

Chapter Twenty-seven
Studies in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans
Overview to the Doctrine of Salvation
(Romans 3:21 through 5:11)

The doctrine of salvation must be solely and wholly Biblical if it is to be correct. In the next few chapters of Romans, Paul establishes the doctrine of salvation centering on two truths relating to two words, i.e. propitiation and justification. When these two truths are properly understood, the doctrine of salvation and the gospel message will be clearly understood. Throughout the centuries, the doctrine of salvation has been Satan's central target for corruption. A proper understanding of the propitiation of God and the justification of man (see preceding chart) will totally eliminate any avenue for the corruption of the doctrine of salvation or the perversion of the gospel.

The word propitiation refers to the righteous satisfaction of God's justice in the condemnation of all sinners and the substitutionary payment of God's death sentence upon all mankind in the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary. God was propitiated when the righteous sentence of the Law (death) was substitutionally executed in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Jesus satisfied God's death sentence on humanity (condemnation) for all sin (past, present and future) in His body on the Cross. Propitiation is a universal and accomplished reality for all mankind.

“¹ My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: ² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*” (I John 2:2).

In the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, God extended Himself to lost humanity in love and grace by putting the full weight of the condemnation of the Law upon Jesus Christ. In doing so, He opened the door of the prison of condemnation offering mercy and full pardon to “whosoever will.”

“⁷ Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. ⁸ He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. ⁹ In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. ¹⁰ Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins” (I John 4:7-10).

The death sentence has been paid. God's righteous death sentence on sin and humanity has been satisfied and executed in Jesus Christ at Calvary. The door to freedom and reconciliation with God is the Lord Jesus Christ. However, the person who rejects the propitiatory work of Christ (or denies it with his own attempts at self righteousness or sacramentalism) remains under the death sentence. The wrath of God remains on the Christ rejector as he awaits the day of his execution (separation from God; death).

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

“¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. ¹¹ But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith. ¹² And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. ¹³ Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: ¹⁴ That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Galatians 3:10-14).

Salvation, justification, remission of sin, forgiveness of sin, redemption, positional sanctification and fellowship with God are all available because God was propitiated when Jesus was substitutionally executed in our place. If the doctrine of propitiation is misunderstood, all of these other doctrines will be misunderstood as well. The propitiation of God is the wellspring from which all these other doctrines flow.

In the Old Testament (Covenant) the believer's sins were covered over (Hebrew - *Kaphar*, this is different than forgiveness) until Messiah finally came and paid the wages of sin. That is why it is theologically incorrect to call the sacrifice of Christ the Atonement. Jesus did not atone for sin (cover it over). Jesus fully paid the wages of sin. This is the differentiation Paul is making in Romans 3:25.

“Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission {*pareisis*; passing over} of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;” (Romans 3:25).

¹ Then verily the first *covenant* had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. ² For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein *was* the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. ³ And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; ⁴ Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; ⁵ And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. ⁶ Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service *of God*. ⁷ But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: ⁸ The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: ⁹ Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; ¹⁰ Which *stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation” (Hebrews 9:1-10).

The word “reformation” in Hebrews 9:10 is from the Greek word *diorthosis* (dee-or'-tho-sis). It was a word used for the straightening and setting of broken bones. It is a word that means to thoroughly straighten or restore to normal or right position. The broken Law was a representation of both the cause and condition of fallen humanity under the curse and lost dominion of the first Adam. In Christ, the last Adam, humanity's fallen condition is restored in our new Federal Head, Jesus Christ. Regeneration (being “born again”) removes the sinner from the fallen creation and makes the believer a “new creature . . . in Christ.”

⁴¹ *There is* one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for *one* star differeth from *another* star in glory. ⁴² So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: ⁴³ It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit. ⁴⁶ Howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven. ⁴⁸ As *is* the earthy, such *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly. ⁴⁹ And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. ⁵⁰ Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption” (I Corinthians 15:41-50).

Another important truth to take note of is that it is theologically incorrect to say salvation, justification and redemption are based upon forgiveness of sin. Forgiveness of sin is a benefit of salvation, not that which procures its. Forgiveness has to do with our fellowship with God, not our salvation.

“¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; ² (For the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)³ That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. ⁵ This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (I John 1:1-10).

In fact, a careful evaluation of Scripture will reveal that five different Greek words are translated “forgive,” “forgiven,” “forgiveness” or “remission” in the Bible. The important truth regarding the use of each of these various words is the context in which they are used. Only one is used in the context of salvation (*aphesis*; af’-es-is).

- 1. *Paresis*** (par’-es-is); meaning to pass over, only used once in the N.T. in Romans 3:25 and refers to the Old Covenant where God *passed over* the sins of Israel when the blood was applied. The Passover was a yearly reminder and representation of this.
- 2. *Aphesis*** (af’-es-is); the primary meaning is the release from bondage (slavery) or imprisonment. It refers to the remission of the penalty for a crime or wrong doing. This word should ALWAYS be translated remission and is always used in the context of salvation (Mark 3:29; Acts 5:31; 13:38; 26:18; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14).
- 3. *Aphiemi*** (af-ee’-ay-mee); this word means to send away or let go of something or someone. It was the common word used for divorce. This word is never used in relation to salvation in the Bible. This word is used for the restoration of fellowship between believers and God or between individual believers. This forgiveness *lets go* of the wrong doing that divides people. Unforgiving people will not *let go* of offenses that bring divisions in relationships (Matt 6:12, 14, 15; 9:2, 5, 6; 12:31, 32; 18:31, 35; Mark 2:5, 7, 9, 10; 3:28, 4:12; 11:25, 26; Luke 5:20, 21, 23, 24; 6:7; 7:47, 48; 11:4; 12:10; 17:3; 23:34; Acts 8:22; Rom. 4:7; James 5:15; I John 1:9; 2:12).
- 4. *Charizomai*** (khar-id’-zom-ahee); the primary meaning is to freely give something pleasant or agreeable. Therefore it is used in regard to giving forgiveness or pardon. It is used in the Bible regarding relationships, not salvation (II Cor. 2:7, 10; 12:13; Eph. 4:32; Col. 2:13).
- 5. *Apoluo*** (ap-ol-oo’-o); the primary meaning is to dismiss, let go or release. This word is seldom used in the N.T., but when it is used, it refers to relationships, not salvation (Luke 6:7; used twice in this verse)

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1. Discuss why it is so important that the doctrine of salvation be solely and wholly Biblical. _____

2. What two Bible truths does the doctrine of salvation center on? _____

3. What does the word “propitiation” mean in its practical and theological application and to whom is “propitiation” directed? Thoroughly explain this Bible term. _____

4. What does the word “justification” mean in its practical and theological application and to whom is “justification” directed? Thoroughly explain this Bible term. _____

5. Salvation, justification, remission of sin, forgiveness of sin, redemption, positional sanctification and fellowship with God are all available because God was propitiated when Jesus was substitutionally executed in our place. Explain why it is so important to understand this. _____

6. Read Romans 3:25 and Hebrews 9:1-10. Thoroughly discuss the difference between the Old Covenant *Kaphar Offering* (commonly referred to as the Atonement) and the propitiation of God through the “once for all” sacrifice of Christ at Calvary. Explain the phrase “remission of sins that are past in Romans 3:25 as it relates to the statement of Hebrews 9:7-8. _____

7. Read I Corinthians 15:41-50. What is the meaning of the word “reformation” in Hebrews 9:10 as you understand the theological context of its use from the perspective of I Corinthians 15:41-50 and your discussion from the question above? _____

8. Discuss why it is important to understand that it is theologically incorrect to say salvation, justification and redemption are based upon forgiveness of sin. List the four Greek words translated forgive, forgiven or forgiveness in the New Testament and the context (salvation from condemnation or restoration to fellowship) of their uses in the Word of God. _____

