

Sacrifice

Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words

Propitiation

Cross-references:

- Also found in *Nave's Topical Bible*
 - Also found in *Easton's Bible Dictionary*
-

Propitiation

A. Verb

1. *hilaskomai*

B. Nouns

1. *hilasterion*
 2. *hilasmos*
-

A1. Propitiation [Verb]

hilaskomai was used amongst the Greeks with the significance "to make the gods propitious, to appease, propitiate," inasmuch as their good will was not conceived as their natural attitude, but something to be earned first. This use of the word is foreign to the Greek Bible, with respect to God, whether in the Sept. or in the NT. It is never used of any act whereby man brings God into a favorable attitude or gracious disposition. It is God who is "propitiated" by the vindication of His holy and righteous character, whereby, through the provision He has made in the vicarious and expiatory sacrifice of Christ, He has so dealt with sin that He can show mercy to the believing sinner in the removal of his guilt and the remission of his sins.

Thus in Luke 18:13 it signifies "to be propitious" or "merciful to" (with the person as the object of the verb), and in Heb 2:17 "to expiate, to make propitiation for" (the object of the verb being sins); here the RV, "to make propitiation" is an important correction of the AV, "to make reconciliation." Through the "propitiation" sacrifice of Christ, he who believes upon Him is by God's own act delivered from justly deserved wrath, and comes under the covenant of grace. Never is God said to be reconciled, a fact itself indicative that the enmity exists on man's part alone, and that it is man who needs to be reconciled to God, and not God to man. God is always the same and, since He is Himself immutable, His relative attitude does change towards those who change. He can act differently towards those who

come to Him by faith, and solely on the ground of the "propitiatory" sacrifice of Christ, not because He has changed, but because He ever acts according to His unchanging righteousness.

The expiatory work of the Cross is therefore the means whereby the barrier which sin interposes between God and man is broken down. By the giving up of His sinless life sacrificially, Christ annuls the power of sin to separate between God and the believer.

In the OT the Hebrew verb *kaphar* is connected with *kopher*, "a covering" (see MERCY SEAT), and is used in connection with the burnt offering, e.g., Lev 1:4; Lev 14:20; Lev 16:24, the guilt offering e.g., Lev 5:16,18, the sin offering, e.g., Lev 4:20,26,31,35, the sin offering and burnt offering together, e.g., Lev 5:10; Lev 9:7, the meal offering and peace offering, e.g., Ezek 45:15,17, as well as in other respects. It is used of the ram offered at the consecration of the high priest, Ex 29:33, and of the blood which God gave upon the altar to make "propitiation" for the souls of the people, and that because "the life of the flesh is in the blood," Lev 17:11, and "it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life" (RV). Man has forfeited his life on account of sin and God has provided the one and only way whereby eternal life could be bestowed, namely, by the voluntary laying down of His life by His Son, under Divine retribution. Of this the former sacrifices appointed by God were foreshadowings.

See also : *hilaskomai* in other topics

B1. Propitiation [Noun]

hilasterion akin to *hilaskomai*, is regarded as the neuter of an adjective signifying "propitiatory." In the Sept. it is used adjectively in connection with epithema, "a cover," in Ex 25:17; Ex 37:6, of the lid of the ark (see MERCY SEAT), but it is used as a noun (without epithema), of locality, in Ex 25:18-22; Ex 31:7; Ex 35:12; Ex 37:7,8,9; Lev 16:2,13-15; Num 7:89, and this is its use in Heb 9:5.

Elsewhere in the NT it occurs in Rom 3:25, where it is used of Christ Himself; the RV text and punctuation in this verse are important: "whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood." The phrase "by His blood" is to be taken in immediate connection with "propitiation." Christ, through His expiatory death, is the Personal means by whom God shows the mercy of His justifying grace to the sinner who believes. His "blood" stands for the voluntary giving up of His life, by the shedding of His blood in expiatory sacrifice, under Divine judgment righteously due to us as sinners, faith being the sole condition on man's part.

Note: "By metonymy, 'blood' is sometimes put for 'death,' inasmuch as, blood being essential to life, Lev 17:11, when the blood is shed life is given up, that is, death takes place. The fundamental principle on which God deals with sinners is expressed in the words 'apart from shedding of blood,' i.e., unless a death takes place, 'there is no remission' of sins, Heb 9:22.

"But whereas the essential of the type lay in the fact that blood was shed, the essential of the antitype lies in this, that the blood shed was that of Christ. Hence, in connection with Jewish

sacrifices, 'the blood' is mentioned without reference to the victim from which it flowed, but in connection with the great antitypical sacrifice of the NT the words 'the blood' never stand alone; the One Who shed the blood is invariably specified, for it is the Person that gives value to the work; the saving efficacy of the Death depends entirely upon the fact that He Who died was the Son of God." [From Notes on Thessalonians by Hogg and Vine, p. 168.]

See also : *hilasterion* in other topics

B2. Propitiation [Noun]

hilasmos akin to *hileos* ("merciful, propitious"), signifies "an expiation, a means-whereby sin is covered and remitted." It is used in the NT of Christ Himself as "the propitiation," in 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10, signifying that He Himself, through the expiatory sacrifice of His Death, is the Personal means by whom God shows mercy to the sinner who believes on Christ as the One thus provided. In the former passage He is described as "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." The italicized addition in the AV, "the sins of," gives a wrong interpretation. What is indicated is that provision is made for the whole world, so that no one is, by Divine predetermination, excluded from the scope of God's mercy; the efficacy of the "propitiation," however, is made actual for those who believe. In 1 John 4:10, the fact that God "sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins," is shown to be the great expression of God's love toward man, and the reason why Christians should love one another. In the Sept., Lev 25:9; Num 5:8; 1 Chron 28:20; Psalm 130:4; Ezek 44:27; Amos 8:14.

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Propitiation

Propitiation is the work of the Lord Jesus Christ by which He appeases the wrath of God and conciliates Him who would otherwise be offended by our sin and would demand that we pay the penalty for it.

Propitiation is translated from the Greek (hilasterion), meaning "that which expiates or propitiates" or "the gift which procures propitiation". The word is also used in the New Testament for the place of propitiation, the "mercy seat". Heb. 9:5. There is frequent similar use of (hilasterion) in the Septuagint. Ex. 25:18 ff. The mercy seat was sprinkled with atoning blood on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:14), representing that the righteous sentence of the Law had been executed, changing a judgment seat into a mercy seat (Heb. 9:11-15; compare with "throne of grace" in Heb. 4:14-16; place of communion, Ex. 25:21-22).

Another Greek word, (hilasmos), is used for Christ as our propitiation. 1 John 2:2; 4:10, and for "atonement" in the Septuagint (Lev. 25:9). The thought in the Old Testament sacrifices and in the New Testament fulfillment is that Christ completely satisfied the just demands of a holy God for judgment on sin by His death on the Cross.

God, foreseeing the Cross, is declared righteous in forgiving sins in the Old Testament period as well as in justifying sinners under the New Covenant (Rom. 3:25,26; cf. Ex. 29:33, note). Propitiation is not the placating of a vengeful God but, rather, it is the satisfying the righteousness of a holy God, thereby making it possible for Him to show mercy without compromising His righteousness or justice.

The Hebrew (kaphar), means "to propitiate, to atone for sin". According to scripture, the sacrifice of the Law only covered the offeror's sin and secured divine forgiveness. The Old Testament sacrifices never removed man's sin. "It is not possible..."; Heb. 10:4. The Israelite's offering implied confession of sin in anticipation of Christ's sacrifice which did, finally, "put away" the sins "done previously in the forbearance of God". Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:15,26. The word "atonement" does not occur in the New Testament; the word in Rom. 5:11 is "reconciliation".

The beginning of the subject of Propitiation is found far back in the Bible, back to the designing of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, the tent which God had the people of Israel set up which would be the center of His presence on earth.

The Tabernacle occupies a large portion of Scripture, sixteen chapters in the book of Exodus and the whole book of Leviticus. Every feature of the Tabernacle, of the worship carried out there, of the priestly life and duties, of the vestments of the priests, the sacrifices, the feast days—every feature was vitally important and designed by the Lord for eternal purposes. It is very important for the Church Age believer to have a good working knowledge of the Levitical system in order to appreciate fully the work of Christ and the plan of God as they have been instituted in the world.

There was great stress on the blueprint of the Tabernacle.

Exodus 25:8,9 "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it:"

The pattern was given to Moses on Mt. Sinai, along with The Law. READ Hebrews 8:1-6. The Tabernacle was a symbolical expression of spiritual truth.

The congregation of the Jews did not go beyond the courtyard of the tabernacle. They made offerings only at the brazen altar; and only the priests were allowed to go anyplace else in the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle was the dwelling place of God on earth, and God was unapproachable by sinful men. The main lessons being taught had to do with the perfection of God and the sinfulness of man.

The Furniture of the Tabernacle

Brazen Altar – this altar was the beginning of a person's approach to God. Animal sacrifices made there taught that substitutionary sacrifice is the first step toward fellowship with God. When a person passed outside the gate of the Tabernacle, the only thing that he could see was the smoke rising from the burnt offerings, and through the one gate could be seen the altar of sacrifice and the blood being shed. Everything else was hidden from view by the curtain of the fence. This was a continuous reminder of "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." The only thing the unbeliever can ever see is the Gospel, the good news of Christ's substitutionary sacrifice for us.

A description of the brazen altar is found in Ex. 27:1-8 and Ex. 38:17.

The Laver – Here the priests cleaned their hands and arms before performing any service or act of worship (Ex. 30:17). It was placed between the brazen altar and the tent of worship (the Holy Place). This cleansing symbolized the spiritual cleansing which is essential to both worship and service.

The Candlesticks – These illustrated the need for illumination, the Light of the World. See Ex. 25:31-40; 37:17-34.

The Table of Bread – An illustration of the need for spiritual food. See Ex. 25:23-30; 37:10-16.

The Altar of Incense – From Ex. 30:1-10, this piece of Tabernacle furniture illustrated the need for acceptable worship and prayer. No animals were offered on this altar. The offering was an incense offering, indicating that which is pleasing to God, Divine Good (gold, silver, and precious stones). The fire for the altar of incense came from the brazen altar, indicating that worship can only come after salvation. No strange fire was allowed; and Nadab and Abihu died for disobeying this rule.

The Veil – the Veil symbolized the barrier between God and man; only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and that only once a year on the day of atonement, to offer the blood on the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant.

The Ark of the Covenant – the Ark of the Covenant was located in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle. It was made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. Its dimensions were 50 inches long by 30 inches wide by 30 inches deep. The Ark was a picture of Christ bearing our sins,

the box part representing Christ. The wood illustrated the humanity of Christ, the gold represented His deity.

Inside the Ark were three objects representing sin (Num. 17:8,10; Heb. 9:4). The Tables of the Law represented sin in the sense of violation or transgression of God's order. The Pot of Manna represented rejection of God's provision. And Aaron's Rod represented revolt against God's authority.

Over the top of the box was a lid of solid gold, the Mercy Seat (or throne). Over each end of the Mercy Seat was a gold cherub, the highest ranking angel. The first cherub represented the absolute Righteousness of God, and the second cherub represented the Justice of God. Together they represented the Holiness of God. The cherubs faced toward each other, wings outstretched towards each other, and looked down at the Mercy Seat. "Righteousness" looks down and condemns (Rom. 3:23). "Justice" looks down and assesses a penalty.

Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies twice; once to make atonement for his own sins, and then to do so for the people. He sprinkled blood from the sacrifice on the Ark, on the top of the Mercy Seat, between the cherubs. This was a graphic illustration of God's grace provision for sin. "Righteousness" looks at the blood of the animal, which represents the spiritual death of Christ on the Cross, His substitutionary atonement, and is satisfied. "Justice" looks at the blood and is satisfied that the penalty paid for sin was sufficient, teaching that Christ was judged and paid the penalty for us.

Therefore, the Ark speaks of Redemption - Christ paid for our sins, paid our ransom, to purchase us from the slave market of sin.

So we have in the Ark and the Mercy Seat a picture of God's satisfaction with the Work of Jesus Christ known as Propitiation.

Now, the Hebrew word for Mercy Seat is (kapporeth). The Greek word used in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament is (hilasterion)! This same Greek word is found in the New Testament in Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:5; 1 John 2:2; and 4:10. and is translated "mercy seat" or "place of propitiation". So there is a direct relationship between the Mercy Seat in the Tabernacle and the doctrine of Propitiation.

Because of Propitiation, God is free to love the believer without compromising either His Righteousness or Justice. The thought in the Old Testament sacrifices and in the New Testament fulfillment is that Christ completely satisfied the just demands of a holy God for judgment of sin.

Propitiation is not the placating of a vengeful God; but it is, rather, the satisfying of the righteousness of a holy God making it possible for Him to show mercy without compromise. Propitiation demonstrates the consistency of God's character in saving the worst sinners. Propitiation reconciles man to God. This means that sin is no longer the issued between man and God. The only issue, both for the Old Testament and New Testament believers, is "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

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A word study — Propitiation

Anthony D. Palma

Propitiation—a theological word one does not hear often. Its meaning—and sometimes its pronunciation—eludes some people. Yet it is a grand biblical terra-thoroughly saturated with wonderful truth. This word *hilasmos* and its cognates *hilasterion*, *hilaskomai*, and *hileos* are found throughout the New Testament and in key passages of the Septuagint. The Hebrew equivalent (*kaphar* and its cognates) occurs in many significant Old Testament passages.

Translations differ in their rendering of these words. In the New Testament where they are used in connection with the death of Christ (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17; 3:12 [the NASB reads, "I will be merciful"]; 1 John 2:2; 4:10), some versions; consistently translate them as "expiation" or "expiate." Others, like the King James Version and the New American Standard Bible, render them "propitiation" or "propitiate." Is there a significant difference?

To expiate means to atone for; it refers to a change in the one making the offering or sacrifice. To propitiate means to placate, appease, or pacify; it involves a change in the one to whom the offering or sacrifice is made. Persons are propitiated; things or acts are expiated. In Scripture, God is propitiated; sins are expiated.

Must we choose between the two? An examination of the relevant biblical passages shows that the death of Jesus did indeed expiate or atone for the sins of mankind. John said that Christ is "the propitiation [*hilasmos*] for our sins" (1 John 2:21), and further, "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation [*hilasmos*] for our sins" (1 John 4:10). It is important to note the connection of God's love with the propitiatory death of Christ.

Some object to the translation propitiation or propitiate on the grounds this concept of placating or appeasing an angry God is pagan in origin, since pagan deities often demanded sacrifices to avert their wrath. But two important points need to be made: (1) the Scriptures do indeed speak often of the wrath of God, and (2) God's wrath or anger is not the same as that of pagan gods. In paganism, it is man who offers the sacrifice to his god to appease him. In the New Testament we have the glorious truth that God, the offended one, has himself provided the sacrifice—the propitiation for our sins. This, as we have seen in 1 John 4:10, was motivated by His love for mankind.

Those who object to the concept of propitiation or appeasement and who prefer to think only in terms of expiation must still answer the important question, "Why must sins be expiated?" The answer lies in the fact that God, who is holy, must punish sin. In the Old Testament, the contexts of most passages where our words occur clearly indicate the idea of appeasement or averting God's wrath. Here are two examples from the Septuagint: "But He, being compassionate, forgave [*hilaskomai*] their iniquity, and did not destroy them; and often He restrained His anger, and did not arouse all His wrath" (Psalm 78:38).

"So the Lord changed His mind [*hilaskomai*] about the harm which He said He would

do to His people" (Exodus 32:14). The verb in these verses can be translated "was merciful" as it is in the prayer of the publican, "God, be merciful to me, the sinner!" (Luke 18:13).

The word *hilasterion* occurs twice in the New Testament. In Hebrews 9:5 the writer, referring to the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, said, "And above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat [*hilasterion*]." The reference is to Exodus 25:17-22. At the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement (*yom hakkippurim*), the high priest offered sacrifice for the sins of the people (Leviticus 23:27,28; 25:9), often referred to as Yom Kippur. The typological fulfillment, of course, is Jesus, who "was made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation [*hilaskesthai*] for the sins of the people" (Hebrews 2:17).

The second occurrence of *hilasterion* in the New Testament is in Romans 3:25. In one of the greatest soteriological passages in Scripture (Romans 3:21-26), Paul discussed being justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, "whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith." Jesus is both the high priest who makes propitiation (Hebrews 2:17) and the propitiatory sacrifice itself (Romans 3:25). (The word *hilasterion*, strictly speaking, is an adjective meaning "propitiatory." By extension it can mean the propitiatory thing or place, such as the mercy seat.) Or, to put it another way, Jesus is our mercy seat.

The Romans 3 passage highlights the two complementary, aspects of God that we observed in 1 John 4:10, which tells us that God's love for us motivated Him to send His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. His love and His wrath meet and are demonstrated in the Cross. In Romans 3:26, Paul said God's righteousness is demonstrated by the propitiatory death of Christ, "that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." His justice required satisfaction for sins, which took place at Calvary. Because He has been propitiated, He can then be the one who justifies the believer.

We must appreciate both aspects of our word group. Certainly they speak to us about expiation—forgiveness and cleansing, but they must also include the idea of propitiation—the averting of divine wrath. A defective or inadequate view of sin results in a distorted view of God. Unless sin is recognized as an offense against a holy God, the tendency will be to speak merely in terms of expiation rather than propitiation. The idea of propitiation certainly includes that of expiation. But the idea of expiation does not necessarily include that of propitiation.

**Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted.*

PROPITIATION AND SUBSTITUTION

by L M Grant

These two truths are again connected with the value of the sacrifice of Christ. Both are most precious and both are distinct. 1 John 2:2 is a clear declaration of the first, "He (Jesus Christ) is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." "The Lord Jesus Christ, by His great work of suffering for sins, the Just for the unjust, is Himself the propitiation who perfectly vindicates and satisfies God in regard to the question of sin. His sacrifice is sufficient to enable God to receive and forgive every sinner under heaven who will receive the Lord Jesus Christ is not only the propitiation "for our sins" (those of believers), but also for the whole world. He died because of the sins of all mankind. The expression "not for ours only" clearly indicates that propitiation is for the sins of others too, that is, those of the whole world.

This same truth of propitiation is evident in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. The gospel that Paul preached and by which the Corinthians were saved was "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Paul told them "that Christ died for our sins" before they were saved: in fact this was the means of their salvation. It is therefore right to tell the whole world, "Christ died for our sins." 2 Corinthians 5:15 insists, "He died for all," and the reason this was necessary is because of the sins of all.

Because this is true, there are some who think it right to assume that everybody is therefore forgiven. This is because they confuse the truth of propitiation with another line of truth that is parallel to it, the truth of substitution. This word is not found in Scripture, but the truth described by this is found there. The fact that "Christ died for all" does not mean that all are saved. In fact, the Scriptural conclusion is, "If One died for all, then were all dead" (2 Cor. 5:14). Since it was necessary for One to die for all, then this simply confirmed the fact that all were "dead in trespasses and sins" before God. This is propitiation, not substitution.

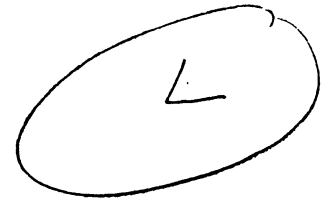
Hebrews 9:28 affirms, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." This is substitution. He did not bear the sins of all, but "of many", those who have in reality trusted Him as Savior. "As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name" (Jn. 1:12). To say that He has borne our sins is a different thing entirely than to say He died for our sins. The former is true only of believers, the latter is true for all men. 1 Peter 2:24, written to believers, tell us, "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross." When one has received the Lord Jesus, he may then have this precious certainty, but not before. Those lovely expressions in Isaiah 53:5,6 are only applicable to believers, "With His stripes we are healed," and "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all".

God therefore has been propitiated in regard to the whole world. As a result the gospel message "whosoever will may come" can be proclaimed to all, but the benefits of this are only known to those who receive Christ as their Substitute. These two lines of truth must therefore be kept distinct, although both are to be deeply appreciated by the child of God.

This article is part of L M Grant's book Wonderful Paradoxes of Scripture

Propitiation

by
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Propitiation is one of the great terms and concepts in the Bible. The word occurs a number of times in both the Old and New Testaments.

Two Great Universals

A universal denotes something that is true at all times under all circumstances.

- The first is that all men have sinned against a sovereign, loving, righteous, even holy God.

Romans 3:23 says that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Isaiah 53:6 adds that all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, everyone, to his own way.

- The second universal is that God is angry at sin and judges it (Romans 1:18, 24, 26, 28).

The Psalmist says, God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day (Psalm 7:11).

Paul says further that the wrath of God keeps on being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18).

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things [fornication, covetousness, uncleanness, etc.] the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience (Ephesians 5:6).

We cannot accuse God “of moral flabbiness. He is vigorously opposed to evil in every shape and form.”¹

Note also Numbers 14:18.

The Lord is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty.

If we use contemporary terminology, we would say that God is not a happy camper with unrepentant sinners, which explains some, though not all, of the weakness, sickness, and death in the world (cp. 1 Corinthians 11:30).

Now most if not all, pagan religions view God as an angry God—especially note the faces on so many of the Hindu gods. Because they see God as violent, they feel compelled to offer sacrifices to change

Him from an angry to a pleased God-to satisfy Him.

1 Kings 18:25-26 is a good passage for showing the mentality of pagan religion. In spite of the strenuous efforts of the prophets of Baal to pull down from heaven the favor of their god, nothing happened.

So they figured it was necessary to try harder and leaped upon the alter which they had made (vs. 26b), then cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them (vs. 28).

Through personal sacrifice, suffering, and penance they were seeking to change the attitude of their god and turn his stony silence so as to receive some mercy from him.²

How Does Sinful Man

Enter a Favorable Relationship With God?

The Old Testament solution: The Mercy Seat

Purpose of the Mercy Seat

The Lord instructed Moses to build the Mercy Seat in Exodus 25:1-22. What was the purpose of the Mercy Seat? Exodus 25:22 says, *there I will meet with you*. In other words, the place where God manifested His mercy was the place of contact between God and man.

It was at the Mercy Seat that God was pleased to meet with His people, in the person of the High Priest. It was at this location, God's righteousness and justice were satisfied, or propitiated. Let us see a passage that reveals what happened once a year at the Mercy Seat.

Leviticus 16

Verses 16:1-5 speak of the Holy of Holies in which was the Mercy Seat. Verses 29-34 especially show what the purpose of this Mercy Seat was—a purpose fulfilled one day only each year. In verse 30 note the clause *shall make atonement*, which Moses repeats in verses 32-34. "Atonement" is the verb *rP#K!*, meaning to cover over, then to pacify, or to make propitiation.³

In Proverbs 16:14 the word speaks of appeasing, or pacifying, an angry king, for example with a gift. This has to do with relations between men.

When it came to relations between God and men, the term in passages such as Leviticus 16 meant to *cover over*, or to *atone for sin*, by means of offerings or sacrifices.

Underlying all these offerings there is the conception that the persons offering are covered by that which is regarded as sufficient and satisfactory by Yahweh. (The purpose of the covering is stated in Lev 16:30 *to make atonement for, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord*.)⁴

Thus from the Old Testament we learn that sinful man had to deal with God, who was angry at his sinful acts. Yet, God Himself provided a way for contact. When the High Priest put the blood of a sacrifice on the Mercy Seat, that blood satisfied God—it propitiated, or appeased—the divine wrath. This then

permitted God to cleanse the people (16:30) and to sustain a relationship with them for another year (16:34).

To sum up: To make atonement for sin was to propitiate God, appeasing His anger at sin, which then permitted His love and mercy to flow unhindered. Atonement happened on the Mercy Seat.

The New Testament solution: The Cross

Three key New Testament terms

1. *Propitiation* (iJlasmov"). This noun we find in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10 only), revealing that God sent Jesus Christ Himself to be the propitiation for our sins. In the Old Testament, the appropriate sacrifice was a goat.

The apostle John describes Jesus Christ as *our Advocate with the Father* (1 John 2:1) and as *the propitiation for our sins* (1 John 2:2). Since we need an Advocate—a defense attorney before heaven's tribunal—it intimates we have a problem: a sin problem (1 John 1:8, 10).

Moreover, since God is light and in Him is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5), our standing before heaven is very shaky indeed, not to say humanly impossible. Nevertheless, we may have confidence, or full assurance because our defense attorney is also our propitiation, that is He turns away the wrath of God the Father, having satisfied it fully by His shed blood on the Cross.

Accordingly, one commentator says,

In the OT the place where the holy God met sinful man was at the mercy seat where the High Priest sprinkled the required blood. In the NT the cross becomes the place where God would meet man through the blood of Christ. Thus John could say that Christ is the propitiation, the satisfaction, for the sins of believers and also for the sins of unbelievers (1 Jn 2:2).⁵

2. *Make propitiation, or be merciful* (iJlavskomai), occurs only at Luke 18:13; Hebrews 2:17. These verses show that God Himself initiated the required sacrifice to satisfy His just claims against sinful man—a marvelous display of grace in action.

3. *Propitiation, mercy seat* (iJlasthvrion), which occurs only in Romans 3:25 and Hebrews 9:5 denoting the place where propitiation took place.

Focus on Romans 3:25

Whom God set forth to be a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed.

Remember the Old Testament background in Leviticus 16. Once a year, the High Priest offered sacrifices on the Mercy Seat for the sins of the whole nation. Each time he entered the Most Holy Place and offered the sacrifice, it was a recognition and reminder of obligation. They owed God the appropriate penalty or sacrifice for their sins.

The children of Israel were renewing an indebtedness, and each year on the day of

atonement they offered the blood in order that the note might be deferred, for it was impossible . . . that the blood of bulls and goats could finally take away sin [Hebrews 10:4].⁶

Now Paul teaches that God set forth Christ Himself *to be a propitiation*.⁷ Scripture uses the term in contexts where we find God's wrath against sin (cp. 1:18), denoting that God is righteous, not able to dismiss man's sin without adequate cause.

Until man's sin problem is resolved, two things are true:

1. First, man's sin stirs up God's wrath to judge the sinner because a holy God cannot "cut corners,"⁸ but only be satisfied with perfect righteousness. When man does not present perfect righteousness to God, God's displeasure surfaces.
2. Second, God's standards require that He *remain* wrathful toward sin until something happens to satisfy, or to appease, His broken standards. This is where propitiation appears. Propitiation speaks of what happens to satisfy God.

Now how does the idea of propitiation fit into this? According to Leviticus 16, the high priest entered the Holy of Holies with the blood of a goat once a year. Yom Kippur! He sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat where the Lord appeared in a cloud (16:2), and where apparently the two cherubim represented His righteousness and justice.

When the blood fell on the mercy seat, it made atonement for all the congregation of Israel (16:17). That is, the shed blood of the goat satisfied God's righteous and just requirements. To satisfy God is to propitiate God, leaving the Lord free to forgive and fellowship with His people.

In Romans 3:25, Paul builds on the Old Testament concept of a sacrifice that satisfies God's righteous demands. Specifically the term propitiation denotes a "propitiatory sacrifice,"⁹ or, a satisfactory sacrifice. Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the Cross was the means God chose to satisfy¹⁰ fully His righteous demands.

The Cross, in effect, was the ultimate mercy seat and Christ's shed blood (death) was the sacrifice that satisfied God. As a sacrificed animal in Israel's dispensation temporarily satisfied God's requirement for a payment for sin, so Christ's sacrifice once-and-for-all has forever satisfied the Father.

Note carefully that *by His blood* should be connected with *to be a propitiation* (not with *through faith*).¹¹ Paul does not say here that we are to put our faith in Christ's blood (though we believe that Christ shed His blood on our behalf). Rather we are to believe that Christ became a propitiation by shedding His blood.¹² What is the point?

Negatively the point is that the blood of Christ is not a mystical gimmick that one may concoct into a magical formula.

Like those who "plead the blood of Jesus" to scare off demons, witches, warlocks, and bogeymen. There is zero biblical support for pleading the blood of Christ in an attempt to make a difficult situation better. In addition, songwriters have distorted the biblical perspective with their artistic license such as the phrases "Fountain filled with blood." "Oh! Precious is the flow that makes me white as snow." "No other fount I know." "The cleansing wave."

Positively the point is that the blood of Christ speaks of the fantastic event when Christ died for the sins of the world, satisfying God the Father.

He made Him who knew no sin to be a sin-bearer for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).

But now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Hebrews 9:26).

[He] Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree (1 Peter 2:24).

Christ also suffered once for sins . . . being put to death in the flesh (1 Peter 3:18).

Accordingly, God purposed that His Son would be *the* satisfactory sacrifice. That work is done. It stands forever finished, propitiating God the Father.

Now note that God passed over the sins that were previously committed (Romans 3:25b).

This phrase alludes to the deferment of sin's obligation. It says when Christ died on the Cross, He gathered together all those years of deferred notes in the dispensation of Israel, and made an once-and-for-all payment for past sins, thus fully satisfying, or propitiating, God the Father's just claims. The Lord Jesus Christ, by offering up His blood as that which propitiated/satisfied a holy God, made a final and complete settlement for all of those past notes. Consequently, there was forgiveness of sins that are past,¹³ as well as present and future.

To round out matters note:

Hebrews 9:13-14 says that Christ offered *to God* a propitiation, or satisfying sacrifice.

Hebrews 9:22 adds that the specific thing Christ offered to the Father was *His own blood*.

And Romans 3:25 adds that though the place of propitiation in Old Testament times was the Mercy Seat, in the New Testament the place of propitiation is Jesus Christ's body nailed to a cross (Romans 3:25).

Hence it is not without cause that Paul magnificently celebrates the triumph that Christ obtained upon the cross, as if the cross, the symbol of ignominy, had been converted into a triumphal chariot. For he says, that he blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross: that "having spoiled principalities and powers he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:14, 15).¹⁴

Now because God is fully satisfied with the death of Jesus Christ, we should not ask people to try to do something to satisfy God.

This would mean trying to appease someone who is already appeased, which is totally unnecessary . . . our message to men today should not suggest in any way that they can please God by doing something, but only that they be satisfied with the sacrifice of Christ which completely satisfied the wrath of God.¹⁵

Conclusion

God be merciful to me a sinner (Luke 18:13).

The word translated *be merciful* is literally “be propitious.” That is, “God, be satisfied with me, rather than displeased.”

What does this man pray? “O Lord, I am a sinner deserving your wrath and judgment. You are a holy God and I fall short of your righteous and just standards.”

Moreover, he does not come to God offering good works as a basis for God’s propitious or satisfied attitude, or suppose that he is better than other men are. Nor does he try harder than other men to be good, or adhere to the erroneous notion that submission to Christ’s Lordship is a prerequisite to appropriating the benefits of Christ’s propitiatory work.

He comes as a man convicted of his sinfulness, mindful of his spiritually bankruptcy, realizing that for God to be propitious to him he must place his faith in the shed blood that alone satisfies or propitiates a holy God. His prayer shows that he did!

What was the result? Luke 18:14 says *this man went down to his house justified*. Why?—because he believed, was persuaded, that God is satisfied with the shedding of blood then required and thus free to deal with him according to mercy. This man, a publican or Roman tax collector, believed and prayed before the Cross.

Now after the Cross, the believer can rejoice that God is propitiated, which one receives personally by faith alone in Christ alone. To believe this is to enter the benefits of it.¹⁶

1 New Bible Dictionary [CD-ROM].

2 J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things which Become Sound Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), 94.

3 BDB.

4 Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Hebrew Lexicon* [CD-ROM].

5 Wycliffe Encycl.

6 Pentecost, 97.

7 Cranfield, *Romans*, 1:214. Bruce, *Romans*, takes the term to denote the “place where sins are blotted out,” i.e., the mercy seat (104-05). In addition, Arndt and Gingrich, *Greek Lexicon* [CD-ROM], give “place of propitiation” as an option (376).

8 McCalley, *Romans*, 75.

9 Cranfield 1:216-17.

10 Arndt and Gingrich, 376, give “that which expiates or propitiates,” conc. a ‘means of expiation, gift to procure expiation’ as the primary meaning.

11 Cranfield 1:210.

12 Regarding Christ's blood, see Rom. 5:9; Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; 2:13; Col. 1:20; Heb. 9:11ff; 10:19, 29; 13:12, 20; 1 Pet. 1:2, 19; 1 Jn. 1:76; 5:6; Rev. 1:5; 5:9; 7:14; 12:11; 13:12). Also Mt. 26:28=Mk. 14:24=Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25; 10:16. Also see Lev. 17:11; Kittel 1:174-75; Turner and Mantey, *The Gospel of John*, 390, who when commenting on John 19:34, *one of the soldier's with a spear pierced his side and straightway there came out blood and water*, they say: This is the language of metaphor, obviously the reference is not to Jesus' physical blood, but rather to the 'Life' which is presented by blood in both the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 17:14). See also Barnhouse 3:126-130 and Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John* (1883), 34-37.

13 Pentecost, 97.

14 John Calvin, *Romans* [CD-ROM].

15 Charles Ryrie, *Survey of Bible Doctrine* [CD-ROM].

16 Unger's New Bible Dict.

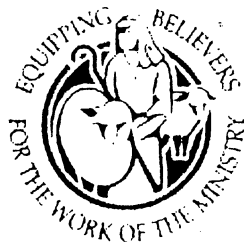
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pro·pi·ti·ate

THAYER'S

VINES

ROMANS 3

23 For all have ²⁴sinned, and come short of the glory¹⁹¹ of God;

24 Being justified freely¹⁹² by his grace¹⁹³ through the redemption¹⁹⁴ that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath ¹⁹⁵set forth to be a (propitiation¹⁹⁵) through faith in his blood, ¹⁹⁶to declare his righteousness for the remission¹⁹⁷ of sins¹⁹⁸ that are ¹⁹⁹past, through the forbearance²⁰⁰ of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time²⁰¹ his righteousness: that he might be just, ²⁰²and the justifier¹³⁴ of him which believeth¹⁹² in Jesus.

ἰλάσκομαι; (scr 2433); in class. Grk. the mid. of an act. ἰλάσκω (to render propitious, appease) never met with;

1. to render propitious to one's self, to appease, conciliate to one's self (fr. ἰλαος gracious, gentle); fr. Hom. down; mostly w. acc. of a pers., as θεόν, Ἀθήνην, etc. (τὸν θεὸν ἰλάσασθαι, Joseph. antt. 6, 6, 5); very rarely w. acc. of the thing, as τὴν ὀργήν, Plut. Cat. min. 61 (with which cf. ἐξιλιάσκεσθαι θυμὸν, Prov. xvi. 14 Sept.). In bibl. Grk. used passively, to become propitious, be placated or appeased;

2. ἰλάσθη, be gracious, be merciful, (in prof. anth. Διὸς and Dor. ἰλαθί, which the gram. regard as the pres. of an unused verb ἰλαμι, to be propitious; cf. Bittm. Ausf. Sp. ii. p. 206; Kühner § 343, i. p. 839; Passow [or L. and S., or Veitch] s. v. ἰλαμι, with dat. of the thing or the pers.: Lk. xviii. 13 (ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις, Ps. lxxviii. (lxxix.) 9; [lxxvii. (lxxviii.) 38]; τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, Ps. xxiv. (xxv.) 11; Διάσθη ὁ κύριος περὶ τῆς κακίας, Ex. xxxiii. 14 Alex.; ἰλασθήσεται κύρ. τῷ δούλῳ σου, 2 K. v. 18).

2. by an Alexandrian usage, to expiate, make propitiation for. (as ἐξιλιάσκεσθαι in the O. T.): τὰς ἁμαρτίας, Heb. ii. 17 (ἡμῶν τὰς ψυχάς, Philo, alleg. leg. 3, 61). [Cf. Kurtz, Com. on Heb. l.c.; W. 227 (213); Westcott, Epp. of S. Jn. p. 83 sq.]*

2434. ἰλασμός, -ός, ὁ, (ἰλάσκομαι); 1. an appeasing, propitiating, Vulg. propitiatio, (Plut. de sera num. vind. c. 17; plur. joined with καθαρμοί, Plut. Sol. 12; with gen. of the obj. τῶν θεῶν, Orph. Arg. 39; Plut. Fab. 18; θεῶν μὴν ἰλασμοῦ καὶ χαριστηρίων δεομένην, vit. Camill. 7 fin.; τοῦτοισι βασιλεῖν ἰλασμοῦ, of a priest offering an expia-

2435

ἰλαστήριος, -α, -ος, (ἰλάσκομαι, q. v.), relating to appeasing or expiating, having placating or expiating force,

4. μνημα ἰλαστήριον, a monument built to propitiate God, Joseph. antt. 16, 7, 1; ἰλαστήριος θάνατος, 4 Macc. xvii. 22; χεῖρας ἰκατηρίους, εἰ βούλει δὲ ἰλαστήριους, ἐκτείνας θεῷ, Niceph. in act. SS. ed. Mai, vol. v. p. 335, 17. Neut. τὸ ἰλαστήριον, as subst., a means of appeasing or expiating, a propitiation, (Germ. Versöhnungs- oder Sühnmittel); cf. W. 96 (91); [592 (551)].

So used of 1. the well-known cover of the ark of the covenant in the Holy of holies, which was sprinkled with the blood of the expiatory victim on the annual day of atonement (this rite signifying that the life of the people, the loss of which they had merited by their sins, was offered to God in the blood as the life of the victim, and that God by this ceremony was appeased and their sins were expiated); hence the lid of expiation, the propitiatory, Vulg. propitiatorium; Luth. Gnadenstuhl, [A. V. mercy-seat]: Heb. ix. 5 (Sept. Ex. xxv. 18 sqq.; Lev. xvi. 2, etc.; more fully ἰλαστήριον ἐπιθεμα, Ex. xxv. 17; xxxviii. (xxxvii.) 7 (6), for the Hebr. תרפף, fr. רפף to cover, sc. sins, i. e. to pardon). Theodoret, Theophyl., Oecum., Luther, Grotius, Tholuck, Wilke, Philippi, Umbreit, [Cremer (4te Aufl.)] and others give this meaning to the word also in Ro. iii. 25, viz. that Christ, besprinkled with his own blood, was truly that which the cover or 'mercy-seat' had been typically, i. e. the sign and pledge of expiation; but in opp. to this interpretation see Fritzsche, Meyer, Van Hengel, [Godet, Oltramare] and others ad loc.

5. an expiatory sacrifice; a piacular victim (Vulg. propitiatio) (Ro. iii. 25) (after the analogy of the words χαριστήρια sacrifices expressive of gratitude, thank-offerings, σωτήρια sacrifices for safety obtained. On the other hand, in Dion Chrys. or. 11, 121, p. 355 ed. Reiske, the reference is not to a sacrifice but to a monument, as the preceding words show: καταλείψω γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἀνάθημα κάλλιστον καὶ μέγιστον τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ καὶ ἐπιγράψω, ἰλαστήριον Ἀγαθῶν τῇ Ἰλιάδι). [See the full discussion of the word in Dr. Jas. Morison, Crit. Exposition of the Third Chap. of the Ep. to the Rom. pp. 281-303.]*

6. an expiatory sacrifice; a piacular victim (Vulg. propitiatio) (Ro. iii. 25) (after the analogy of the words χαριστήρια sacrifices expressive of gratitude, thank-offerings, σωτήρια sacrifices for safety obtained. On the other hand, in Dion Chrys. or. 11, 121, p. 355 ed. Reiske, the reference is not to a sacrifice but to a monument, as the preceding words show: καταλείψω γὰρ αὐτοὺς ἀνάθημα κάλλιστον καὶ μέγιστον τῇ Ἀθηνᾷ καὶ ἐπιγράψω, ἰλαστήριον Ἀγαθῶν τῇ Ἰλιάδι). [See the full discussion of the word in Dr. Jas. Morison, Crit. Exposition of the Third Chap. of the Ep. to the Rom. pp. 281-303.]*

pro·pi·ti·a·tion

STRONG'S

2433. ἰλάσκομαι hilaskómai, hil-as-kom-ahce; mid. from the same as 2436; to conciliate, i. e. (trans.) to atone for (sin), or (intrans.) be propitious:—be merciful, make reconciliation for.
2434. ἰλασμός hilasmós, hil-as-mos'; atonement, i. e. (concr.) an expiator:—propitiation.
2435. ἰλαστήριον hilastērion, hil-as-lay'-ree-on; neut. of a der. of 2433; an expiatory (place or thing), i. e. (concr.) an atoning victim, or (spec.) the lid of the Ark (in the Temple):—mercyseat, propitiation.

B. Nouns.

1. hilastērion (ἰλαστήριον, 2435), akin to A, is regarded as the neuter of an adjective signifying "propitiation." In the Sept. it is used adjectivally in connection with epithēma, "a cover," in Exod. 25:17 and 37:6, of the lid of the ark (see MERCY SEAT), but it is used as a noun (without epithēma), of locality, in Exod. 25:18, 19, 20, 21, 22; 31:7; 35:12; 37:7, 8, 9; Lev. 16:2, 13, 14, 15; Num. 7:89, and this is its use in Heb. 9:5.

Elsewhere in the NT it occurs in Rom. 3:25, where it is used of Christ Himself; the RV text and punctuation in this verse are important: "whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood." The phrase "by His blood" is to be taken in immediate connection with "propitiation." Christ, through His expiatory death, is the personal means by whom God shows the mercy of His justifying grace to the sinner who believes. His "blood" stands for the voluntary giving up of His life, by the shedding of His blood in expiatory sacrifice, under divine judgment righteously due to us as sinners, faith being the sole condition on man's part.

Note: "By metonymy, 'blood' is sometimes put for 'death,' inasmuch as, blood being essential to life, Lev. 17:11, when the blood is shed life is given up, that is, death takes place. The fundamental principle on which God deals with sinners is expressed in the words 'apart from shedding of blood,' i. e., unless a death takes place, there is no remission' of sins, Heb. 9:22.

"But whereas the essential of the type lay in the fact that blood was shed, the essential of the antitype lies in this, that the blood shed was that of Christ. Hence, in connection with Jewish sacrifices, 'the blood' is mentioned without reference to the victim from which it flowed, but in connection with the great antitypical sacrifice of the NT the words 'the blood' never stand alone; the One Who shed the blood is invariably specified, for it is the Person that gives value to the work; the saving efficacy of the Death depends entirely upon the fact that He Who died was the Son of God."

2. hilasmos (ἰλασμός, 2434), akin to hilastērion ("merciful, propitious"), signifies "an expiation a means whereby sin is covered and remitted." It is used in the NT of Christ Himself as "the propitiation," in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10, signifying that He Himself, through the expiatory sacrifice of His death, is the personal means by whom God shows mercy to the sinner who believes or Christ as the One thus provided. In the former passage He is described as "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." The italicized addition in the KJV, "the sins of," gives a wrong interpretation. What is indicated is that provision is made for the whole world, so that no one is, by divine predetermination, excluded from the scope of God's mercy; the efficacy of the "propitiation," however, is made actual for those who believe. In 4:10, the fact that God "sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins," is shown to be the great expression of God's love toward man, and the reason why Christians should love one another. In the Sept., Lev. 25:9; Num. 5:8; 1 Chron. 28:20; Ps. 130:4; Ezek. 44:27; Amos 8:14. ¶

24 Being justified freely¹⁴⁰² by his grace⁵⁴⁵ through the redemption⁴²⁹ that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth⁴³⁸ to be a propitiation²⁴³⁵ through faith in his blood,¹²⁹ to declare his righteousness for the remission³⁹²⁹ of sins²⁶⁵ that are ^{pp}past, through the forbearance⁴⁶³ of God;

I JN

2 My little children,⁵⁴⁴ these things I write¹¹²⁵ I unto you, that ye ^{nosb}sin²⁶⁴ not. And if any man ^{nosb}sin, we have an advocate³⁸⁷⁵ with the Father,³⁹² Jesus Christ⁵⁵⁷ the righteous.¹³⁴²

2 And he is the propitiation²⁴³⁴ for our sins⁴⁴⁰ and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.²⁸³⁹

I JN 4

7 Beloved, let us ^{psa}love²⁵ one another: for love²⁴ is of God; and every one that ^{psa}loveth is ^{psa}born¹⁶⁸⁹ of God, and knoweth God.

8 He that loveth not ^{nos}knoweth not God; for God is love.

9 In this was manifested⁵¹¹⁹ the love of God toward us, because that God ^{ps}sent his only begotten³⁴⁹ Son⁵²⁰⁷ into the world, that we might ^{nosb}live²¹⁹⁸ through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent⁶⁴⁹ his Son to be the propitiation²⁴³⁴ for our sins.²⁶⁶

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to ^{psa}love one another.

HEB 9

3 And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all,³⁹

4 Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant ^{psa}overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna,³¹³¹ and Aaron's rod that ^{psa}budded, and the tables of the covenant;¹²⁴²

5 And over it the cherubim⁵⁵⁰² of glory¹³⁹¹ shadowing the mercy seat,²⁴³⁵ of which we cannot now ^{psa}speak particularly.²⁵⁹⁶

HEB. 2

17 Wherefore in all things it ^{psa}behoved¹⁷⁸⁴ him to be made ^{psa}like unto his brethren,³⁷⁸⁴ that he might ^{nosb}be a merciful and faithful⁴¹⁰³ high priest⁷⁴⁹ in things pertaining to God, to ^{psa}make reconciliation for²⁴³³ the sins²⁶⁶ of the people.²⁹⁹² 24 34

EX 37

6 And he made the mercy seat⁵⁷⁷ of pure gold: two cubits and a half was the length thereof, and one cubit and a half the the breadth thereof.

ap-pease (ə pēz'), v.t., -peased, -peas-ing. 1. To satisfy (an appetite or desire): His hunger was appeased by a good dinner. 2. To make calm or quiet; pacify: He tried to appease his father's anger by promising to obey. 3. To give in to the demands of: Chamberlain appeased Hitler at Munich. [Old French *appaier* < a- + *paiz* peace < Latin *pax, pācis*] —ap-peas'er, n. —ap-peas'ing-ly, adv.

—Syn. 2. Appease, pacify mean to make calm. Appease means either to quell excitement or to calm a person who is excited or upset, and usually making demands, by pleasing and contenting: When he left school to go to work, he had to appease his father. Pacify means to quiet people or things that are quarreling or fighting among themselves or against some condition, by making peace though not necessarily by eliminating the cause of the disturbance: He pacified the angry mob. 3. conciliate, placate, propitiate.

SACRIFICE, v.t. sac'rifice. [L. sacrifico; sacer, sacred, and facio, to make.] 1. To offer to God in homage or worship, by killing and consuming, as victims on an altar; to immolate, either as an atonement for sin, or to procure favor, or to express thankfulness; as, to sacrifice an ox or a lamb. 2Sam. 6. 2. To destroy, surrender or suffer to be lost for the sake of obtaining something; as, to sacrifice the peace of the church to a title vain curiosity. We should never sacrifice health to pleasure, nor integrity to fame. 3. To devote with loss.

condemn'd to sacrifice his childish years to babbling ignorance and to empty years. 4. To destroy; to kill.

SACRIFICE, v.i. To make offerings to God by the slaughter and burning of victims, or of some part of them. Ex. 3.

SACRIFICE, n. [L. sacrificium.] 1. An offering made to God by killing and burning some animal upon an altar, as a acknowledgment of his power and providence, or to make atonement for sin, appease his wrath or conciliate his favor, or to express thankfulness for his benefits. Sacrifices have been common to most nations, and have been offered to false gods, as well as by the Israelites to Jehovah. A sacrifice differs from an oblation; the latter being an offering of a thing entire or without change, as tithes or first fruits; whereas sacrifice implies a destruction or killing, as of a beast. Sacrifices are expiatory, impetratory, and eucharistical; that is, atoning for sin, seeking favor, or expressing thanks. Human sacrifices, the killing and offering of human beings to deities, have been practiced by some barbarous nations. 2. The thing offered to God, or immolated by an act of religion. My life though preserv'st, my life thy sacrifice shall be. 3. Destruction, surrender or loss made or incurred for gaining some object, or for obliging another; as the sacrifice of interest to pleasure, or of pleasure to interest. 4. Any thing destroyed.

placate (plā'kāt, plak'āt), v.t. -cat-ed, -cat-ing. to soothe or satisfy the anger of; make peaceful; pacify; conciliate: A victory so complete . . . failed to placate the indignant young actress (Joseph Knight). [Latin *placāre* (with English -ate) is pleasing, soothe] —pla'cat'er, n. —pla'cat-ing-ly, adv. —Syn. appease, propitiate.

placation (plā'kā'shən), n. the act of placating; an appeasing; pacifying. —Syn. conciliation, propitiation. CONCILIATE, v.t. [L. To draw or bring together, to unite; Gr. To call. The primary sense of the root is to strain, stretch,, drive or draw. Calling is a straining or driving of voice. See Class Gl. No. 32. 36. 48. 49. And See Council.]

1. To lead or draw to, by moral influence or power; to win, gain or engage, as the affections, favor or good will; as, politeness and hospitality conciliate affection. 2. To reconcile, or bring to a state of friendship, as persons at variance. We say, an attempt conciliate the contending parties.

EXPIA'TION, n. [L. expiatio.] The act of atoning for a crime; the act of making satisfaction for an offense, by which the guilt is done away, and the obligation of the offended person to punish the crime is canceled; atonement; satisfaction. Among pagans and Jews, expiation was made chiefly by sacrifices, or washings and purification. Among christians, expiation for the sins of men is usually considered as made only by the obedience and sufferings of Christ, has been made to

1. The means by which atonement for crimes is made; atonement; as sacrifices and purification among heathens, and the obedience and death of Christ among christians. 2. Among ancient heathens, an act by which the threats of prodigies were averted.

PROPI'TIATE, v.t. [L. propitio; pio. Eng. pity.] To conciliate; to appease one offended and render him favorable; to make propitious.

Let fierce Achilles, dreadful in his rage,

The god propitiate and the pest assuage.

PROPI'TIATION, n. propisia'shon. 1. The act of appeasing wrath and conciliating the favor of an offended person; the act of making propitious. 2. In theology, the atonement or atoning sacrifice offered to God to assuage his wrath and render him propitious to sinners. Christ is the propitiation for the sins of men. Rom.3. 1 John 2.

PROPI'TIOUS, a. [L. propitius.] Favorable; kind; applied to men. 1. Disposed to be gracious or merciful; ready to forgive sins and bestow blessings; applied to God. 2. Favorable; as a propitious season.

ATO'NING, ppr. 1. Reconciling, Obs. 2. Making amends, or satisfaction.