

THE SIN OFFERING

Scriptures: Leviticus 4:1-35; 5:1-13; Numbers 15:22-31; Deuteronomy 15:5-14, the Hebrew word – “Hattath” – stands for sin-offering.

I. We now leave the “sweet savor” sacrifices and deal with open violation by man of god’s nature and government.

- A. The sin offering is not to be despised even if it is not a sweet savor type – for it is still “**most holy.**”
 - 1. It was not considered a “**free-will**” offering, voluntarily offered – it was prescribed by Law.
 - 2. Not the delight of God – for it spoke of man’s rebellion.
 - 3. Not an expression of man’s love – but required because of a lack of love expressed in disobedience.
 - 4. It grows out of the necessity imposed by God’s holiness and government by law.
- B. Difference between the sin-offering and the trespass-offering is difficult for many to understand – but remember these simple facts and the distinction should become clear.
 - 1. Generally the sin-offering deals with the first five commandments and the trespass-offering deals with the last five.
 - 2. The sin-offering views sin as an insult against Divine nature and the trespass-offering as an insult against Divine government.
 - 3. The sin-offering involves sins as they wrong God; but the trespass-offering involves sins that injure man.
 - 4. Atonement for the wrong done is central to both – as seen in the use of the blood.
 - 5. It seems that both are offered to regain fellowship with God and man.
 - a. Which assumes that the sin committed broke the bonds of friendship and fellowship.
 - b. Under the assumption that the fellowship has been broken, we can understand why the burnt, meal and peace offerings are prohibited to the offender until the appropriate sin or trespass offering has been offered – Leviticus 22:2.
 - c. This is the reason the peace-offering is called the offering of completion – Leviticus 3:1-17.
- C. Old Testament scholars have different views as to the difference between the sin and the trespass offerings.
 - 1. Edersheim says the sin-offering atones for the person that sins; but the trespass-offering atone for the sin itself restitution.
 - a. He points out that the sin-offering was offered even on festive occasions – but never the trespass-offering.
 - b. Trespass-offering were thus seen as righting the wrong in as far as possible and was regarded as ransom for special wrong in as far as possible and was regarded as ransom for special wrong done to one’s neighbor.
 - c. He views the sin offering as toward God, and the trespass offering as being toward man.
 - 2. Haldeman more simply distinguishes the two this way:
 - a. The sin-offering deals with the nature of sin (**in other words, disobedience to God or His representatives – Moses, the priests, or parents**).
 - b. The trespass-offering deals with the sins (**specific**) of nature.

3. Kellogg points out that the difference is not in atonement – which is central and common to each sacrifice.

- a. Therefore the sin offering regards atonement as an expiration of guilt and relieves all penal judgments of God.
- b. And the trespass offering regards atonement under the aspect of satisfaction and restitution for the wrong done, and thus relieve the civil claims of man.

D. In either case, God breaks fellowship with the man who commits the wrong.

1. Whether wittingly or not – whether in ignorance of with a “**high hand.**”
2. Such separation of God from the sinner is a necessary consequence of God’s on Holiness.
3. And such separation is the most terrible consequence and most awful punishment of the sinner.

E. Difference between atonement in the sin and trespass offerings and in the burnt offerings and peace offerings.

1. Atonement is central for the sin and trespass, but marginal in the burnt and peace offerings.
2. Burnt and peace offerings provided atonement for those **IN** fellowship with God, the sin and trespass were for those **OUT** of fellowship
 - a. The burnt and peace sacrifices deals with moral and spiritual weakness and social contamination resulting in ceremonial uncleanness.
 - b. They deal perhaps more with what we are than with what we do.
3. Sin and trespass offerings deal with individual acts of an overt nature – specific wrongs.
4. Because sin is more than a defect of nature – it is an action of disobedience to the will of God as revealed in Law.
 - a. It is not the result of a “**built-in**” weakness in man.
 - b. It is either done because of his ignorance and waywardness both of which are voluntary actions – Read Hebrews 8:2 where the “**ignorant and the erring**” are contemplated.

II. There is a difference in the attitude of the sinner and his possibility of forgiveness seen in the sin-offering.

A. The willful, stubborn “**high handed**” sinner was deprived atonement.

1. Such caused him to be “**cut off from the people**” as the minimum penalty that could be imposed.
2. Or to be stoned to death as the maximum punishment.
3. Loss of fellowship with God and Israel understood in both cases.

B. Hebrews 10:28 indicates that those of a haughty spirit, who defy God’s rule, who “**set at nothing (zero)**” His Law “**died at the mouth of two or three witnesses**” *Deuteronomy 1:39; 17:6,7 Leviticus 24:14.*

1. Even if he is a friend “**who is as your own soul**”, he is not to be pitied, spared, or concealed – Deuteronomy 13:9.
2. The reason is to eliminate such wickedness from Israel – Deuteronomy 13:11.

C. Sins for which there was no provision made for sacrifice were:

1. Murder, blasphemy, adultery, idolatry, and so on.
2. The reasons are mazy and sufficient for the Law of Moses.

- a. To emphasize to Israel's conscience the aggravated wickedness of such crimes against God and man.
- b. To attenuate the commission of such crimes.
- c. To develop in Israel a sense of need for a perfect sacrifice that would atone for all sins – not just some!

D. If one ever committed such sins and was ever restored to God's fellowship, it was because of:

- 1. His deep penitence – which involves his turning away from such.
- 2. His abhorrence of wrongs he has perpetuated – which involves his own agreement with God's judgments against his sins.
- 3. And because of his expression of love and devotion to God.
- 4. Psalm 51 would be a good example of all these.

E. Yet sins of ignorance, rashness, stupidity, weakness, and waywardness that did not defy God's government were covered by the sin-offering.

- 1. Even if committed in ignorance, they were still sins and the man **"is guilty"** – Leviticus 4:2; 13-14; 22-23; and 27.
- 2. While ignorance, weakness or rashness may mitigate or palliate the guilt – the sin is not thereby nullified.
 - a. Leviticus 4:2 begins with **"unwitting sin"**, yet demands a sacrifice when it is known.
 - b. When it is not known, that was covered in the sacrifice of the great Day of Atonement.

1) No sin was forgiven without its appropriate sacrifice.

2) Hebrews 9:22 states that **"according to the Law ...without the shedding of blood there is no remission."**

C. On the Day of Atonement every Jew was to "afflict himself and mourn" over all the sins he committed.

1) Known or unknown atoned for or unatoned for – Leviticus 16:30-31.

2) For **"all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, even all their sins"** were symbolically laid on the head of the goat – Leviticus 16:21.

3. The ignorance of the heathen may diminish the degree of their guilt, and they may be beaten with few stripes (Luke 12:47-48), yet their ignorance doesn't cancel their guilt – Romans 1:18-32.

4. The Christian today has an **"abiding"** sacrifice, or a remaining sacrifice – Hebrews 10:26.

- a. And therefore, does not have to obtain a new sacrifice for his next sin – as did the Jew.
- b. As far as offering sacrifices for sin, the Christian has been **"forever perfected"** – Hebrews 10:14 – in Christ.