

By Faith Lesson 20

Atonement and Redemption

The revelation of God concerning atonement and redemption was heard already in Paradise. The seed of the woman was to bruise the head of the serpent. The promise of the Lamb of God, which was to take away the sins of the world, was repeated time after time in the sacrificial worship of the Old Testament. As the revelation advanced, the picture of Christ, who was to fulfill all things with one single sacrifice, became ever more clear.

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." (Isa. 53:3-5)

This portion of the Book of Isaiah portrayed for us the Mediator, the Messiah, whom God was to send.

The High Priest during Old Testament times went on the great Day of Atonement into the Holy Place and sprinkled the blood of the sacrificial animal together with water on behalf of his own sins and those of the people.

He, Christ, is the Atonement

The Son of God, shedding His own blood, went to the hill of Golgatha and gave Himself for the atonement of our sins. He accepted the wrath of God, which we had deserved. The explanation of the Second Article of the Creed speaks of this same matter. The Bible teaches that God was in Christ and reconciled the world with Himself. Christ gave His life as the price of redemption.

The Office of Reconciliation

The office of reconciliation was ordained by this great work. The congregation of God was sent to proclaim the word of reconciliation in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the letter of credentials. The Holy Spirit still borrows the mouth of the child of God and proclaims the gospel in the name and blood of Jesus. The explanation of the Third Article of the Creed teaches about this office of the Holy Spirit in detail, which work is performed through the congregation of God.

"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)

"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)

Exercises

1. Read and consider Luther's explanation of the Second Article of the Creed. How was the work of redemption performed? Why were you redeemed? What was the price of redemption?
2. Read Rom. 5:6- 11. Redemption took place for the sake of all people. However, it does not benefit

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anyone, unless he believes. How does this passage explain the matter? Compare the passage to Col. 1:20-23. How does this portion of text explain the importance of faith?

3. Unto whom did the Son of God give the office of reconciliation? (John 20:19-23; II Cor. 5)