

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

BY

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QUESTION 1.—Is “fire” always a symbol of divine judgment? What fire consumed the offerings for Aaron and his sons before the fire came out from the Lord?

ANSWER.—Fire *on the altar* consuming the sacrifice was a symbol of divine judgment, that fire, after all was in order, having come down from heaven (Lev. ix., 24; 2 Chron. vii., 1). But fire in itself is not always a symbol of divine judgment. It may symbolise trial or suffering at the hand of man (1 Peter iv., 12-13). So the *meat* offering, baked before being brought to God’s altar, typifies the Lord as man experiencing trials before the cross, who, of course, did not bear divine judgment till on the cross. I suppose the fire was ordinary fire before the sacred fire came down.

Q. 2.—With reference to the “carcase of the sin offering,” you say that eating or burning served the same purpose (“Recent Utterances,” p. 46), viz., the removing from sight the sin transferred to it. What do you think is the difference between the two?

A.—None could eat of the sacrifice offered on their own behalf except it were a peace offering. Hence these sin offerings, in which the priests were concerned, were burnt. Lev. x., 16-18 shows me that the burning or the eating served the same purpose. Moses was content that it was burnt. Could that have been the case had the burning of it expressed something different from the eating of it?

Q. 3.—The carcase being holy, why was the man who burnt it thereby rendered unclean?

A.—The carcase was holy, because it typified the Lord. But sin is a defiling thing; so every one who had to do with the carcase or with the scape-goat to which sins were transferred had to wash their clothes and bathe their flesh.

Q. 4.—Why was the red heifer completely burned without the camp? Was this divine judgment? Was it such in Lev. xvi.?

A.—The red heifer was a sin offering, but of an abnormal character. No part of it went on God’s altar. But as that part of every sacrifice which did, thereby typified the Lord bearing divine judgment, and seeing that the red heifer is called a sin offering, I conclude the burning of it outside the camp served two purposes, symbolising in an informal way the bearing of divine judgment, as well as the putting out of sight completely of the sin. In Lev. xvi. the two are distinguished. What typified divine judgment was the part burnt

on the altar ; what symbolised the putting out of sight of the sins was the burning the carcase outside the camp.

Q. 5.—Is it proper to say that Christ was made sin outside the camp, and that God came out of His place to take vengeance on sin ?

A.—The Lord suffered without the *gate*. The Hebrews were exhorted to go outside the *camp*. Speaking carefully, I do not think I could say, He was made sin outside the camp, because Judaism was maintained by God till He had died.

Q. 6.—Why was it necessary to burn what remained of the bread (Exod. xxix., 32), or the remainder of the sacrifice of peace offerings instead of eating them (Lev. vii., 15-18) ?

A.—They were burnt that they should not be put to any common use (Exod. xxix., 34). In the case of the peace offering, God would not accept as expressive of communion with Him what was really not so. It would be abomination to the Lord.

Q. 8.—Could Aaron have entered the Holiest without blood before divine judgment fell on Nadab and Abihu ? Did he in Lev. ix., 23 ?

A.—I do not know that Aaron ever entered the Holiest except to make atonement. There is no hint of it in Lev. ix., 23.

Q. 9.—Is “holy place” in Exod. xxviii., 29-43, etc., the holiest of all ? What is it in Lev. xvi., 17, 20, 27, etc. ?

A.—In Exodus xxviii., 29-43, the outer chamber is clearly meant by the holy place. In Lev. xvi., 17, 20, 27, the holy place, as verse 2 shows, is the inner chamber, “the holy place within the veil.”

Q. 10.—In what sense did Aaron bear the iniquity of the holy things (Exod. xxxviii., 35) and also bear the iniquity of the congregation (Lev. x.) ? Does Christ bear the iniquity of our holy things ?

A.—Aaron was to bear the iniquity of the holy things, in that he was liable to punishment if anything in the work of the sanctuary went wrong. The Lord bore our sins.

Q. 11.—“Bearing the iniquity of the congregation to make atonement for them before the Lord” seems to have connection with “eating the sin offering in the holy place.” Would you say that “eating the sin offering” or “burning it” was an essential part of atonement ? If so, would you say that atonement was really “effected ere the carcase was taken outside ?” (“Recent Utterances.”)

A.—If you take the whole sentence of Lev. x., 17, it will, I think, be clear to you. “Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath

given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord." Atonement by blood, which alone deals with sins before God (Heb. ix., 22), had already been effected for the people with the blood of that goat (Lev. iv., 35); and Aaron first and then Moses and Aaron had together blessed the people (ix., 22-23) on the ground of the accepted sacrifice. Now, in this verse (x., 17) there is not a word of atonement by blood, but of the duty of the priest to eat that goat, for they were responsible for the people to God that all the sacred rite should be properly performed, that *wrath in government* should not break forth against the congregation. It is of this character of things that Moses speaks, not of atonement by blood. See Numbers viii., 16-19. So the passage in no way militates against the doctrine set forth. Eating the sin offering or burning it, you will see, therefore, is not an essential part of *atonement by blood*, but either the one or the other was the right way of dealing with the carcase, that if the victim could not be afterwards found, the sin transferred to it must be gone. No imputation of guilt could rest on the person or persons on whose behalf the sacrifice had been offered. I think you will find atonement, as we have part in it, *i.e.*, by blood, was not dependent on the disposal of the carcase, but was always connected with the service at the altar or in the holy place, so that the offerer could depart knowing that his sin was forgiven before the carcase was disposed of. See Lev. iv., 20-21; vi., 24-30; xvi., 27-28. Could the offerer have had forgiveness before atonement was completed? Atonement, we must remember, in the Old Testament, is spoken of at times in connection with government, and then blood is not necessarily called for. Atonement, as we needed it, is not effected without blood. It is of the former character of atonement Lev. x., 17, I take it, speaks.

Q. 12.—What is the difference between the scapegoat "bearing iniquities" and the carcase of the sin offering being burnt?

A.—The dealing with the scapegoat was an essential part of atonement by blood (Lev. xvi., 10), and answers to the Lord's bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. Where the burning of the carcase is mentioned, as I have already stated, we have not a word of atonement. If it were part of atonement, how could we feed on the sin offering as Heb. xiii., 10-12, teaches us? Of the portion of the sin offering by which atonement was made, none could eat. That was for God.

Q. 13.—Is there anything in the offerings that symbolises our old man crucified with Christ?

A.—I know nothing which does that.

Q. 14.—Is it in the burnt or the sin offering, either or both, that

the basis is laid for the putting away of sin and the bringing glory to God?

A.—The putting away of sin is by the sacrifice of Himself. This comprises both the burnt offering and the sin offering really, for both are needed fully to express the sacrificial death of Christ (Lev. xvi., 3-5). But you cannot draw the distinction, as it is sometimes drawn, *i.e.*, the one for *sin*, the other for *sins*, for both speak of atonement (Lev. i., 4), which is for *sins* and not for *sin*. The burnt offering was not brought because of the person's sins, yet *atonement for sins was not duly effected without it, for it set forth in the fullest way the Lord bearing divine judgment for us, inasmuch as all of it was consumed by the fire on the altar.*

Q. 15.—Of what was the Passover a type?

A.—Shelter by blood from judgment.

Q. 16.—What is to be understood by “redemption by power?” What difference is there between “salvation” as seen by Israel (Exod. xiv., 13), and the “redemption” by an outstretched arm and strong judgments?

A.—Redemption by power for Israel was displayed at the Red Sea. God promised it (Exod. vi., 6). He accomplished it at the Red Sea (xv., 13). Psalm lxxvii., 15, refers to it. Redemption delivered them from the slavery of the Egyptians and made them God's people. Salvation speaks more of their state as delivered, but does not imply necessarily that they were God's people.

Q. 17.—What is embraced in the term “redemption that is in Christ Jesus?”

A.—Redemption that is in virtue of or by Christ Jesus, embraces forgiveness of sins (Ephesians i., 7; Col. i., 14) and justification likewise (Rom. iii., 24).

Q. 18.—Is there a difference between a “sinful” and a “guilty” man? What is it?

A.—*Sinful*, *i.e.*, tainted by sin, is what we are by nature; *guilty* is true of those who have sinned.

Q. 19.—What is meant by “he that is dead is freed from sin?”

A.—Against a dead man no charge of sin could be laid. His condition, dead, shows he could not have acted, so is a complete answer to the charge. It is an abstract statement in Rom. vi., 7, an illustration taken from every day life for *practical* instruction for us.

Q. 20.—What is the force of “dead to the law by the body of Christ?”

A.—The Lord has died to the law actually. We in Him have died to it. We have died to the law through the body of Christ.

Q. 21.—Explain “The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

A.—The law, or uniform action, of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law, or uniform action of sin and death.

Q. 22.—What element of the sin offering symbolises the condemning sin in the flesh?

A.—Atonement was effected by the sin-offering. There is no atonement for the nature. God condemned sin in the flesh by the incarnation and death of Christ. As to the latter, nothing but His sacrificial death could enable God righteously to put away sin. If it has to be put away it must be bad indeed. Thus His death condemns it.

Reply to a Letter in reference to some of the foregoing answers.

July, 30th, 1886.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,

I am glad my answers were helpful. Truth comes out by investigation. The spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the spirit of life which is in Him. Now, that is in us who are in Him, hence makes us free from the law of sin and death. I do not see any connection between that and John xx. This last was the bestowal of His Spirit on the disciples *collectively* to act for Him while He would be on high. But it clearly was not the gift of the Spirit (see Acts i., 4), which is given to saints *individually*, and by which it is that we come to be in Christ.

Infants are born sinful creatures, but are not by nature guilty. The Lord's sacrificial death on the cross was needful for them, for His sacrifice alone enables God to put away sin (Heb. ix., 26). Strictly speaking, atonement is for *sins*, not for *sin*.

As to the offerings, whatever was burnt on the altar betokened the Lord bearing divine judgment, it being consumed under the law by the fire which came down from heaven. Not one of the five kinds of offerings appointed by the law was lacking in this, for a portion of each was consumed on the altar. So no one of Adam's race can really approach God with acceptance unless He owns that the Lord bore divine judgment.

Before the law was instituted there was no sin offering distinct from the burnt offering. Job offered burnt offerings for his sons for sins he feared they might have committed. God told Job's three friends to offer burnt offerings for what they had done. The institution of sacrifice under the law introduced, as distinct from the burnt offering a sin offering, and a trespass offering. The sin

offering was *chiefly* for sins unwittingly committed, the trespass offering was required where God or man had been defrauded of their rights, whilst the burnt offering set forth especially the self-surrender of the Lord in death voluntarily to do God's will in making atonement. The making atonement refers, as I have said, to sins, not to sin. The sin offering looked more at the sinner's need, the burnt offering, at the willing surrender of Him who is the sacrifice. So both together were required on the day of atonement to typify the one sacrifice of Christ; and by that one sacrifice sin will be put away. So Abel's offering spoke of the Lord's sacrificial death needed to deal with the question of the nature. But where that death is before us, I take it, both the burnt offering and sin offering are really represented. I hope this may help you.

Affectionately yours in Christ,

C. E. STUART.