

ZOOM BIBLE STUDY: KEY TERMS OF SCRIPTURE

SACRIFICE FOR SIN

1.) At Mt. Sinai God set up his Old Testament worship system, which included many sacrifices. Some were for sins; others were fellowship/peace offerings between the worshiper and God; some were freewill offerings of thanks and joy. Here are some descriptions of various sacrifices for sin.

- **The Morning and Evening Sacrifice:** Cleanse the Sanctuary as a Holy Place for God's Presence

Exodus 29:38-39, 42-44 "This is what you are to offer on the altar regularly each day: two lambs a year old. ³⁹ Offer one in the morning and the other at twilight. ...⁴² For the generations to come this burnt offering is to be made regularly at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the LORD. There I will meet you and speak to you; ⁴³ there also I will meet with the Israelites, and the place will be consecrated by my glory."

- **The Whole Burnt Offering:** Voluntary, atonement for unintentional sin, expressing complete devotion

Leviticus 1:3-5,9 "If the offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he is to offer a male without defect. He must present it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting so that it will be acceptable to the LORD. ⁴ He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him. ⁵ He is to slaughter the young bull before the LORD, and then Aaron's sons the priests shall bring the blood and sprinkle it against the altar on all sides at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. ...⁹ He is to wash the inner parts and the legs with water, and the priest is to burn all of it on the altar. It is a burnt offering, an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to the LORD."

- **The Sin Offering:** Mandatory atonement for unintentional sin of individual or community; confession; forgiveness; cleansing from ceremonial defilement

Leviticus 4:13-17, 20b-21 "If the whole Israelite community sins unintentionally and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands, even though the community is unaware of the matter, they are guilty. ¹⁴ When they become aware of the sin they committed, the assembly must bring a young bull as a sin offering and present it before the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁵ The elders of the community are to lay their hands on the bull's head before the LORD, and the bull shall be slaughtered before the LORD. ¹⁶ Then the anointed priest is to take some of the bull's blood into the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁷ He shall dip his finger into the blood and sprinkle it before the LORD seven times in front of the curtain. ...^{20b} In this way the priest will make atonement for them, and they will be forgiven. ²¹ Then he shall take the bull outside the camp and burn it as he burned the first bull. This is the sin offering for the community."

- **The Guilt Offering:** Mandatory atonement for sin requiring additional 20% restitution; gives forgiveness

Leviticus 5:14-16 The LORD said to Moses: ¹⁵ "When a person commits a violation and sins unintentionally in regard to any of the LORD's holy things, he is to bring to the LORD as a penalty a ram from the flock, one without defect and of the proper value in silver, according to the sanctuary shekel. It is a guilt offering. ¹⁶ He must make restitution for what he has failed to do in regard to the holy things, add a fifth of the value to that and give it all to the priest, who will make atonement for him with the ram as a guilt offering, and he will be forgiven."

2.) What was the picture and the purpose behind these sacrifices? What was God communicating to his people?

3.) According to the following passages, what is Jesus' connection to the Old Testament sacrifices?

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Romans 3:25-26 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

Romans 8:3 God [sent] his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering.

Ephesians 5:2 Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

4.) How was Christ's sacrifice superior to those offered under the Old Covenant?

Hebrews 9:26 [Christ] has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Hebrews 10:10 We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Hebrews 10:11-14 Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

5.) How do the following statements from the Catechism of the Catholic Church obscure the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross?

1367 "In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered [again] in an unbloody manner."

1368 The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church. the Church which is the Body of Christ participates in the offering of her Head. With him, she herself is offered whole and entire. She unites herself to his intercession with the Father for all men. In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value. Christ's sacrifice present on the altar makes it possible for all generations of Christians to be united with his offering

6.) Liberal Christian churches speak little of the bloody sacrifice of Christ. Some of their theologians actually consider the concept barbaric. How would you respond?

7.) Where is our altar located at Ascension? What message does that send?

8.) For how many sins did Jesus sacrifice himself?

1 John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

9.) What does Jesus' sacrifice lead us, his followers to do?

1 Corinthians 5:7-8 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast—as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth.

Romans 12:1 I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

Closing Prayer: Lamb of God and sacrifice for sin, we admit that we deserve to be butchered for our transgressions. Cover us with your blood, and clothe us with your perfect righteousness. Renew our hearts by your love that our whole lives may be living sacrifices to your everlasting praise. Amen