

## “THE SIN OFFERING”

(Discourse below by J. P. MacPherson, 1916 Convention Report, Page 55.)

*Text: “For such a High Priest became us who is holy, harmless and undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the Heavens.*

*Who needeth not daily as those high priests to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the sins of the people, for this he did once when he offered up himself.”*

(Heb. 7:26, 27.)

All Bible Students familiar with the book of Hebrews, know that it is a work of analogy. The apostle is reasoning on the covenants, priesthoods, and Tabernacles, showing the superiority of the new arrangement. While Israel had their Tabernacle and the officiating priest, who on the yearly Atonement day, offered the sin-offerings, so spiritual Israel have their priest, who during the antitypical day of atonement, is offering the better sacrifices. In the days of the apostles certain ones were claiming that Jesus could not be a priest as he was not of the Levitical tribe or of the priestly family. God had decreed that the perpetuity of the priesthood should remain in the family of Amram, of the tribe of Levi and such a priest was serving at Jerusalem. Jesus was born of the tribe of Judah and Moses spake nothing of priesthood being vested in that tribe, therefore, they reasoned, he could not be a priest. The Apostle well knew that if Jesus was on earth he could not be a priest of the Aaronic order, proceeded to show them that he is a priest of the Melchisedec order. He reminded them that Levi while yet in the loins of Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec, who at that time was a King and a priest upon his own throne, showing the superiority of the Melchisedec priesthood. Israel’s sin-offerings were only typical and had no value so far as the conscience was concerned. How clearly the apostle brings this to our attention in Heb. 9:13-17:

13) “For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of the heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh.

14) “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your *conscience* from dead works to serve the living God.

15) “And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament that by the means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they that are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

16) “For where a testament is there must of necessity be the death of the testator.

17) “For a testator is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.”

The Apostle’s argument is that the blood of the sin-offerings and the ashes of the red heifer merely had a cleansing effect upon the flesh and never cleansed the conscience from the guilt of sin. The blood of Christ is more efficacious and will in due time cleanse

the conscience and grant to the called ones, the Jewish nation, the promise of everlasting life under the new covenant. For this cause he is the mediator, not the mediator for the church—because the Church never was under the first testament and have not a guilty conscience because of inability to keep its conditions—but the mediator for the called nation of Israel, that in the cleansing of their conscience, they might secure life if obedient to the terms and conditions of the new arrangement. Then he adds a word of caution, namely, that a covenant can only be in operation when the testator is dead as it is of no force when the testator is alive. We understand the Apostle to mean that Jesus and his Church will be the great testator and that the new testament cannot go into operation until every member shall have passed into death. Israel after the flesh is waiting until the Church shall have had a part in the great sin-offering, then their deliverance will be in order. We recall the sin-offerings of Lev. 16. These sacrifices were offered year by year on the 10th day of the 7th month. Some important point should be carefully noted:

- (1) These sin-offerings were not ransom sacrifices.
- (2) These sin-offerings were not for willful sins.
- (3) The animals slain, the bullock and the Lord's goat represent the humanity of Jesus and the Church, whereas the high priest represented the new creature. As Aaron lived after the animals were slain and consumed, so Christ and the Church will live on the divine plane even after their humanity shall have passed into the tomb forever as the world's sin-offering. This is clearly shown when we remember that after the offering of the sin-offerings Aaron was clothed in the garments of glory and beauty and offered the two rams of burnt offering.

That twenty-four hour day represented principally this Gospel Age and incidentally the Millennial Age, inasmuch as the high priest put on the garments of glory and beauty. The sacrifices represented the better sacrifices. As we come to consider the sin-offerings of the Gospel Age we believe it is essential that we draw a clear line of demarcation between the ransom and the sin-offering. It is not our thought to take up the subject of the ransom as Bro. Ritchie will tell us about that in detail this afternoon, yet just one thought. As Jesus stood at Jordan, a perfect man, he was an exact corresponding price for Adam. That is, he was exactly what Adam was before he sinned. Jesus possessed the price at Jordan. The moment he was begotten of the spirit, the correspondency measurably ended because Adam never was begotten of the spirit. There the sin-offering, began. Jesus having consecrated his all to the Father he was begotten of the Holy Spirit, then HE, the new creature, the antitype of the high priest, became the possessor of all that the perfect man had possessed prior thereto. He took possession of the right to life, the perfect organism and all for three and one half years of his obedience, he maintained his right to that earthly life while laying down his humanity in sacrifice. As the human nature was being sacrificed, the new nature was being developed and prepared for the birth. Finally the offering was consumed and in the hour of his resurrection the Father rewarded him with the divine nature. He ascended to the Father and since that time he

has been advocating the cause of the Church, his Body. Before he sat down at the Father's right hand, he offered the Church. This is shown clearly in Heb. 10:12. "But this man after he had offered *one* sacrifice for sins, sat down on the right hand of God."

However, we must remember that there is the initial offering and then the gradual consuming of the sacrifice. This was shown in the typical sacrifices. The Lord's goat was slain by the priest, but then the body was sent into the camp to be burned. So Christ offered his Church at Pentecost and since that time he has been seated at the Father's side waiting until the sacrifice be completely carried out.

The thought that the Lord is accepting members for the Body of Christ and granting them the privilege of sharing in the sin-offering is indeed a precious one and yet it does not for a moment detract from the glory of our dear Master because there is no intrinsic merit, no purchasing merit in the Church's sacrifice. Their part in the sin-offering, is a favor. Favor upon favor and grace upon grace. The Church does not atone for the willful sins of the world. The sin-offering has nothing to do with the willful sins of anybody. The principal reason for the Church's part in the sin-offering is that by thus being offered by the head, our high priest, we might eventually reign with him. Glorious! How our hearts go up to our dear Heavenly Father in thanksgiving for this precious privilege of being accepted and offered in sacrifice. As daily the outer man perishes the inner man is being renewed and prepared for the glorious resurrection change.

The question arises: How can any member of the sinful race be accepted as a member of the Body of Christ and share in the world's sin-offering? The matter is plain. We must first of all renounce sin in its every form and make a full consecration of our will to God. In consecrating our *will* we consecrate our *all*, everything which the will controls. When the time comes that the Father is ready to accept us, the merit is imputed, the Father counts us righteous, accepts and begets us of the Holy Spirit, thus we become new creatures begotten to a new heavenly nature and gradually the new nature develops at the expense of the old nature. The new creature is being prepared for the birth and the humanity is being offered in sacrifice. What a secret is this part of the Father's plan! Members in particular of the Body of Christ! The natural body is surely a perfect simile of the spiritual. One head, many members. Suppose that we had five heads on each hand and the head would say "Move" and they would reply "No." What trouble we would have. Or as the poet has said, "O for a thousand tongues to sing my dear Redeemer's praise." It would indeed be grand to have a thousand tongues in order that we might sing his praises, but none of us would want the herculean task of controlling them. It is hard enough to control and properly use one tongue.

This privilege of suffering and dying with our dear Lord is certainly the grandest privilege ever offered any of God's intelligent creatures. Dead to the world with all its

aims and ambitions and alive unto Him and the Heavenly impulses. Again we desire to emphasize the fact that our part in the sin-offering is a favor. Not that we redeem anyone, not that in sharing in the sufferings of Christ we cancel the willful sins of others. Some of the Lord's dear people are swinging to extremes regarding the Church's part in the sin-offering. Some claiming that Jesus cancelled all that willful sins up to the time of his death and that the Church will cancel all willful sins since that time and in doing so they share in the sin-offering. Others claim that the Church have absolutely no part in the sin-offering whatsoever. Both of these extremes are to be avoided. The death of Jesus did not cancel the willful sins up to the time of his death else how could he say that "all the righteous blood slain from Abel to Zacharias will be required of this generation," speaking of that generation of Jews who in his day had sinned against such great light? And if the Church atones for willful sins committed since the death of Jesus, how could the Revelator say that he saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus crying out from under the altar, saying, "How long O Lord dost thou not visit the earth and avenge our blood upon them that dwell upon the earth." Willful sins must be expiated and so we find that that generation of the Jews living in our Lord's day had to bear all the willful sins from Abel to that time. Because of the clear light shining at that time they were esteemed more culpable than preceding generations in their rejection of that light. So all the willful sins *against* the Lord's body will be expiated by the sufferings of those individuals, who by and by will make up the Great Company class. In other words the antitypical scapegoat class will bear these willful sins committed against the Lord's brethren from Stephen on down through the age. The scape goat of the type was not a sin-offering, not being offered by the priest. It was forced to die. So with the antitypical scape goat class they have no share in the sin-offering for the reason that they are not offered by the great high priest, their humanity being destroyed by Satan, as they are forced to pass through adverse experiences in which their flesh and its ambitions shall be destroyed. On the other hand it is equally clear that the Church do share in the sin-offering. Does not the apostle bring this to our attention in no uncertain terms in Heb. 13:13?

For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the camp. Let us go to him without the camp bearing his reproach with him. The Apostle is showing that the bullock of the day of Atonement was burned without the camp and that the Lord's goat was also burned without the camp, so we, his footstep followers, ought to gladly and willingly follow Jesus without the camp condition sharing the ignominy and shame that will be heaped upon us by the nominal systems, the camp of our day.

Some have asked this question: Seeing that we do share in the sin-offering, is there not a merit in the sacrifice of the Church? Much depends on the definition we give the word merit. There is surely a worth in the Church's sacrifice because the Revelator says that

they shall walk with him in white for they are *worthy*. This personal worthiness must not be confused with the redeeming merit of Christ. The fact that the Church make a full consecration and manifest the spirit of self-sacrifice and gladly and willingly follow in Jesus' footsteps even unto death is of itself meritorious. This personal worthiness redeems no one, but gains for them the divine nature. Another thought should also be clearly recognized. We do not sacrifice ourselves. The high priest does all the sacrificing. All we can do is to offer ourself for sacrifice and thereafter maintain the spirit of self-sacrifice, the desire, the willingness to be sacrificed, accepting the trials and difficulties that our Head may permit to come to us as day by day he leads us in the way of sacrifice.

The following illustration will serve to show the part the Church has in the great sin-offering. Suppose a man was worth \$200,000. On his death bed he wills that the money should go to his five sons, with one proviso, namely, that during the life of his wife she should have the sole benefit accruing from the principal. She must not add thereto or take therefrom. When the wife would die then the money would be equally divided among the sons, but they could not have the money until the death of the mother. So with our dear Master. He wills or desires that his right to life, the human life, should eventually go to the human family, the obedient ones. But there is a provision which must not be ignored and that is the part the Church plays in this matter. The Lord's plan is that during the life of the Church on the earth, she is to receive the sole benefit accruing from the death of the Redeemer. She must not add to his merit, in fact she could not do so if she did desire, she cannot take therefrom, but merely have the benefit of the merit of Christ during this age. When the Church shall have finished her course and the merit of Christ is released the whole world will have the offer of life under the new covenant, the obedient ones, represented by the five sons will enter into the inheritance. Thus seen it is the death of Christ that blesses the world through his Body, the Church.

What a privilege, dear brethren, of sharing in the sin-offering with our beloved Master. Dying as humans, our bodies counted as members of his body in sacrifice, in order that suffering and dying with him we may have the privilege of reigning with Him. Some who one time saw these things clearly are today losing their spiritual insight. I have in mind one class where a number are going into universalism thinking that even Satan himself shall eventually be saved. I am also reminded of two others of the friends who have gone into theosophy after being in the truth for years. Another sister told me that the scape goat represented the Lord Jesus, in fact, said, "The bullock, Lord's goat and scape goat all represent Jesus." We asked her the following questions which will serve to show the confusion into which she has fallen:

- (1) Did the typical day of Atonement represent the Gospel Age, the antitypical Atonement Day? Answer: Yes.
- (2) Did the work performed therein represent the work done herein? Answer: Yes.
- (3) Did those three animals dealt with on that day typify our Lord Jesus? Answer: Yes.

(4) Then when Jesus died on the cross of Calvary the day of Atonement came to an end, seeing that he fulfilled the type, now why this long delay of over 1,800 years since his death? Answer: I do not know.

If Jesus, as the antitype of those animals slain, died on Calvary and thus fulfilled the type, why have not the world a clear realization of their sins forgiven, as would be the case if the work of atonement ended? The *mystery* of the whole plan is the participation of the Church in the sufferings of Christ and in the glory which will follow. “*Christ in you the hope of glory.*” “If that light that is in thee become darkness how great is that darkness.” But some say we ought to be *broad*. True! But we can be so broad that we will get out of the *narrow way* entirely. To be ahead of the light is to be in darkness, to be behind the light means darkness. *Walk in the light.*

So, dear brethren, let us day by day submit ourselves cheerfully to the will of our Head in all things and in all humility realize our own nothingness in comparison with His greatness. Let us suffer with him looking forward to the near future when we hope to reign with him. We are nearly *home*.

One by one the dear ones whom we know and love are passing over. Our dear Brother Barton has gone on and his work on this side is done. I had the privilege in the Lord’s providence of completing his pilgrim routing in southern California. He followed our Master in all humility and we rejoice that he has gone home. As one by one the friends that we are personally acquainted with pass beyond the vail, the vail seems so thin and we long to go and be at rest. No more uncertainty, no more suffering, just one long eternity of *joy* and *service*. May the dear Lord grant us strength to finish our course and to be offered with our Head.

Who would mind the journey when the road leads *home*.