

THE SIN OFFERING

NO. 739

A SERMON
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 AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“If the priest that is anointed do sin, according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he has sinned, a young bullock without blemish, unto the LORD for a sin offering.”
Leviticus 4:3.

IN the previous chapters of the book of Leviticus, you read of the burnt offering, the peace offering, and the meat offering—all types of our Lord Jesus Christ, as seen from different points of view. Those three sacrifices were sweet savor offerings, and represent the Lord Jesus in His glorious person and perfect righteousness as an offering of a sweet smell unto God.

The chapter before us, the whole of which we shall require as a text, describes the sin offering, which although quite distinct from the sweet savor offerings, is not altogether to be separated from them, for the Lord Jesus Christ viewed in any light is very dear unto His Father, and even when beheld as a sin offering is elect and precious unto God, as we shall have to show you in the type before us. Still, the sin offering does not set forth the acceptance of the substitute before the Lord, but rather brings out the abhorrence which God has towards sin, the putting away from His holy presence of everything upon which sin is laid.

This morning, if God shall enable us, we hope to impress upon your minds, first of all, the great evil of sin and secondly, the great and wonderful power of the blood of atonement by which sin is put away.

Without any further preface we shall invite you, in meditating upon the type before us, first, *to consider our Lord Jesus as made sin for us*. Secondly, we shall *ask you to observe, carefully and prayerfully, His blood in its efficacy before the Lord*. And thirdly, *we shall bid you look at His substitution in the shame which it involved*.

I. First, brethren, let us, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, view our BLESSED LORD AS MADE SIN FOR US, as He is here typified in the bullock.

His personal character is set forth before us in the victim chosen, namely, a young bullock without blemish. It was a bullock, the most valuable of the sacrifices, an animal laborious in life and costly in death. It was a young bullock in the fullness of its strength and vigor. It was without blemish and the slightest fault disqualified it from being laid upon the altar of God.

Behold, O believer, your Lord Jesus, more precious by far than ten thousands of the fat of fed beasts, a sacrifice not to be purchased with gold or estimated in silver. Full of vigor, in the very prime of manhood, He offered up Himself for us. Even when He died, He died not through weakness. For that cry of His at His death, “with a loud voice,” proved that His life was still firm within Him, and that when He gave up the ghost, His death was not one of compulsion, but a voluntary expiring of the soul.

His glory is as the firstling of the bullock, full of vigor and of strength. How distinctly was our Lord proved to be without blemish! Naturally born without sin, practically He lived without fault. In Him there was neither deficiency nor excess. In no virtue did He come behind, and no fault could be found in Him. The prying eyes of the prince of this world could find nothing in Him, and the still more accurate search of the all-seeing God found no fault in Him.

This spotlessness was necessary, for how could He have been made an offering for our sin, if it had not been true that personally, “He knew no sin?” Shall one bankrupt stand in the debtor’s court as a substitute for another? How shall one penniless wretch pay the debt of another who is about to be cast into prison? If the king requires service of any man, how shall another from whom service is equally

due, offer himself as a substitute for him? No, the Savior of others must have no obligations of His own. He must owe no personal debts. There must be no claims on the part of justice against Him, on His own account, or He cannot stand “the just for the unjust,” to expiate the sins of men.

You holy souls, feast your eyes upon the spotless Son of God. You pure in heart, delight your purified vision with a sight of His perfections. You shall one day be like Him, this will be your heaven. Meanwhile, make it your rapture, your paradise on earth, to gaze upon the unrivaled beauties of the Altogether Lovely. “In him was no sin.” In Him was all excellence. His body and soul are alike—white as the lily for holiness, though made by suffering, red as the rose. Alabaster and bright ivory overlaid with sapphires are but dull and soiled types of His purity. Come, you virgin souls, and let the eyes of your holy love survey Him, that you may see how fit He was to suffer as “the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.”

The act of transference of sin to the victim next calls for our attention. You will have noticed, in reading the chapter, that our Lord’s being made sin is set forth to us by the very significant transfer of sin to the bullock, which was made by the priest, or by the elders of the people, as the case might be. We are expressly told, “He shall lay his hand upon the bullock’s head,” which act, our good Dr. Watts has interpreted in his well-known verse,

*“My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of Yours,
While like a penitent I stand;
And there confess my sin.”*

This laying of the hand does not appear to have been a mere touch of contact, but in some other places of Scripture has the meaning of leaning heavily, as in the expression, “Your wrath lies hard upon me” (Psa 88:7).

Surely this is the very essence and nature of faith, which does not only bring us into contact with the great Substitute, but teaches us to lean upon Him with all the burden of our guilt, so that if our sins are very weighty, yet we see Him as able to bear them all. And mark, the whole weight of our iniquity taken off from us, who must have been crushed to the lowest hell thereby, and laid on Him who took the weight and bore it all, and then buried it in His sepulcher forever.

From of old, it was decreed, “The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” JEHOVAH made to meet upon the head of the Substitute all the offenses of His covenant people, but each one of the chosen is brought personally to ratify this solemn covenant act of the great God, when by grace he is enabled by faith to put his hand upon the head of the “Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world.”

My fellow believers, do you remember that rapturous day? My soul recalls her day of deliverance with delight. Laden with guilt and full of fears, I saw my Savior willing to be my Substitute, and I laid my hand, oh! how timidly at first, but as my courage grew and confidence was confirmed, I leaned my soul entirely upon Him, and now it is my unceasing joy to know that my sins are no longer imputed to me, but laid on Him, and like the debts of the poor wounded traveler, Jesus, like the good Samaritan, has said of all my future sinfulness, “Set that to My account.” Oh, blessed discovery, sweet solace of a repenting heart.

*“My numerous sins transferr’d to Him,
Shall never more be found,
Lost in His blood’s atoning stream
Where every crime is drown’d!”*

We must now beg your notice of the *sins transferred*. In the case of the type, they were sins of ignorance. Alas! the Jew knew nothing about a sin offering for sins of presumption, but there is such a sin offering for us. Our presumptuous sins were laid on Christ. Our willful sins, our sins of light and knowledge, are pardoned by His blood. The mention of sins of ignorance, suggests a very comfortable

reflection, that if there are any sins which I know not, they were, notwithstanding my ignorance, laid on my Substitute and put away by His atonement. It is not sin as we see it which was laid on Christ, but sin as God sees it—not sin as our conscience feebly reveals it to us, but sin as God beholds it, in all its unmitigated malignity, and unconcealed loathsomeness. Sin in its exceeding sinfulness Jesus has put away. Not sham sin, but real sin. Sin as before the Lord. Sin as sin, Jesus has made an end of.

Child of God, you will not misuse this truth and deny the need of repentance, for you well know that you cannot practically feel the power of this blood, except as your sin is known to you. This indeed is intimated in the type, for according to verse fourteen, the bullock was only offered when the sin was known. It was to be laid by the elders upon the head of the bullock, when the sin was no longer hidden from the eyes of the congregation. Sin unknown, the sacrifice is unheeded. It is only as you know and perceive sin that you can consciously know and prize the atonement by which it is taken away.

Mark, it is when you perceive sin that then you are to trust the blood, not when you perceive holiness in yourself, and goodness and virtue, but when you perceive sin, and iniquity, and defilement—it is then you are to lay your hand upon the head of the great atoning sacrifice. Jesus is a sinner's Savior. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." It is not written, "If any man is holy, he has an advocate," but "if any man sin, we have an advocate." So that in all our sin and iniquity, blackness, and defilement, when overwhelmed with our own vileness, we may still come to Christ, and believe that our most horrible and detestable sins were laid upon Him. And over and above that, those sins which we do not feel, which may be even more detestable, even these, and what is more, the sinfulness of our nature itself—that black and polluted fount from which the streams of our trespasses take their rise. The guilt of all actual and original sin was laid upon Jesus, and by Him forever put away.

Passing on, still keeping to the same point, we would remark that the sin was laid upon the bullock most conspicuously, "*before the LORD.*" Did you notice the frequent expressions, "shall bring him to the door of the congregation before the LORD." "kill the bullock before the LORD." "shall sprinkle the blood seven times before the LORD, and shall put some of it upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD."

Clearly the most important part of the sacrifice was not before the people, but before the Lord. All that the onlookers outside could have seen was the bullock, when dead, carried by the priests outside the camp. Some of them who came nearer might have seen the pouring of the blood at the bottom of the brazen altar, but they certainly never did and never could see the priest sprinkle the blood towards the veil, nor yet see him put it upon the horns of the golden altar, for the court of the priests was concealed from their view.

We are very much mistaken if we think that the ceremonies of Jews were much seen by the people. They were mainly unseen except by the priests. The ritual of the old covenant must have been very little a matter of sight, for the Israelite, pure and simple, never penetrated beyond the first court. He stood before the brazen altar, but he never went further, and all that was done in the next court of the priests, and especially all that was done in the most holy place, must have been entirely a matter of faith to all the people. The fact was, the sacrifices were not so much for men to look at as for God Himself to gaze upon, and though this may seem to you a strange observation, there is no little value in it.

You will hear men nowadays say that the purpose of atonement has reference to men, and not to God. Depend upon it, there is a fatal error in this doctrine, and we must denounce it. Although its advocates take a few expressions of certain of our hymns, and pretend to believe that we teach that the blood placated an angry God, we never taught anything of the kind, and they know we never did. Yet we are not to be frightened into denying or qualifying our assertion that the action of God towards man has been wondrously affected by the atonement of Christ. God the Judge would have condemned us to punishment had not Jesus suffered in our place, so that, in justice, we might be permitted to go free.

Not only is man made willing to love God by the manifestation of the love of God in Christ Jesus, but it has become possible for God to extend the hand of amity towards sinful man through the

atonement, and this would not have been possible, consistently with the divine attributes, if it had not been for the atoning sacrifice. We must still stand to it, that the blood is not merely a comfort to the wounded conscience, but is really a satisfaction to divine justice—a covering, a propitiation, a mercy seat for the Most Holy God.

That is a striking passage concerning the Passover and the destroying angel in Egypt. Thus spoke JEHOVAH, “When I see the blood, I will pass over you.” not, “When you see the blood.” The spared ones did not see the blood at that moment, for you will remember, they were all inside the house feasting upon the lamb. The father of the family had put the blood outside upon the lintel and the side-posts, not for the inhabitants to see, but for God to see. And so, though a sight of the precious blood, thanks be to God, does bring us faith, and joy, and peace, yet the real work of our salvation is not the effect of the blood upon us, but the effect of the blood upon God Himself, not, it is true, a change produced in God, but a change which is thus produced in the action of divine justice.

Apart from the blood, we are guilty and condemned. Washed in the blood, we are accepted and beloved. Without the atonement, we are aliens and strangers, heirs of God’s wrath even as others, but as seen in the eternal covenant purpose, through the precious blood of Jesus, we are accepted in the beloved. The great stress of the transaction lies in its being done “before the LORD.”

Still, further, carefully observe that as soon as ever the sin was thus “before the LORD,” laid upon the bullock, the bullock was slain. “He shall lay his hands upon the bullock’s head, and kill the bullock before the LORD.” So, in the fifteenth verse, “The elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD, and the bullock shall be killed before the LORD.”

Ah! yes, as soon as the sin is transferred, the penalty is transferred too. Down fell the pole-axe the minute that the priestly hand had been laid on the bullock. Unsheathed was the bloody knife of sacrifice the moment that the elders had begun to lean upon the sacrificial head. So was it with our Savior. He must smart, He must die, for only as dying could He become our sin offering.

Ah! brethren, those who would preach Christ, but not Christ crucified, miss the very soul and essence of our holy faith. “Let Him come down from the cross, and we will believe in him,” is the Unitarian cry. Anything but a crucified God. But there indeed lies the secret of that mystery, and the very core and kernel of our confidence. A reigning Savior I do rejoice in, the thought of the splendor yet to come makes glad our eyes, but after all, it is a bleeding Savior that is the sinner’s hope. It is to the cross, the center of misery, that the sinner turns his eyes for comfort, rather than to the stars of Bethlehem, or to the blazing sun of the millennial kingdom.

I remember one joining this church who said, “Sir, I had faith once in Christ glorified, but it never gave me comfort. I have now come to a faith in Christ crucified, and I have peace.” At Calvary there is the comfort, and there only. That Jesus lives is delightful, but the basis of the delight is, “He lives who once was slain.” That He will reign forever is a most precious doctrine of our faith, but that the hand that wields the silver scepter, once was pierced, is the great secret of the joy.

O beloved, abide not in any place from which your eye cannot behold the cross of Christ. When you are thinking of the doctrines of the Gospel, or the precepts of the Word, or studying the prophecies of Scripture, never let your mind relinquish the study of the cross. The cross was the place of your spiritual birth. It must ever be the spot for renewing your health, for it is the sanatorium of every sin-sick soul.

The blood is the true balm of Gilead. It is the only catholicon which heals every spiritual disease. Come, sin-sick soul, and breathe the air which was purified when the blood of the heart of Jesus fell from His wounds to the ground, for no spiritual disease can abide the presence of the healing blood. Hurry, you weak ones, to Calvary, and partake in God-given strength and vigor. It is from Calvary that you shall see the Sun of righteousness arising with healing beneath His wings. The beloved Physician meets His patients at the foot of the cross and relieves them from all their ills.

I shall not ask you to dwell on any further details of the type, as they refer to the substitution, but I cannot leave the topic till I have asked each one this all-important question, “Is the Lord Jesus made a sin offering for you? It is written, “He has made Him to be sin for us,” and from this it appears that sin

was laid upon Jesus by God Himself, but still it is true that each believer by faith lays his own sins there, and the hymn, “I lay my sins on Jesus,” is quite scriptural. Have you, dear friend, seen your sins laid on Jesus? Has your faith laid its hand upon His head?

My dear hearers, we shall soon, each one of us, have to pass through the vale of death. It may be but a very short time before some of us will know what are the solemnities of our last, departing hour. Are you ready?—quite ready? You have been a professor of religion for years—are you now ready to die? Can you hope that if at this moment the summons were given, sitting where you are, you are so really and truly resting in the precious blood, that sin would not disturb your dying peace, because it is forgiven and put away!

Search the ground of your hope, I pray you, and be not satisfied unless your faith is surely built upon the Rock of Ages. Get as much assurance as you can, my brethren, but beware of presumption. I have seen some of those fine Christians who will not say,

*“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!”*

And I think very little of them. It is their boast that no hymns will suit them but those which are full of assurance and conscious enjoyment. I admire their confidence, if it is the fruit of the Spirit, but I fear, in many cases, it is the offspring of proud, unhumiliated self-conceit. I know that in shaking times, when I am sorely vexed with bodily pain and mental distractions, I am glad enough to say,

*“Let me hide myself in You!
Let the water and the blood,
From Your riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and power!”*

Without boasting, I can declare as much about strong faith in God as most men, and I can usually rejoice in the fullest confidence of my acceptance in the Beloved, but there are times with me of deeply awful depression of spirit, and horror of great darkness, and at such periods my joyous confidence takes the form of humbly pleading the blood once shed for sinners, and saying, with a broken heart,

*“Nothing in my hands I bring:
Simply to Your cross I cling.”*

It seems to me, that humbly resting upon Jesus is the best position for us. And I ask each of you, very affectionately, whether that is your position at this present moment? Does your heart rejoice in the Substitute? Do you rejoice in the language of these two precious verses?

*“When Satan tempts me to despair,
And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look, and see Him there
Who made an end of all my sin.*

*Because the sinless Savior died,
My sinful soul is counted free;
For God, the Just, is satisfied
To look on Him, and pardon me.”*

II. Let us turn to the second part of the subject. The chapter sets forth before us THE EFFICACY OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JESUS.

As soon as the bullock was slain, the priest carefully collected the blood. The bullock was slain in the court of the Israelites. See, there it lies at the foot of the brazen altar, with the blood in a basin. The priest passes into the court of the priests, passes by the golden altar of incense, which stood in the holy place, and proceeds to dip his finger in the basin and to sprinkle the blood seven times towards the veil which concealed the Holy of Holies. Whether the blood fell on the veil or not, we are not certain, but we have good reason to believe that it was cast upon the veil itself.

The veil, of costliest tapestry, would thus become by degrees more and more like a vesture dipped in blood. Seven times towards the veil the blood of the sin offering was sprinkled by the priest. Why did he begin there? It was to show that our communion with God is by blood. The veil was not then, of course, torn. It showed that the way of access to God was not then revealed. The sprinkling of the blood showed that the only thing that could open the way of access to God was the blood, that the blood, when it should be perfectly offered, seven times sprinkled, would rend the veil.

The blood of Jesus has to the letter fulfilled the type. When our Lord had sprinkled, if I may say so, seven times His own heart's blood upon the veil, He said, "It is finished," and "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." Beloved, through the perfect offering of the precious blood, we have access with boldness into this grace wherein we stand. and we who have faith in that blood have intimate communion with the living God, and come near to His mercy seat to talk with Him, who dwells between the cherubim, as a man talks with his friend.

The priest began at the innermost point, because the first thing which a Christian loses through sin is communion with God, and free access to Him, and consequently the first thing to be restored to him must be this communion with his God. Suppose, my brother, you backslide, there are some things which you will not lose at once. You will still be able to pray in a feeble style. You will still have some sense of acceptance, but certainly your enjoyment and fellowship with God will be suspended as soon as you have fallen from your first estate. Therefore the blood is sprinkled upon the veil to show you that through the blood, and through the blood only, you can renew your access.

You advanced Christians, you who have lived in the very heart of God, and have stood like Milton's angel in the sun, you who have been made to sit at the banqueting table, and to drink of the wines on the lees well refined, you who have been the King's favorites, and like Mephibosheth, have always been made to sit at the King's own table, and to eat of the choice portions of His dainties, if you have lost your heavenly fellowship, it is through the blood, and through the blood alone, that you can again have access unto the heart of God.

The next act of the priest was to retire a little from the veil to the place where stood the golden altar of incense, adorned with four horns of gold, probably of a pyramidal shape, or fashioned like rams' horns, and the priest, dipping his finger in the basin, smeared this horn and the other, until the four horns glowed with crimson in the light of the golden candlestick. The horn is always, in the oriental usage, indicative of strength. What was the blood put upon the altar for, then? That incense altar was typical of prayer, and especially of the intercession of Christ, and the blood on the horn showed that the force and power of all-prevailing intercession lies in the blood.

Why was this the second thing done? It seems to me that the second thing which a Christian loses is his prevalence in prayer. Whereas, first he loses communion with God when he backslides, the next thing he loses is his power in supplication. He begins to be feeble upon his knees. He cannot win of the Lord that which he desires. How is he to get back his strength? Here the great Anointed Priest teaches us to look to the blood for renewed power, for see, He applies the blood to the horns of the altar, and the sweet perfume of frankincense ascends to heaven and God accepts it.

O beloved, think of this, Christ's intercessory power with God lies in His precious blood, and your power and mine with God in prayer must lie in that blood, too. Oh! to see the horns of that altar smeared with blood! How can you ever prevail with God unless you plead the blood of Jesus! Believer, if you would overcome in prayer, tell the Lord of all the groans of His dear Son, never dream of arguing except with arguments fetched from Jesus' wounds. These are potent pleas with God—the bloody sweat, the

flagellation, the nails, the spear, the vinegar, the cross—these must be the mighty reasons with which to overcome the Infinite One. Let the altar of your incense be smeared blood.

This being finished, the priest goes backwards still further and enters the court of the Israelites. There stood the great altar of brass, whereon was consumed the burnt offerings, and now the priest, having his basin full of the blood, of which only a small quantity had been used in sprinkling the veil and touching the horns of the golden altar, pours the whole of the remaining blood in a great stream at the foot of the altar of burnt offering.

What does that typify? Did he not thus teach us that the only ground and basis (for mark, it is put at the foot of the altar) of the acceptance of our persons and of our thank offerings is found in the blood of Jesus? Did it never strike you how the whole tabernacle must have been smeared with blood everywhere? Blood was on every side. The priest himself, when at his work, with garments on which showed every stain, must have looked as though all smeared with gore. You could not look at his hands or at his vestments without seeing everywhere blood. Indeed, when consecrated, he had blood on his ear, blood on his foot, blood on his hand, he could not be made a priest without it.

The apostle says, “almost everything under the law was sprinkled with blood.” It was blood, blood everywhere. Now, this could have been very far from a pleasant sight, except to the spiritual man who, as he looked at it, said, “What a holy God is the God of Israel! How He hates sin! See, He will only permit sinners to approach Him by the way of blood!” And then the inquiring mind would ask, “What blood is this which is here intended?” We know that the blood of bulls and of goats was but the visible symbol of the sufferings of Jesus, the great Sacrifice, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation for our sins. All the blood-marks pointed to the “Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.” Let us rejoice in the precious blood of Christ the Lamb without blemish and without spot, who was foreordained from the foundations of the world, but was manifest in these last days for us.

Will you now make a summary of what has been spoken? Come with me outside the tabernacle. Let us begin at the opening in its curtains leading to the outer court. We have sinned and desire acceptance with God, that must be the first blessing. The brazen altar of burnt offerings is standing before us, and we wish to offer our thank offering, may we do so? How can we be accepted? Look at the bottom of the altar! What do you see there? A pool of blood all around it, as though the altar stood in blood! What does this mean? Surely the blood of Jesus is the basis of our acceptance before God, and here we stand as citizens of heaven, not accursed, but beloved, not rejected and abhorred, but elect and blessed through the blood which is the ground of our acceptance as believers and citizens of Zion.

Now we have come so far, we remember that we are not only citizens of the New Jerusalem, but priests unto God, and as priests we desire to enter the court of the priests, and offer the incense of praise and prayer. Here we stand as priests, and there is the golden altar, but where is our power to minister before the Lord? How shall we approach with the love of our hearts, our joyful thanks, and our fervent intercessions? Behold the answer to our inquiries! Observe with joy the blood-marks on the four horns! It is not our prayers that will be in themselves prevalent, nor our praises, nor our love, but the blood gives prevalence, acceptance, and power to all. Come here then and let us lay our heart itself, all bleeding upon that altar, and let our prayers and praises rise to heaven, like pillars of smoke, accepted through the blood.

But beloved, this is not all, we are something more than priests, we are *children* of God, dear to His heart. Let us then seek fellowship with our Father who is in heaven. How can we enter into the most holy place and commune with the God who hides Himself? What is the mode of entrance into that which is within the veil?

We look, and lo, the veil is rent, and on the floor, right across where the veil used to hang, we see a line of blood, where, times without number, the blood had been sprinkled, and on the two pieces of the veil through which we pass, we can see many distinct traces of blood. Yes, and when we come right up to the mercy seat, we can see the blood there, too. What means this but that the blood is the means of access to God and by no other means is He to be approached?

When we shall be nearest to God, and see Him face to face, and dwell with Him in heaven forever, it will be because Jesus Christ loved us and died for us, and sprinkled His blood for us that we are permitted to have this close and wonderful communion with God, which even angels never had, for even they can only veil their faces with their wings, but must not dare to look upon God as we shall do, when our eyes shall see Him as our Father and our Friend.

Thus I have tried to set forth the threefold prevalence of the precious blood, but let it not be forgotten that the blood also put away sin, for you find at the end of the chapter, “His sin shall be forgiven.” First forgiven, then accepted, then prevalent in prayer, and then admitted into access with boldness to God. What a chain of blessings! All, all through the blood of Jesus!

III. Thirdly, the most painful part of our sermon remains, while I beg you to view **THE SHAME WHICH OUR LORD ENDURED.**

While it is all so well for us, so sweet for us, I want you now to reflect how bitter, how shameful it was for our Lord! The offerer who brought the sin offering has been forgiven. He has been accepted at the brazen altar. His prayers have been heard at the golden altar, and the veil has been sprinkled on his behalf—but what of the victim itself? Draw nigh and learn with holy wonder.

In the first place, albeit that our Lord Jesus Christ was made sin for us, it is noteworthy that, though nearly all the bullock was burned without the camp, there was one portion left and reserved to be burnt upon the altar of burnt offering, that was the fat. Certain descriptions are given as to the fat which was to be consumed upon the altar, by which we believe it was intended to ensure that the richest part of the fat should be there consumed. As much as if God would say, “Though My dear Son must be made sin for this people, and consequently I must forsake Him, and He must die outside the camp, yet still He is most dear and precious in My sight, and even while He is a sin offering, yet He is My beloved Son in whom in Himself I am still well pleased.”

Brethren, whenever we speak about our Lord as bearing our sins, we must carefully speak concerning Him, not as though God ever did despise or abhor the prayer of His afflicted Son, but only seemed to do so while He stood for us, representatively made sin for us, though He knew no sin. Oh! I delight to think that the Lord smelled a sweet even in the cross, and that Jesus Christ is this day a sweet savor unto God, even as a sin offering. The fat, the excellence of His heart, the consecration of His soul, were acceptable to God, and sweet in His esteem, even when He laid upon Him the iniquity of His people.

Still, here is the shameful part of it. The priest then took the bullock, and gathering up all the innards, every part of it, the skin, the dung—all mentioned to teach us what a horrible thing sin is, and what the Surety was looked upon as being when He took our sin—he took it all up, and either himself personally, or assisted by others, took it away out of the camp. We are told that in the wilderness, so large was the camp, that it may have been the distance of four miles that this bullock had to be carried.

I think I see the sad procession—the priest all smeared with blood, carrying the carcass of the bullock, taking it right away down the long line of tents, first through the abodes of one tribe and then of another, through the long streets of tents, while the people stood at their doors and saw the ghastly sight. It was killed at the altar of burnt offering. Why was it not burnt there? That altar was holy, and as soon as ever sin was laid upon the bullock, it ceased to be any longer looked upon as a holy thing. It could not therefore be burnt in the holy place, it must be right taken away. So the priest carried it away—a terrible load—till he reached the usual place where the ashes were kindled, and he put the bullock there, and heaped the hot ashes upon it till the whole smoked up to heaven, and was utterly consumed as a sin offering.

My beloved, try if you can to grasp the idea of Jesus being put away from God. I cannot give you the thoughts, but if you could hear the air pierced with the dreadful cry, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” you would see Christ put away because He was made sin. It was not possible for God to look upon sin, even when it was in Christ, with anything like satisfaction. “It pleased the Father to bruise him; he has put him to grief.” If you have read the order of the burnt

offering, you will have noticed that when the bullock of the burnt offering was offered, it was washed, to show the perfection of Christ as He is a sweet savor, all pure and clean, but in this case there is added that humiliating word, "with the dung." What a humiliating type of Christ! Ah, but what are your sins and mine that were laid upon Jesus? How could our iniquities and transgressions be better set forth than by that bleeding, mangled mass, which the high priest had to carry out away from the camp, as though it were a thing abhorred, which could not be endured in the camp any longer? It is your Savior made sin for you and put away on your behalf.

After the removal, they gathered the hot ashes, they kindled the fire, and burnt it all. See here a faint image of the fire which consumed the Savior upon Calvary! His bodily pains ought never to be forgotten, because there is so intimate a relation between physical suffering and mental grief, that it were hard to draw the line. But still the sufferings of His soul must have been the very soul of His sufferings, and can you tell what they were? Have you ever suffered from a raging fever? Have you felt at the same time the pangs of some painful disease? Has your mind refused to rest? Has your brain been tossed like the waves of a sea of fire within your head? Have you questioned whether you should lose your reason or not? Have you ever been near unto distraction? Have you ever been near unto the breaking of the cords of life?

If so, you may feebly guess what He suffered when He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and when He "began to be sorrowful and to be very heavy." Those were the coals of juniper which were being heaped over the sin offering. As you see Jesus scourged by Herod and by Pilate, and afterwards bleeding on the accursed tree, you see the fire of divine wrath consuming the sin offering, because our sin had been laid upon Him. I will not dwell longer on this, only ask the Holy Spirit to make you feel the shame that Christ suffered for you.

Sometimes I cannot grasp the thought, when I have tried to think that He who made the heavens, to whom the whole blue arch is but as a span, and the depths of the seas as the hollow of His hand, should be made flesh! and suffer for such an insignificant worm as I am. That He should suffer, however, never amazes me so much as that He should bear my sin. Oh! marvelous! The angels say, "Holy! Holy! Holy! LORD God of Sabaoth!" What could they have said when He, whom they hymned as "glorious in holiness," bowed His head and gave up the ghost, because "made sin for us"? Blessed Son of God! Where we cannot understand we will adore.

The apostle Paul suggests to us the most practical conclusion of our sermon. He tells us that as our Savior, having given His blood to be sprinkled within the tabernacle for us, was then taken outside the camp, so it is our duty, ay, and our privilege, to go forth unto Him without the camp also, bearing His reproach. You have heard how He was reproached for you, are you unwilling to be reproached for Him! You have heard how He went without the camp in that shameful manner, are you unwilling to go without the camp for Him?

Too many Christians try to be Christians in the camp, but it cannot be done. "Be not conformed to this world, but be you transformed by the renewing of your minds." There is so much of worldly conformity among us, but the promise is not to worldly-minded Christians, but, "Come you out from among them; be you separate; touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you." How much we lose by affinities with the world! How much of distance there is between us and God, because of the nearness there is between us and the world! Come out, you lovers of the Savior, and tread the separated way which your Savior walked before you!

And now, should there be any here who are unsaved, I should not wonder but what some of them will make the remark, the almost, nay, the quite profane remark, "Why, he spoke so much of blood!" Ah! sinner, and we need to speak much of it to you, for it is your only hope. God will either have your blood or Christ's blood, one of the two. If you reject Christ, you shall perish in your sin. "The blood is the life thereof," says the Word of God, and your life must be taken unless Christ's life shall avail for you.

The very heart of Christ was broken to find out the way to save a sinner, and sinner, there is no other. If you refuse the purple road, you shall never reach the pearly gate. Trust in the blood of Jesus. Do you doubt? How can you? Is there not efficacy enough in the blood of the Son of God to take away sin? Do you contradict God's declared truth? "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin." Oh! believe it, and cast your soul upon it, and we will meet within the veil, one of these days, to sing, "To Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood...to him be glory forever and ever." Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—LEV 4:1-21. Heb 13:10-15.

Taken from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.