

# Righteousness by Faith

**Key Verses:** *“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.”*  
—Romans 3:24,25

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Romans 3:21-31*

## IN OUR CONSIDERATION

of this lesson from Romans chapter 3, we first note verse 23, in which Paul states, “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Thus, all are in need of a Redeemer. Summarizing our Key Verses, they declare that redemption has been provided by God’s grace through Christ Jesus. Those who have full faith in his blood are “justified,” or counted righteous in God’s sight, because Jesus was the “propitiation,” or satisfaction, for Adamic sin. God, the righteous judge, has declared that his Son was fully perfect, which has qualified him to accomplish the “remission of sins.”

The “forbearance of God,” also spoken of in our Key Verses, has been long and merciful toward the fallen human race. Yet, the exercise of his mercy and grace in providing a Redeemer has not been done in violation of his attribute of justice. Indeed, God cannot violate his own laws. In the following verse, Paul asserts that God

is not only “just,” but also the “justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”—Rom. 3:26

For those whom God has justified, the “enmity” which once existed has been removed by virtue of the blood of the cross of Christ. (Eph. 2:16) The Apostles Paul and Peter testify with regard to this work of Jesus, “In that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.” “Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that he might bring us to God.”—Rom. 6:10; I Pet. 3:18, *New American Standard Bible*

The word “propitiation” is a translation of the Greek word *hilasterion*, and signifies propitiatory, or place of satisfaction. The same Greek word is translated “mercy seat” in Hebrews 9:5. In Israel’s Tabernacle arrangement, the blood of their Atonement Day sacrifices was sprinkled on top of, and in front of, the mercy seat in the Most Holy. This was, in a literal sense, the place of satisfaction for Israel’s sins. The mercy seat was the solid gold cover of the ark of the covenant, where God’s symbolic presence was shown. Thus was indicated the fact that atonement, or satisfaction for sin, was properly made to God himself.—Exod. 37:1-9; Lev. 16:14

These arrangements were types and shadows. Only Jesus’ blood could truly be the basis for the forgiveness of sins. He served a “greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands,” and “obtained eternal redemption.” He “offered himself without spot to God,” so that we could be cleansed from “dead works, to serve the living God.”—Heb. 9:11-14

Referring again to our Key Verses, the phrase, “through faith in his blood,” emphasizes the fact that redemption and the resulting propitiation of sins is based upon the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. He was sinless, and not worthy of death, yet he laid down his life voluntarily so that mankind might be made free from Adamic condemnation. Truly we can echo Paul’s words, “By grace are ye saved through faith; ... it is the gift of God.”—Eph. 2:8 ■