

Day 123 - WEDNESDAY: March 15th

Leviticus 4

Leviticus 4:1–35 NKJV

Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "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, 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. 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. Then the anointed priest shall take some of the bull's blood and bring it to the tabernacle of meeting. 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. 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. 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, 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, 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. But the bull's hide and all its flesh, with its head and legs, its entrails and offal— 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. 'Now if the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally, and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done something against any of the commandments of the LORD in anything which should not be done, and are guilty; when the sin which they have committed becomes known, then the assembly shall offer a young bull for the sin, and bring it before the tabernacle of meeting. And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD. Then the bull shall be killed before the LORD. The anointed priest shall bring some of the bull's blood to the tabernacle of meeting. Then the

priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD, in front of the veil. And he shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar which is before the LORD, which is in the tabernacle of meeting; and he shall pour the remaining blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. He shall take all the fat from it and burn it on the altar. And he shall do with the bull as he did with the bull as a sin offering; thus he shall do with it. So the priest shall make atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them. Then he shall carry the bull outside the camp, and burn it as he burned the first bull. It is a sin offering for the assembly. 'When a ruler has sinned, and done something unintentionally against any of the commandments of the LORD his God in anything which should not be done, and is guilty, or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a male without blemish. And he shall lay his hand on the head of the goat, and kill it at the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD. It is a sin offering. The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering.

And he shall burn all its fat on the altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of the peace offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him. 'If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally by doing something against any of the commandments of the LORD in anything which ought not to be done, and is guilty, or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, then he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed. And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering. Then the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour all the remaining blood at the base of the altar. He shall remove all its fat, as fat is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering; and the priest shall burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma to the LORD. So the priest shall make atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him. 'If he brings a lamb as his sin offering, he shall bring a female without blemish. Then he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill it as a sin offering at the place where they kill the burnt offering. The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin

offering with his finger, put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour all the remaining blood at the base of the altar. He shall remove all its fat, as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of the peace offering. Then the priest shall burn it on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire to the LORD. So the priest shall make atonement for his sin that he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

Daily Deep Dive:

After focusing on the three “sweet smelling” offerings where God’s part is burnt to God on the bronze altar, we now come to the first of the two offerings that God doesn’t describe as “sweet smelling” as they pertain to sin. Here’s what the UCG reading plan states: “As we've already seen, “in the Burnt-offering and other sweet-savour offerings, the offerer came as a worshipper, to give in his offering, which represented himself, something sweet and pleasant to [the Eternal]. In the Sin and Trespass-offerings, which were *not* of a sweet savour, the offerer came as a convicted sinner, to receive in his offering, which represented himself, the judgment due to his sin or trespass.... In the one case the offering was accepted to shew that the offerer was

accepted of the Lord; and the total consumption of the offering on the altar shewed God's acceptance of, and satisfaction in, the offerer. In the other case the offering was cast out, and burnt, not on God's table, the altar, but in the wilderness without the camp; to shew that the offerer in his offering endures the judgment of God, and is cast out of His presence as accursed.... And yet the Sin-offering needed to be 'without blemish,' as much as the Burnt-offering.... A part indeed, 'the fat,' was burnt on the altar, to shew that the offering, though made a sin-bearer, was in itself perfect.... 'The fat,' as we have already seen in the other offerings, represents the general health and energy of the whole body. Its being burnt to God was the appointed proof that the victim offered for sin was yet in itself acceptable" (Jukes, pp. 142-143, 146, 165).

There were different regulations for the sin offering depending on who the offerer was. If the sin being atoned for was that of the entire congregation or the priesthood, the blood of a sacrificial bull was to be brought inside the Holy Place and sprinkled on the altar of incense. This was not necessary in the case of a civil ruler or common person. One guilty individual would not necessarily upset the entire spiritual life of the nation. But sin among all the people or

the priests would. And, thus, the incense altar, which represented the prayers of God's people ascending up to His throne and therefore their contact with Him, had to itself be purified of the taint of sin. It should also be recognized that when the sacrifice was not for themselves, the priests were to eat part of it. They were, thus, satisfied when the demands of divine judgment were met and the spiritual life of the nation preserved. But when a priest was atoning for his own sin, the whole animal was to be burnt outside the camp—for no one was allowed to profit from his own sin.

Special sin offerings for priest and congregation were sacrificed on the Day of Atonement (see Leviticus 16:11–19, 27). The only differences were that on Atonement the animal for the whole congregation was specified as a goat (goats being used as a sin offering for the congregation in other special circumstances as well) and, on that one day only, the blood was taken beyond the altar of incense into the Most Holy Place.

Clearly Jesus Christ fulfilled the sin offering by dying in our place. But there is a sense in which this offering is also fulfilled in us—in a secondary way. Jukes explains: "God forbid I should be mistaken upon this point, as though I

thought that the saint could atone for himself or others.... Still, there is a sense and measure in which the Sin-offering has its counterpart in us, as bearing on our self-sacrifice: there is a sense in which the Christian may bear sin, and suffer its judgment in his mortal flesh.... Christ's death in the flesh for sin is made our example: we too must also, yea therefore, die with Him.... The saint, as having been judged in the person of Christ, and knowing that for him Christ has borne the cross, follows on by that cross to judge and mortify all that he finds in himself still contrary to his Lord. The flesh in him is contrary to that Holy One [compare Romans 7:18, 23]: the flesh in him therefore must die.... God's truth is, that so far from 'the flesh' or 'old man' being saved from death by the cross, it is by it devoted to death and to be crucified [Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20]; and that Christ's death, instead of being a kind of indulgence for sin, or a reprieve of the life of the flesh, the life of the old man, is to His members the seal that their flesh must die, and that sin with its lusts and affections must be mortified [Colossians 3:5]" (pp. 204-206)." [END]

Verse 2 -Ellicott's commentary states: "He did it inadvertently, and at the time of its committal did not know

that it was a transgression, but recognized it as a sin after he did it.”

Verse 3 – John Gill’s commentary states: “That is, the high priest, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and the Septuagint version, render it; who in after times was only anointed, though at first Aaron's sons were anointed with him; so an high priest is described in Lev_21:10 and such an one was liable to sin, and often did; which shows not only that the greatest and best of men are not without sin, but proves what the apostle observes, that the law made men high priests which had infirmity, even sinful infirmities, who needed to offer for themselves as well as for the people; by which it appeared that perfection could not be had by the Levitical priesthood, and that it was proper it should cease, and another priesthood take place, Heb_7:11,”

Verse 4 – Here a bull, an animal of tremendous value and strength, is brought by the High Priest, who like we’ve seen in the previous offerings, identifies that the life being given of the animal stands in his place and he then personally kills the young bull.

Verse 6 – Here we see the blood (the life) of the animal paying the penalty for sin, is sprinkled seven times.

Regarding “seven”, Elicott’s commentary states: “Seven, being a complete number, is used for the perfect finishing of a work. Hence the seven days of creation (Genesis 2:2–3); seven branches were in the golden candlestick (Exodus 25:37; Exodus 37:23); seven times the blood was sprinkled on the day of atonement (Leviticus 16:14); seven times was the oil sprinkled upon the altar when it was consecrated (Leviticus 8:11); seven days were required for consecrating the priests (Leviticus 8:35); seven days were necessary for purifying the defiled (Leviticus 12:2; Numbers 19:19); seven times Naaman washed in the Jordan (2Kings 5:10; 2Kings 5:14); seven days Jericho was besieged, and seven priests with seven trumpets blew when the walls fell down (Joshua 6); the lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God (Revelation 5:6); seven seals are on God’s book (Revelation 1:5), &c.” [END]

Verse 7 – The Hebrew word for “sweet” with regard to incense means “spice”. It is not the same Hebrew word used for “sweet smelling”.

Ellicott's commentary adds: "This process, too, was peculiar to the sacrifice of the sin offering. The altar was placed in the holy place before the veil which separated off the holy of holies (Exodus 30:1-6). According to the practice which obtained in the time of Christ, the priest began by putting the blood first on the north-east horn, then on the north-west, then on the south-west, and, lastly, on the south-east horn. He dipped his finger in the blood of the bowl at the sprinkling of each horn, and wiped his finger on the edge of the bowl between the separate sprinklings, as the blood which remained on his finger from one horn was not deemed fit to be put on the other." [END]

Verse 12 - Ellicott's commentary adds: "During the time of the second Temple there were three places for burning: one place was in the court of the sanctuary, where they burnt the sacrifices which were unfit and rejected; the second place was in the mountain of the house called *Birah*, where were buried those sacrifices which met with an accident after they had been carried out of the court; and the third place was without Jerusalem, called the place of ashes. It is this place to which the Apostle refers when he says, "for the bodies of those beast whose blood is brought into the holy

place by the high priest as *an offering* for sin are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate” (Hebrews 13:11–12).” [END]

Verses 13 – 21: Jamieson–Faucet–Brown commentary states: “In consequence of some culpable neglect or misapprehension of the law, the people might contract national guilt, and then national expiation was necessary. The same sacrifice was to be offered as in the former case, but with this difference in the ceremonial, that the elders or heads of the tribes, as representing the people and being the principal aggressors in misleading the congregation, laid their hands on the head of the victim. The priest then took the blood into the holy place, where, after dipping his finger in it seven times, he sprinkled the drops seven times before the veil. This done, he returned to the court of the priests, and ascending the altar, put some portion upon its horns; then he poured it out at the foot of the altar. The fat was the only part of the animal which was offered on the altar; for the carcass, with its appurtenances and offals, was carried without the camp, into the place where the ashes were deposited, and there consumed with fire.” [END]

Verses 22 – 35: Jamieson–Faucet–Brown commentary states: “Whatever was the form of government, the king, judge, or subordinate, was the party concerned in this law. The trespass of such a civil functionary being less serious in its character and consequences than that either of the high priest or the congregation, a sin offering of inferior value was required – “a kid of the goats”; and neither was the blood carried into the sanctuary, but applied only to the altar of burnt offering; nor was the carcass taken without the camp; it was eaten by the priests–in–waiting.” [END]

Notice with these sin offerings, the sin is seen in a general way, not specifically. These sin offerings dealt with the general sins of everyone, from the priests to the nation and its leaders. We understand that we all are sinners (Rom 3:23).

The life of the perfect Jesus Christ, the Creator of all things, was worth more than all of His creation. Jesus Christ, wanting to make it possible for us to join His Family, gave His sinless life under the law to pay our penalty, to clear our name, and through His one sacrifice for sin for all time

(Hebrews 10:12), sanctified and cleansed us (Hebrews 10:10).