

“What must I do to be forgiven of my sins?” We see this question answered in the New Testament in Acts 2:38 by the Apostle Peter. When Peter preached to the crowd on the day of Pentecost, they believed the gospel and were convicted of their sin. They asked the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). Peter’s answer was quite different than what you hear in most religious groups today. He didn’t tell them to say a prayer or that they were already saved because of the faith they displayed in the gospel. He answered by giving them this command, which when believed and obeyed, God grants us forgiveness. Peter said, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). They needed to repent, which means to have a change of mind about themselves and who they wanted to rule their lives. They needed to submit to Christ as their Lord and Master instead of themselves. They also needed to be baptized. It is at this point in which God, in His infinite mercy and grace, removes our sin because it is at this point in which we are by faith united with Jesus in His death (where we contact His blood) and resurrection; being raised into new life (see Romans 6:1-7 and Colossians 2:9-14).

There were THREE THOUSAND people who did just these things in response to Peter. Acts 2:41 says, “those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.” When these people received the word of God and believed it, they obeyed it by repenting (turning from their sins) and by being baptized for the forgiveness and removal of their sins. At this point, they were added by God to His one church.

If you believe and obey this gospel, it can give you freedom from your sin. Will you do so today?

**What was the purpose
of animal sacrifice?**

**Why did God create
man?**

What does God want from me?

Why did Jesus have to die?



Interested in further study?

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God’s Amazing Plan of Redemption



***The Big Picture of
the Bible***

**God Has an
AMAZING Plan
for You!**

The Bible is truly an amazing book. Actually, it is a library of 66 books. The books were written by at least 40 different authors over a period of about 1500 years. Yet, it is remarkable that woven throughout the times and people is one unified theme; God's amazing plan of redemption for mankind. The Bible shows us how the God of heaven made it possible for us to be in fellowship with Him!

God reveals to us in His word what He desires of us so we can be in a relationship with Him. He tells us that He desires us to be holy, just as He is holy (Leviticus 19:2). God is perfect in every way. He is pure and righteous and good. He is beyond us in every way. "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). God is 100% free from any moral evil, and He commands us to be just like Him. Is this possible?

There is a problem: we sin. We learn in the Bible that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). You and I have all disobeyed God at some point in our lives. When we break the law of God, this causes a separation between us and God so we are not able to be in fellowship with Him. Isaiah 59:2 states "your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God." Because God is holy, He cannot have fellowship with us because of our sin. He needs to separate Himself from us. The scriptures refer to this separation from God as spiritual death



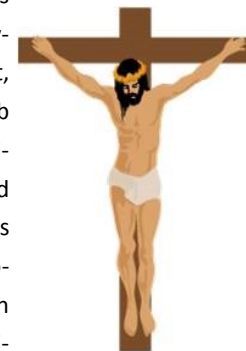
(Ephesians 2:1). Paul states in Romans 6:23, "The wages of sin is death." God takes sin very seriously. In the Old Testament God punished sin and disobedience. During the time of Noah, He killed every living thing on earth except for Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark because of the sin mankind was corrupted with. He destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their immorality. He is a God of justice. He punishes sin, and we are all deserving of His punishment and wrath because of our sin.

But what can we do? How can this sentence of death disappear so we may once again be in fellowship with God? Out of His grace and mercy, He gave us a way to be forgiven of our sins.

In the Old Testament God instituted animal sacrifice so His people could be forgiven. He allowed an innocent animal (that could not sin) to receive the punishment of the guilty sinner. Because of the shedding of the animal's blood (its life-Lev 17:11) the sinner was able to be forgiven of his sins. The animal's life took the place of the sinner's life. God states clearly that "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Hebrews 9:22). This is the only way that God says sin can be forgiven. God instituted animal sacrifice by His mercy and love towards His people so the punishment for sin could be taken care of and the sinner could be cleansed. This system of sacrifice continued for over a thousand years. Millions of animals were killed for the sins of the people.

Does this mean that we need to kill animals for sins to be forgiven? No, because the Old Testament scriptures prophesied of a Messiah that would come, live a sinless life, and offer Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind (Isaiah 53). This happened just as prophesied! Seven hundred years after this prophecy was made, Jesus Christ, the Son of God came to this earth. Jesus' coming was announced by John the Baptist, His prophesied forerunner. John the Baptist looked up one day and saw

Jesus coming to him, and he made an amazing proclamation about Jesus, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). To understand what John meant by this statement about Christ, we need to have an understanding of the sacrifices in the Old Testament. What was John saying here? He was saying in this powerful statement, "Here is the only sacrificial lamb which God will accept as a substitute for the sinner (you and me)." Jesus, God's lamb who was without sin or blemish, submitted to an excruciating death on the cross so we could be justified and brought into peace with God by His blood (1 Peter 1:18-20; Ephesians 1:7).



Then, three days after His death, the most amazing thing happened. Jesus was raised from His tomb. He defeated sin and the death that it causes. This happened to prove all of His claims and to show that the hand of God was in what Jesus had done for us. This proves that Jesus is indeed the Lamb of God. It proves that He is the Son of God, and it proves that He will be our judge (Acts 17:31). After He was resurrected, He was seen by hundreds of people according to 1 Corinthians 15. The New Testament gives us eyewitness testimony to these events, and shows how lives were changed by it. This is the gospel, the good news for us all! After His resurrection, this is the very gospel that Jesus commanded His disciples to go into all the world to preach (Mark 16:15). He wants everyone to be given the opportunity to hear this message and to choose whether to accept it and obey it or to reject it.

What is your response to this amazing message? Will you obey the gospel of Jesus Christ? If you see your need to be forgiven of your sin that is separating you from the Holy God, you may be asking this question: