

Leviticus 4:1-12 –The Offering for Sin

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The **burnt offering** showed a total dedication to God and was the basis for the **thanksgiving** and **fellowship** offerings. (If there were not burnt offering, there would be no thanksgiving or fellowship offering.)

Now if man lived perfectly and enjoyed those 3 blessings, it would have been enough. But man often failed to live up to God's righteous standards, so when man sinned, he had to make sacrifices to placate God's anger. You will hear about this offering for sin today.

I will encourage you to read through the whole chapter, but you will see the main point of the sin offering in the first 12 verses. You will see how **the priest** made the sin offering for himself. The remaining verses show how the same offering was made for the whole **congregation**, the **leaders**, and the **common man**.

Our headings are:

The Nature of the sin offering

The Method of the sin offering

The Purpose of the Sin Offering

Our goals are: That you will make it a daily habit to confess your failings before the Lord so your relationship can be clean and pure and that God can use you to advance his cause in the world.

The Nature of the sin offering

1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: '**If a person sins unintentionally against** any of the commandments of the LORD in anything which ought not to be done, and does any of them, 3 '**if the anointed priest sins, bringing guilt on the people, then let him offer to the LORD for his sin which he has sinned a young bull without blemish as a sin offering.** 4 'He shall bring the bull to the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD, **lay his hand on the bull's head,** and **kill the bull** before the LORD. 5 'Then the anointed priest shall take some of the bull's blood and bring it to the tabernacle of meeting. 6 'The priest shall dip his finger in the blood and **sprinkle some of the blood seven times** before the LORD, in front of the veil of the sanctuary. 7 'And the priest shall **put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense** before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of meeting; and he shall **pour the remaining blood of the bull at the base of the altar of the burnt offering,** which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 8 'He shall **take from it all the fat of the bull as the sin offering.** The fat that covers the entrails and all the fat which is on the entrails, 9 'the **two kidneys and the fat** that is on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe attached to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove, 10 'as it was taken from the bull of the sacrifice of the peace offering; and the priest shall burn them on the altar of the burnt offering. 11 'But the **bull's hide and all its flesh, with its head and legs, its entrails and offal** — 12 'the whole bull he shall **carry outside the camp to a clean place, where the ashes are poured out,** and burn it on wood with fire; where the ashes are poured out **it shall be burned.**

1. The sin offering was a non-sweet aroma offering.

The thanksgiving and fellowship offerings were sweet aromas, but the **sin offering dealt with justice.**

2. The sin offering was a compulsory offering.

It was made for all: man, woman, boy, girl, leaders, citizens, and priests. It was not a freewill (optional) offering.

3. The language of our translations seems to suggest the sin offering was simply for unintentional sins, but this is not an exact translation; the word means much more.

It means to sin by mistake, ignorance, mishap, oversight, or forgetting to do something you should.

The most notable characteristic of the sin offering is it was **generally for sins that were public in nature.**

I know when we think of the narrow meaning of "sin," we mean "missing the mark," or "failing to reach God's standards," but **"sin" is used here in a general sense.**...where "sin" could mean both "failing to meet God's standards," and "doing something you shouldn't. So it means **sin AND trespass.**

4. Goats, sheep, and bulls were the common sacrifices of the sin offerings.

In some cases of extreme poverty, the offerer could bring pigeons, doves, or fine flour.

5. The general rule was: The higher position, greater the offering.

6. Lessons:

a. God tells you how to worship him. This is the regulative principle of worship. God did not leave it to your creative imagination.

b. Thank God for the regulative principle of worship as you would not know how to worship him and please him.

c. No sin must be ignored. God never condones sin, even of the greatest Christian. He condemns the smallest sin.

The Method of the sin offering

1. There were 4 different types of sin offerings: from the priests, the congregation, the leaders, and the ordinary person.

a. The Priest's sin offering:

The priests brought a perfect young bull, the largest sacrifice God required. (Higher position, greater the sacrifice!)

He brought the offering to the door of the tabernacle, lay his hands on its head... and killed it.

He took some of the blood into the tabernacle, dipped his finger in it, and sprinkled it 7X in front of the veil of the Holiest Place.

He put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of incense before the Holiest Place before the Lord.

He poured the remaining blood on the base of the main altar outside of the tabernacle.

He took the 2 kidneys (the seat of affection) and fat (a sweet aroma) and burned them to God.

He burned the rest of the animal outside of the city. None of this sacrifice was eaten, unless it was offered for minor sins.

b. The congregation's sin offering:

Upon recognizing a congregation's sin, the priest would take a young bull and do to it as was done for the priest's sin offering, and the elders would lay hands on the head of the bull and kill it. Note the lessening of the sacrifice: The whole congregation brought 1 young bull.

c. The leader's sin offering.

Upon recognizing his sin, a civil ruler would bring a perfect young goat as an offering for his sin, lay his hand on its head and kill it. So there was another lessening of the requirements.

The priest would take the blood and put some blood on the horns of the outside altar of sacrifice and pour the rest of the blood on the base of the altar. The other prescriptions were the same as the other sin offerings.

d. The ordinary person's sin offering.

Upon recognizing a sin, a guilty person would bring a young female goat, lay his hands on its head and kill it. (So the animals became even smaller.)

The priest would take the blood and put some on the horns of the outside altar of sacrifice and pour the rest on the blood on the base of the altar. The fat was burned as before, as a pleasant offering. But the kidneys were not required.

2. All the offal, skin, and other waste from all the animals were taken outside of the city and burned.

3. You can imagine the blood and the gore that was visible...and what it smelled like a few day later.

This is why there was so much incense. It reminded the offerer his sins were a stench in God's nostrils.

4. The offerer would confess his sins as part of his sacrifice (and be forgiven), so it was more than a ritual.

5. Lesson:

a. All men must confess their sins before God. This is like laying your hands on Jesus, your sacrifice.

b. The higher the position, the worse the sin! If you are a father who steals, your sin is worse than that of a little child who steals. **God will demand more of our civil leaders than of ordinary citizens.**

c. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. God could not wish away sins as some religions teach. Death had to come.

The Purpose of the Sin Offering

1. The sin offering was made to be like a blanket, covering the offerer from God's judgment for his failure to live up to the family name.

The technical word is that **the sin offering expiated man's sins**. Instead of the punishment of sins being put on the sinner, it was put on the sacrifice instead and man was protected from God's judgment!

2. But did the animal offering really expiate sins?

No. The blood of cows, sheep, and goats could not wash away sin. Rather, the offerer had to have in mind the work of the coming Savior who would be the “animal” who would take away the sins of the world.

3. How can we prove Jesus was the one who covered the offerer sins and not the animals that were offered?

a. The Apostle Paul said Christ became sin for you. He meant Jesus became that sin “offering” for you! 2Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

b. When Jesus was before Pilate he was silent, not answering any of the charges leveled against him.

He did that because **he was carrying your sins.** He was guilty. He was the Lamb before the shearer! Isaiah 53: 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, **Yet He opened not His mouth;** He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

Old Testament believers knew this!

c. Just as the animal was burned outside of the city, so Jesus was buried outside of the city for you.

Hebrews 13:11 For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, **are burned outside the camp.** 12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, **suffered outside the gate.** 13 Therefore let us go forth to Him, **outside the camp,** bearing His reproach.

d. Put the clearest, Jesus, and Jesus alone, expiated your sins.

4. Lessons:

a. Ever hear someone say, “I don’t have anything to wear?” That may be true for your body, but not for your soul! You have the covering of Jesus - a covering which lasts forever. It never gets old and it never goes out of style. It is a most valuable covering. Love it. Cherish it!

b. There is no Christianity without the cross! Yes, there are many who consider themselves to be Christians, mostly because they went to church as kids or were baptized, but if they don’t understand and believe in the sacrifice of Jesus for sins, they are going to hell. Do you have friends like this? Don’t let them die this way! Confront them about their false hope. Love them enough to do so!

Conclusion:

The sin offering was a non-sweet aroma compulsory offering for public sins and failing to live up to God’s righteous standards. To make the offering, the offerer would place his hand on the head of the animals and its head would be cut off. Some blood was sprinkled and poured as required, some parts of the animal offered to God, and the rest taken outside of the city and burned. With that done, the guilty offerer would have his sins covered as God would be pleased with him. **This was the most important offering of all!**

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Everyone fails to do what God expects him to do. It doesn’t matter your position, you still fail. (This is good reason to pray for each other!) And higher the position (parents, pastor, politicians, professors), worse the sin!

2. Instead of letting shame destroy you, cast your sin and shame on Jesus, as he paid for all your sins. Lay your sins on Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God.

3. This covering of sin is available to everyone who calls. Question: Will you tell others who don’t know of Jesus that they can call on him and have their sins forgiven as well? I hope you will.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, you have no basis to confess your sins. The only way you can confess your sins is if you are a child of God. And the only way you can become a child of God is if you hold on to the life and death of Jesus as your own!