

## WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD "ATONEMENT"?

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Adam And Eve: Sin And Death Are Passed To All Men, A Blood Sacrifice Was Required, Without The Shedding Of Blood There Is No Remission Of Sins, Jesus Shed His Blood For Us, Jesus Paid The Ransom Price For Our Salvation, Jesus Frees Us From Penalty Of Sin Which Is Death, Washed And Cleansed By The Blood Of Jesus Christ, God's Love: Love Covers The Multitude Of Sins, Justified And Made Righteous Through Our Faith In Jesus Christ, A Peaceful Relationship With God The Father Is Restored, Christ Is Our High Priest Advocate Intercessor And Defense Attorney, Word "Atonement" In The King James Bible, Definitions Of "Katalage" And "Kaphar", 16th Century Origin Of The Word "Atonement", William Tyndale's Translation Work, Unity And At One With God, My Conclusion, Suggested Reading

Many modern Christians are familiar with the words "atone" and "atonement", and have a general idea regarding what these two words mean. As I point out in a number of articles such as "The Blood Atonement: In Jesus' Own Words" and "Backsliding, Divine Chastisement and the Divine Agreement", the Scriptures inform us that due to the breach which occurred between God and man as a result of the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, sin and death were passed on to all men, and humanity became separated from God, as we can determine by the following verse:

"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, KJV

In order to restore our relationship with God the Father and seal up the breach which had occurred, Divine Law mandated that a blood sacrifice must be made; because as we discover in the Epistle to the Hebrews, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of our sins:

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."

Hebrews 9:22, KJV

As all Christians know, this restoration with our Heavenly Father occurs as a result of the Lord Jesus Christ shedding His precious blood on a Roman cross, which itself was in fact foreshadowed throughout the pages of the Old Testament by way of animal sacrifices. Jesus himself spoke of the necessity of shedding His blood in the Gospels, as we can determine by the following group of verses:

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Matthew 26:26-28, KJV

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."

Mark 14:22-24, KJV

"And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

Luke 22:14-20, KJV

As I point out in various other BBB articles, Jesus Christ

was willing to pay the ransom price for our Salvation. He was willing to do what we cannot possibly do for ourselves, as we see by the following group of verses:

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Matthew 20:28, KJV

"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Mark 10:45, KJV

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Acts 20:28, KJV

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, KJV

"Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men."

1 Corinthians 7:23, KJV

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Ephesians 1:13-14, KJV

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

1 Timothy 2:5-6, KJV

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"

Romans 3:25, KJV

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved

us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

1 John 4:10, KJV

Thus, while death and separation from God hung over us like a terrible sword, the Scriptures inform us that the blood of Jesus Christ frees us from the penalty of sin -- which is death -- when we believe in what He did for us. Here again are a few Bible verses for your personal consideration:

"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, KJV

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 6:23, KJV

"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) . . . That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 5:17, 21, KJV

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Romans 8:2, KJV

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;"

Colossians 2:13, KJV

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins . . . But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in

heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

Ephesians 2:1, 4-7, KJV

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

1 Peter 2:24, KJV

In short, we see that through our faith in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, His blood symbolically washes and cleanses us, and covers our sins, so that the Father sees them no more. As a result, and as I explained previously, our relationship with God the Father is restored, and we can draw nigh to Him once again. Consider the following verses where this subject is amply discussed:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Isaiah 1:18, KJV

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off ARE MADE NIGH by the blood of Christ."

Ephesians 2:13, KJV

"Having therefore, brethren, BOLDNESS TO ENTER INTO THE HOLIEST BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;"

Hebrews 10:19-20, KJV

"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."

1 John 1:7, KJV

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"

Revelation 1:5, KJV

"And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Revelation 7:14, KJV

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate . . . Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Hebrews 13:12, 20-21, KJV

Now concerning our sins being covered by the blood of Jesus Christ, as all Christians know, this occurs because of God's love for us. In fact, as you will see by the following group of verses, love -- or charity -- covers the multitude of sins. Why? Because God is love, and He gave His Son in love. Furthermore, nothing can separate us from God's love. Now how about THAT?:

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for GOD IS LOVE. 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. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

1 John 4:8-10, KJV

"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."

1 Peter 4:8, KJV

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

John 3:16, KJV

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

1 John 3:16, KJV

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 5:8, KJV

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:38-39, KJV

The Scriptures further inform us that not only are we washed and made clean by the Blood of Jesus Christ so that our sins are covered, but we are also justified and made righteous before our Heavenly Father, so that we are able to once again boldly approach Him and be reconciled, restored and reunited with Him. Here again are some Bible verses which validate this important point:

"And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Acts 13:39, KJV

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe . . . Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

Romans 3:21-22, 24-26, KJV

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

Romans 8:10, KJV

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Romans 10:4, KJV

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified . . . I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

Galatians 2:16, 21, KJV

"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:"

Philippians 3:9, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"

Titus 3:5, KJV

Thus, through all of the previous verses, we easily see that because Jesus Christ willingly chose to die for our sins on a Roman Cross and take our place, and suffer death for us, we can be washed, cleansed, justified and made righteous in the Father's sight. Through our faith in Jesus' Sacrifice, we are reconciled to God, and a peaceful relationship is restored with Him. Jesus came to give us this peace. This is precisely what the Bible tells us in the following set of verses:

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

John 14:27, KJV

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33, KJV

"Therefore being justified by faith, WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST . . . 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 5:1, 10, KJV

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are



made nigh by the blood of Christ. FOR HE IS OUR PEACE, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, SO MAKING PEACE; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHICH WERE AFAR OFF, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

Ephesians 2:13-18, KJV

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, HAVING MADE PEACE THROUGH THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:"

Colossians 1:19-22, KJV

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:7, KJV

"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."

2 Corinthians 5:18-19, KJV

With good reason then, Jesus Christ is the very best high priest, advocate and defense attorney we can ever expect to have. Why is Jesus able to assume this role? Well, because He paid the full price for our Salvation, and met the full requirement of Divine Law when He shed His blood for us. The Scriptures in fact inform us that He continually intercedes for us before the Throne of the Father as our high priest and advocate, as we can determine by the following set of Bible verses:

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand

of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Romans 8:34, KJV

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Hebrews 4:15, KJV

"So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec."

Hebrews 5:5-10, KJV

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Hebrews 7:25, KJV

"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: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

1 John 2:1-2, KJV

With all of the previous paragraphs, I have now given you a Scriptural crash course regarding what the Atonement is all about. As I was conducting Biblical research for this current article, I made an interesting discovery. To my amazement, I discovered that the actual words "atone" and "atoned" are not mentioned a single time in the entire KJV Bible. In contrast, the word "atonement" is found one time in the New Testament, in the following two verses:

"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 5:10-11, KJV

In the previous verses, the word "atonement" is derived from the Koine Greek word "katallage". This word is translated as "reconciliation" two times, as "atonement" one time, and as "reconciling" one time, for a total of four times in the KJV Bible. Thayer's Greek English Lexicon defines this word in the following manner:

----- Begin Quote -----

1) exchange

1a) of the business of money changers, exchanging equivalent values

2) adjustment of a difference, reconciliation, restoration to favour

2a) in the NT of the restoration of the favour of God to sinners that repent and put their trust in the expiatory death of Christ

----- End Quote -----

As you can plainly see, the previous definition perfectly fits what I shared with you earlier regarding how Jesus in fact paid the ransom price for our sins, and exchanged His life for ours, so that we can be reconciled to the Father, be restored in a peaceful relationship with Him, and obtain Eternal Life.

Turning to the pages of the Old Testament, I discovered that the word "atonement" is used a total of seventy times. It is derived from the Hebrew word "kaphar" which literally means to cover, atone or reconcile. Now isn't that interesting! As we have already seen, that is exactly what Jesus' shed blood does for us. It covers our sins, and it reconciles us with the Father. Following is the full definition as provided by the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon

----- Begin Quote -----

1) to cover, purge, make an atonement, make

reconciliation, cover over with pitch

1a) (Qal) to coat or cover with pitch

1b) (Piel)

1b1) to cover over, pacify, propitiate

1b2) to cover over, atone for sin, make atonement for

1b3) to cover over, atone for sin and persons by legal rites

1c) (Pual)

1c1) to be covered over

1c2) to make atonement for

1d) (Hithpael) to be covered

----- End Quote -----

Being as there are so many verses in the Old Testament in which the word "atonement" is used, it would no doubt tax you to read all of them. Thus, following are just a few sample verses where the word is used. As you can see, all of these verses involve animal sacrifices, which as I told you earlier, were a foreshadow of what Jesus would do in the New Testament:

"And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it. Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy."

Exodus 29:36-37, KJV

"Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock. If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD. And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him."

Leviticus 1:2-4, KJV

"And thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD: and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites: And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD for an

offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the LORD. And the Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and thou shalt offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, unto the LORD, to make an atonement for the Levites."

Numbers 8:10-12, KJV

Now that we understand what the word "atonement" signifies in the pages of both the Old and the New Testaments of the KJV Bible, it is time to answer the big question, and that is this: How and why was the Hebrew word "Kaphar", and the Koine Greek word "katallage" translated as "atonement"? Exactly where did this word originate?

As I briefly mention in other articles, this word was coined by the 16th century reformer, William Tyndale, who as you may know, gave us the first printed English version of the New Testament in 1525-26. He was also working on the Old Testament as well. However, he was martyred before he could complete it, so other reformers had to finish it for him. As I point out in the article "History of the Authorized King James Bible", roughly ninety per cent of the Geneva Bible is based on Tyndale's work. In turn, the Authorized King James Version of the Holy Bible is based on the Geneva Bible.

At any rate, Tyndale required a word which would describe our relationship with God the Father being restored, so that we are once again in unity with Him, and at one with Him. So if we consider the fact that Tyndale was a member of the Roman Catholic Church -- and thus knew Latin -- what he decided to do makes perfect sense. You see, it is believed that Tyndale was influenced by the medieval Latin word "adunamentum" -- which means "unity" -- and an even earlier word -- "onement" -- which was derived from the obsolete verb "one", which means to unite. Thus, William Tyndale chose to do this:

at one + ment = atonement

And that, my dear friends, is where the word "atonement" is believed to have originated. God bless William Tyndale for all that he did for the Lord -- and by extension, for us as well -- during his lifetime. No doubt God has indeed blessed Tyndale, as surely, that great pioneer of our faith now walks in Heavenly Places with other reformers of his era!

With these thoughts, I will bring this article to a close. It is my hope that you've found it informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you'd take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information and further study, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were either mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server. To read these articles, simply click or tap on any link you see below.

A Verse a Day to Keep the Doubts Away  
All Are Given a Chance, But . . .  
Are You Clean Every Whit?  
Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled?  
Backsliding, Divine Chastisement and the Divine Agreement  
Five Foolish Virgins: Don't Procrastinate!  
Free From the Fear of Death: Law and Works vs Grace  
Free Will and Personal Choice  
History of the Authorized King James Bible  
Is the Message of Salvation Meant for All Men?  
Many Are Called, But Few Are Chosen  
Message to the World  
Not Everyone is a Child of God  
OSAS: Are We Once Saved, Always Saved?  
OSAS: The Hebrews 10:26-27 Controversy  
Salvation is Free Through Jesus Christ  
Striving for Perfection: Are You a Sinless Saint?  
The Blood Atonement: In Jesus' Own Words  
The Nature and Consequence of Sin and God's Solution  
What Does "Blessed Are the Peacemakers" Really Mean?  
What It Means to Repent

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