

# The Sin Offering

## Leviticus 4:1 to 5:13

### I. INTRO

- A. What if you died right now and stood before God... Should I let you into my house? Why?
  - B. Leviticus outlines five special fire offerings and sacrifices. The first three are largely voluntary, focusing on worship. The final two are required, focusing on sin. The first three celebrate God's covenant relationship with Israel. The final two atone (pay for and cleanse) for violations of the Law.
    1. Burnt Offering an appeal for acceptance and surrender to the Lord
    2. Grain Offering is a prayer of remembrance, asking the Lord to remember his faithful covenant and being comforted that he will, in fact, do so
    3. The Sacrifice of Peace Offering is to worship God for the peace that the worshipper has with their Creator
    4. The Sin Offering, which we are going over today, is for making amends for sin when it does happen, when peace is lost & the relationship is fractured
    5. The Guilt or Reparation Offering (next section) was for righting the wrong caused by sin.
  - C. As we go through Leviticus, remember this summary: **God is holy, we are not, but the Gospel is far greater news than you ever realized.**
- II. *Leviticus 4:1–12 [1] And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, [2] "Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If anyone sins **unintentionally** in any of the LORD's commandments about things not to be done, and does any one of them,*

### A. UNINTENTIONAL SIN

1. The Hebrew says "by straying" but the meaning is "unintentionally"
2. It refers to wandering, going wrong, making a mistake, etc. → it is sin that arises from the weakness of the flesh (I didn't mean to), a sin of waywardness // Ex: Manslaughter vs. Premeditated Murder
3. The important thing to note is that the opposite is a sin of defiance or rebellion, literally described as "with a raised hand/fist)
  - a) Numbers 15:30–31, [30] But the person who does anything with a high hand, whether he is native or a sojourner, reviles the LORD, and that person shall be cut off from among his people. [31] Because he has despised the word of the LORD and has broken his commandment, that person shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity shall be on him."
4. You may have heard people say that the word for sin means to "miss the mark" - that is the kind of sin dealt with in the Sin Offering
5. Two (of many) biblical examples of this:
  - a) Christ on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34)

- b) Paul. 'I obtained mercy because I [persecuted the church] ignorantly, in unbelief' (I Timothy 1:13)."

#### B. FOR US

1. This could be sin that grows from a weakness in our own flesh
2. This could be sin from an imperfect insight into the Law of God and afterward you look back with shame and regret.
  - a) "I was wrong in my understanding of the Word's insight"  
(1) Ex: Costi Hinn vs. Benny Hinn
  - b) "I didn't know this was sin, but once I did I felt dirty and ashamed."  
(1) Ex: Lust as equal to adultery
3. Some of you grew up in religious households and you think things like, "I never killed anybody" when thinking of your sin
  - a) We tend to ignore our unintentional sin, as if God's holiness is only bothered by "the big stuff"
  - b) But Jesus flipped all that upside down, not teaching something new but underscoring a reality that already existed - unintentional sin is still sin (anger : murder // lust : adultery // etc)
4. We are often unaware of just how sinful we actually are
  - a) But just because we are unaware at the time doesn't mean that our actions aren't sinful, nor that we aren't responsible for them
5. Once the Holy Spirit (God's vehicle for conviction) shines light on past (or present) sin, it is our responsibility to deal with it accordingly
6. To not act on conviction is to shake our fist in open rebellion against God
  - a) In Numbers this required the death penalty, essentially removing someone from the people of God and ending their line
  - b) In the New Covenant, if there is exhaustively no repentance, it culminates in excommunication from the people of God until there is repentance

- III. *[3] if it is the **anointed priest who sins, thus bringing guilt on the people**, then he shall offer for the sin that he has committed a bull from the herd without blemish to the LORD for a sin offering. [4] He shall bring the bull to the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD and lay his hand on the head of the bull and kill the bull before the LORD. [5] And the anointed priest shall take some of the blood of the bull and bring it into the tent of meeting, [6] and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle part 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 fragrant incense before the LORD that is in the tent of meeting, and all the rest of the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. [8] And all the fat of the bull of the sin offering he shall remove from it, the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails [9] and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys [10] (just as these are taken from the ox of the sacrifice of the peace offerings); and the priest shall burn them on the altar of burnt offering. [11] But the skin of the bull and all its flesh, with its head, its legs, its entrails, and its dung—[12] all the rest*

*of the bull—he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, to the ash heap, and shall burn it up on a fire of wood. On the ash heap it shall be burned up.*

#### A. TYPES OF ANIMALS

1. Your socio-economic class determined your sacrifice
2. Bull for the anointed priest, that is to say the High Priest
3. Bull for the community of Israel
4. Male goat for a civil leader
5. Female goat or female lamb for the common person
  - a) For us: Make a note that Jesus is called the Lamb of God, not the bull. He is a sacrifice for the common man!
6. Two Doves or two pigeons for the poor
7. A tenth of an ephah of fine flour for the very poor, but without olive oil or frankincense, which was reserved for the Grain Offering

#### B. PROCESS - How did this work? (see chart/pic)

1. You would present your sacrifice at the door to the Tabernacle
2. You would lay your hand on the animal's head "giving" your sin to the animal
  - a) E.G. You knew this animal was going to die instead of you
3. You would confess the sin that led to this specific sacrifice (Lev 5:5)
4. You would kill the animal
5. The priest would sprinkle the blood - where varied according to social status
  - a) If it were a poor man's offering, the blood was sprinkled around the altar
  - b) If the offering were that of a ruler or a common person, the blood was applied upon the horns of the Altar of Sacrifice (see pic)
  - c) If the offering was for the high priest and the congregation of Israel, the priest took the blood into the Holy Place and sprinkled the blood seven times toward the veil, then applied the blood on the horns of the Altar of Incense, and poured out the rest at the base of the Bronze Altar
  - d) Why the difference? Between for the priest he went in and out of God's house and had tainted the whole thing
6. The rest of the blood was poured out at the base of the Altar of Sacrifice
7. The fat and the kidneys were burned on the Altar
8. The body of the animal was burned outside the camp at the ash pile
9. The skin of the other sheep / goats was kept by the priests - this represented that the priest did his job as the covering / mediator between God and the people
  - a) But notice that when the priest sins, he has to burn the skin, underscoring his failure

#### C. ANOINTED (HIGH) PRIEST AND IMPACT ON SOCIETY

1. Notice that when the anointed priest sinned, it impacted everyone else.

2. If he was unclean and didn't realize it and then offered a sacrifice for others, everything he his work wasn't actually being accepted by God
3. Sin is never without consequence because it defiles
  - a) It fractures our relationship with God
  - b) It fractures our relationship with the world around us
  - c) As a leader, you become a lid for the people around you, which is why it is more serious among leaders
  - d) Even if people don't know about it, the consequence is still there and it remains without forgiveness from God
4. Sin costs death. Even unintentional sin required death as payment.
  - a) Without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sins
  - b) These people were very aware of this reality as they killed their sacrifice
  - c) God cannot simply wave sin away b/c he is just. As a just, good judge, he must divy out justice
    - (1) Ex: National Treasure, "Someone needs to go to prison" // Someone needs to get punished.
    - (2) *Hebrews 2 [2b] [If] every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, [3a] how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?*
  - d) The only way for the guilty to go free is for the innocent to suffer
5. Why? Because God is holy, holy, holy - he cannot tolerate sin in his presence forever without meting out justice.
6. But, God is merciful, making atonement available to his people

#### D. Summary:

1. The purpose of the Sin Offering was to cleanse and forgive the worshipper for specific unintentional, non-defiant, sins where no payback was required (next section).
2. God accepted the animal's blood as payment for the sin, and the sacrifice's blood purified or cleaned away the defilement
3. This satisfies the two aspects of atonement: purification and payment

#### IV. Looking to Jesus

##### A. You see a tension in these sacrifices

1. Imperfect priests
2. Imperfect sacrifices → couldn't actually forgive, just temporarily delay
3. Imperfect people

##### B. What a dark and dismal situation → I hope you feel the weight of it

1. Who will stand before this holy God for us?
2. Who sacrifice can I bring that can redeem my life? Could I ever truly pay enough?
3. Can I ever be good enough, pure enough, righteous enough?

##### C. You can understand why the Pharisees tried SO HARD to not mess up. You can understand why they tried to define every law and rule and nuance and then

made them more important than the Word of God itself. They didn't want to go to eternal judgment.

D. And this was only for the Israelites. People like you and me - what was our hope? We had none.

E. Intro John the Baptist

1. *John 1:29–34, [29] The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! [30] This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' [31] I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." [32] And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. [33] I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' [34] And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."*
2. Jesus - the sacrificial lamb who would take away the sin of the world
3. Jesus - the sacrificial lamb, the animal for the every man - not the religious or political elite
4. Jesus - the high priest, anointed by the Spirit, who would bring the sacrifice to the Father and be the sacrifice himself
5. Jesus - he who baptizes his people with the Holy Spirit, not washing the dirt on the outside, but washing away sin once for all from our souls
6. This is why we celebrate the incarnation, the arrival, Advent

### What do we do in response?

- ACT on it
  - *1 John 1:5–2:2, [5] This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. [6] If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. [7] But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. [8] If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [10] If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. [1] My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. [2] He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*
    - ACKNOWLEDGE the Holiness of God (he cannot tolerate sin), the destructive nature of sin, the role that it plays in our own lives, and that Jesus is our only hope as our sacrifice.
    - CONFESS the sin that God is bringing to light and ask him to forgive you and deliver you from future temptation
      - 1 Corinthians 10:13

- THANK him for the forgiveness that he promises and walk in freedom.
  - 1 john 1:9
  - Romans 8:1
- SHARE about it
  - The holiness of God
  - The severity of sin
  - The promised solution in Christ
  - An invitation to respond or learn more