

**Vicarious Sacrifice: The Principle of Unlimited Atonement: God Desires All Men Be Saved, 2 Pet 3:9; He Selects All at Birth, Gen 2:7 cf. Rom 3:23; Propitiated by His Judgment of All Sins in Jesus, 1 Jn 2:2; Original Sin Was by Lucifer, Isa 14:13–14; Lucifer's Two Imprisonments Yet Future, Rev 20:1–3 & 20:10; Baptism of Fire for Gentiles, Matt 25:41**

### III. The Principle of Unlimited Atonement:

1. Unlimited atonement is confirmed by a number of rationales developed from several passages of Scripture some of which we will note.
2. Limited atonement is a deduction erroneously reached by logic, not by a straightforward reading of the Bible.
3. Since the Protestant Reformation, great controversy has arisen over which of these two positions is biblical.
4. I teach unlimited atonement since that position is clearly evident when conducting a straightforward, or literal, reading of Scripture.
5. The debate over which is biblical emerged from interpretations of the writings of John Calvin. We will not venture into that discussion since it has been thoroughly covered in our study *Hermeneutics* which is posted on the Web site under Bible Class Archive: Class Catalog: Theology: Hermeneutics.<sup>1</sup>
6. The rationale for unlimited atonement begins with the proclamation that salvation is available to all through faith alone in Christ alone.
7. This is confirmed by the fact that God desires that all men be saved:

**2 Peter 3:9** - The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not [ μή (*mē*): expresses the negation of a wish ] wishing for any to perish [ gnostic aorist of ἀπόλλυμι (*apóllumi*): a fact described as a certainty, i.e., the lake of fire ] but for all [ plural pronoun πάντα (*pánta*): everyone ] to come to repentance [ μετάνοια (*metánoia*: to change one's mind about Christ) ].

8. This verse indicates it is God's desire that every person He selects will come to an objective understanding of the gospel and make the decision to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation thus avoiding the certainty of the lake of fire.
9. God selected every member of the human race at the moment of physical birth through the imputation of soul life to biological life.

**Genesis 2:7** - And the Lord God [ Jesus Christ ] formed from existing minerals [ יָצַר (*yasar*) ] from the soil of the earth the male body [ biological life ] and breathed [ נָפַח (*naphach*): nitrogen & oxygen ] into his nostrils the breath [ נְשָׁמָה (*neshamah*) ] of lives [ the masculine plural noun חַיִּים (*chaiyim*): Selection: soul life imputed to biological life equals human life plus the human spirit producing spiritual life ] and the man [ אָדָם (*'atham*): Adam ] became a living soul [ נְפֶשׁ (*nephesh*): a trichotomous person ]. (EXT)

10. The fall of man was the result of free-will decisions by Ishah and Adam to sin. They were perfect up to that point, but their violation of the mandate not to eat the forbidden fruit was theirs alone.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.joegriffin.org/Pages/ClassArchiveSubject.aspx?SeriesID=CC02&ClassNumberStart=285&ClassNumberEnd=358&Subject=Hermeneutics+%e2%80%a2+Clanking+Chains+\(2002\)](http://www.joegriffin.org/Pages/ClassArchiveSubject.aspx?SeriesID=CC02&ClassNumberStart=285&ClassNumberEnd=358&Subject=Hermeneutics+%e2%80%a2+Clanking+Chains+(2002))

11. Following the fall, Adam and Eve's progeny were born physically alive, but spiritually dead.

**Romans 3:23** - All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (NASB)

12. These preceding verses clearly indicate that everyone is born condemned, but, with a free-will decision, anyone may have eternal life by expressing faith alone in Christ alone.
13. Part of each person's soul essence is volition, the innate power to make choices.
14. Unlimited atonement provides potential salvation for the entire human race, but restricts actual salvation to those who choose to believe in Christ.
15. If volition is utilized to reject Christ, then those who remain "reprobate" will, against the desire of God, be sentenced to the lake of fire at the last judgment.
16. Why would the sins of the reprobate be imputed to Christ if it was already determined by divine decree in eternity past that they would not be saved?

**1 John 2:2** - He [ Jesus Christ ] is the propitiation for our sins; and not for our sins only, but also for the entire world. (CTL)

17. The only answer to this is because of unlimited atonement. The judgment of our sins in Christ removes sin as an issue and places emphasis on using volition to believe in Christ for salvation.
18. That there are those who do not so choose indicates the reason people are sentenced to the lake of fire: it is not because of a choice by God, but by the individual.
19. The original expression of negative volition goes back into pre-human history and the fall of Lucifer. His rebellion against the sovereignty of God is documented by his five assertions recorded in:

**Isaiah 14:13** - "You said in your *kardia*, (1) 'I will ascend to the third heaven [ rule in place of God ]; (2) I will sit in authority over the angelic community; (3) I will sit on the throne over the assembly [ position of honor ]; (4) I will ascend above the clouds [ assume the power to judge; see Psalm 82:1 ]; (5) I will be like the Most High [ replace God ]."

20. This sedition is indicted in the very next verse:

**Isaiah 14:15** - "Nevertheless, you shall receive incarceration in Sheol [ שְׁאוֹל (*she'ol*): Greek ᾗδης (*hádēs*): Hades ], to the recesses of the abyss [ ἄβυσσος (*ábussos*): a compartment of Hades; see Revelation 20:1–3 cf. Luke 16:19–31 ]."

21. This temporary incarceration occurs at the Second Advent. Jesus Christ takes control of world government and has Lucifer banished to the Abyss:

**Revelation 20:1** - Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.

**v. 2** - And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

**v. 3** - and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were completed. (NASB)

22. This temporary imprisonment occurs during the Millennium (Revelation 20:7-9). Lucifer will be released for a short time at the end of the dispensation, but following his defeat he will be permanently transferred to the lake of fire:

**Revelation 20:10** - The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

23. What we find in this sequence of events is that the original charge of rebellion, noted in Isaiah 14:13-14, was prosecuted followed by a guilty verdict and sentence confirmed by our Lord in:

**Matthew 25:41** - "Then He [ **the Father** ] will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

24. Following the guilty verdict in the original trial, God created a specific place of eternal imprisonment for the devil and his angels but, that sentence will not be carried out until the end of human history (Revelation 20:10).
25. If the sentence was ordered before human history began, but suspended until the end of human history, then we conclude that human history is the courtroom in which Satan's appeal takes place.