

**THE PHILOSOPHY  
OF THE  
ATONEMENT**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649670321

The Philosophy of the Atonement by Robert Paterson

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**ROBERT PATERSON**

**THE PHILOSOPHY  
OF THE  
ATONEMENT**



THE PHILOSOPHY  
OF  
THE ATONEMENT.

BY  
REV. ROBERT PATERSON,  
BLANTYRE,  
AUTHOR OF "VICARIOUS SACRIFICE," ETC.

GLASGOW:  
DAVID BRYCE AND SON.  
1892.

12-20-37 J.A.

10-28-37

## PREFACE.

THESE Discussions were written originally for the columns of a religious periodical. By arrangement a certain amount of space was to be allowed for each paper. It was to be as a first requisite short, and secondarily popular in form and style. This accounts for the method and uniform length of the papers numbered in the book. The Discussion, however, took a wider sweep, and extended to dimensions far beyond what was at first contemplated, and so, for this reason in particular, it was not published periodically. In issuing it as a book there did not seem to be any special call for recasting it or for changing in any way its literary form. Probably but for the circumstance of having been originally bound and confined with respect to space the work might have turned out to be double the size, and without any real gain as to its substance.

The book is thus in no sense a Systematic Treatise; but for popular purposes, and considering the end in view, it has advantages, I am inclined to think, which a more formal and systematic treatment could hardly possess. It was a discussion that was desiderated—a discussion touching upon

underlying postulates, too much ignored in popular discourse, as well as on essential things all round and round about, up and down, and going far within towards the very heart of all reality. Thus I regarded myself as having greater freedom with respect to topics, form and style, than the systematic volume is thought to allow. From my experience in dealing with such a subject it is not enough, unless for the thoroughly initiated, to make a bald and severely logical statement once for all. It is necessary to approach it from many sides, adding here a little and there a little, here more and there more, re-stating and developing the same fundamental idea, and meeting the same objection, from this point of view and from that, now in one connection and now in another, and thereby familiarizing the mind with the essential aspects of the case in its manifold bearings. And hence in the present work the intentional repetitions, in varied form, to which a free discussion so admirably lends itself, and which, it is hoped and believed, will not be offensive even to the more fastidious reader.

As to the substance of the book I have nothing to add. Only if thereby I could give it emphasis I would repeat that the Atonement as represented by the inspired writers is a rational conception, and that it is possible for us in this nineteenth century to see it as they saw it, and as with their eyes. It involves the Trinity-in-Unity, the Triplicity of true Personality in the Godhead. Philosophically this must be determined, ultimately, to be the only rational idea of God. If the Unitarian thinks that the idea of a unipersonal is more rational than that

of a tripersonal God he is mistaken. If he thinks that on the unipersonal hypothesis he can make out a rational conception of the eternal as a personal being he is more mistaken still. Before the enlightened pantheist he could not stand for a moment. Before an intelligent antagonist of the critical philosophy he could not hold his ground. There is going to be, I believe, a new school of philosophy, and it will hold that our Lord Jesus Christ is a greater teacher than all the schools. It will found upon God as essentially tripersonal. It will be demonstrated that the great propitiation could not possibly be realized if there were not in God plurality of genuine personality. With respect to that propitiation itself it will become more and more apparent that the philosophy of the case resolves itself ultimately into this principle—THAT THE THREE-ONE PERSONAL GOD MAY DO ONE THING IN ORDER TO DO ANOTHER.

I have but further to say that the work discusses the leading objections to the Atonement as a vicarious sacrifice and satisfaction to God. It contends that Christ in our stead bore, to the extent which public justice demanded, or which God as the Great Moral Magistrate demanded, the penal consequences of our sins. Representatives of the principal theories are brought forward and criticized: the true idea is set off to advantage as on the background of the false: and the Biblical view of Christ as the Divine-human Redeemer and the propitiation for the sins of the world maintained. On reading part of the proof-sheets, a brother minister said that "The work should rather be called *The Philosophy of the Atonement*."



*ment.*" While it may not be that in any formal manner, yet I cannot but think that the materials for the philosophy of the case are presented to the competent reader. Consciously, I have evaded no question by falling back upon mystery or "upon the impotence of human reason," and so far as known to myself there is not a single difficulty specifically involved "which is not either solved or provided with a key for its solution in the book."

BELMONT, BLANTYRE,  
1st October, 1892.

*P.S.*—By an oversight the name of the distinguished son and translator *Charles*, instead of that of the distinguished father and author *Lewis*, is given, p. 43.

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
I. A Divine Person must become Incarnate, . . . . .	1
II. The Divine Humiliation involved, . . . . .	7
III. The Divine Nature not "Impossible," . . . . .	16
IV. Absolute Justice may be Modified, . . . . .	22
V. Compensation not Possible, . . . . .	29
VI. God as a Public Personage, . . . . .	36
VII. Love equally as Justice demands it, . . . . .	43
VIII. God's Idea of the Befitting alone Absolute, . . . . .	49
IX. Merit in Christ, . . . . .	56
X. Not the Reconciling of God to Men, . . . . .	64
XI. Christ's Pre-Incarnate Relations, . . . . .	71
XII. Not the Bearing of the Absolute Penalty, . . . . .	79
XIII. Not Suretyship but Satisfaction, . . . . .	87
XIV. The Difficulty of Pardon, . . . . .	93
XV. Anti-Penal Objections, . . . . .	100
XVI. Anti-Penal Objections, . . . . .	106
XVII. Anti-Penal Objections, . . . . .	111
XVIII. Anti-Penal Objections, . . . . .	117
XIX. Peculiarity of God's and Christ's Nature, . . . . .	122

	PAGE
XX. Anti-Penal Objections, . . . . .	128
XXI. Anti-Penalist's Theory Criticized, . . . . .	133
XXII. Anti-Penalist's Theory Criticized, . . . . .	138
XXIII. Anti-Penalist's Theory Criticized, . . . . .	144
XXIV. Anti-Penalist's Theory Criticized, . . . . .	150
XXV. Anti-Penalist's Theory Criticized, . . . . .	156
XXVI. Anti-Penalist's Theory Criticized, . . . . .	162
XXVII. The Poetic Conception, . . . . .	168
XXVIII. The Moral Theory, . . . . .	175
XXIX. The Moral Theory, . . . . .	181
XXX. The Moral Theory, . . . . .	186
XXXI. The Moral Theory, . . . . .	192
XXXII. The Uniformitarian Gospel, . . . . .	198
XXXIII. The Biblical Theory, . . . . .	204
XXXIV. The Value of Christ's Blood, . . . . .	211