention and elsewhere. We have covered Texas, Miss., Ark., N. C. Fla. Ariz. New Mex., and Va.—Mrs. H. B. Taylor.

BIBLE SCHOOLS BAPTISTIC

"In 1229, they (the Waldenses) had spread themselves in great numbers through all Italy. They had ten schools in Valcamonica alone, which were supported by pecuniary contributions in all their societies (churches), and which contributions were transmitted into Lombardy." Jones in his Church History quotes this statement from Reinerius Saccho, a French inquisitor, with reference to the Waldensian Baptists in Italy. Note that 706 years ago Baptists had schools. The West Kentucky Bible School has pretty good example, our critics to the contrary notwithstanding.