

EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

Group Bible Study 7

VERSES TO READ:

2 Corinthians 5:21

Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Leviticus 4:3

If the anointed priest sins so as to bring guilt on the people, then let him present a bull of the herd without blemish to Jehovah for a sin offering for his sin that he committed.

Romans 8:3

For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,

DISCOVERY PORTION:

THE SIN OFFERING

What is sin? People commonly understand sin to be actions such as killing people and

beating people. Actually, those are merely sinful acts and not sin itself. This may be likened to the fact that a tree and its fruit are not the same. Sin is the tree, whereas sinful acts are the fruit of the tree. Stealing, lying, and doing shameful things are examples of the fruit of sin, sinful acts.

Romans chapter six speaks clearly about sin. It says that sin can reign and can have dominion over us (v. 12). In the Bible sin does not refer to the outward actions of sin; rather, it refers to the source of sin that dwells in us. Romans 8:3 says, "For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh." Because the Lord Jesus came in the likeness of the flesh of sin, He could be the sin offering for us, and as such, He judged sin and condemned sin. In other words, first the Lord came in the likeness of the flesh of sin, then He became the sin offering, and finally He condemned sin.

What does it mean that the Lord came in the likeness of the flesh of sin? Second Corinthians 5:21a says, "Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf." Not only do we commit sinful acts, but we are sin; we sin because we are sin. A tree bears oranges because it is an orange tree.

Likewise, we commit sins because we are sin; even if we do not commit any sinful acts, we are still sin. In the beginning, after Adam was created and before his fall, he did not sin because he was not sin; he was a man. Then in Genesis chapter three after he had eaten the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (v. 6), another element was added into him. That element was Satan. When the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil entered into man, Satan entered into man as sin. Since that time there has been the element of sin within man, and man has become sin. Everyone who is of Adam is a sinner from his birth.

In God's creation we were humans, but after sin entered into us, we became sinners. Since we are sinners, we commit sins without being taught, just as an orange tree, after a period of time, will naturally bear oranges without having to learn how to. Some would ask, "What is man?" Strictly speaking, man is sin. Within man there is nothing but sin. However, one day the Lord Jesus became flesh; that is, He became a man like us. We are sin, so when the Lord Jesus became a man, He was in the likeness of the flesh of sin. He not only bore our sins but also became sin for us. He who did not know sin was made sin on our behalf. However, although He had the likeness of

the flesh of sin, within Him He did not have the substance of sin. This is typified by the bronze serpent in the Old Testament (Num. 21:4-9).

John 3:14 says, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up.” That bronze serpent typified Christ. In the Old Testament a bronze serpent was lifted up on a pole; in the New Testament a man-Jesus-was lifted up on the cross on Mount Golgotha. Was the One who was hung on the cross a man or a serpent? He was a man, yet He was typified by a serpent; He had the appearance of a serpent, yet He was truly a man. The serpent is Satan (Gen. 3:1; Rev. 12:9). After the children of Israel sinned in the wilderness, poisonous serpents came into their midst and bit them. When the venom of the serpent entered into them, they became serpents. To say that at that time they were merely humans would not be entirely accurate; they were also like serpents because within them they were full of the element of the serpent. Therefore, God lifted up a substitute—a bronze serpent—on the pole. Instead of lifting up a man, God lifted up a bronze serpent, because in His eyes all the children of Israel had become serpents.

However, there is a difference between the serpent that was lifted up on the pole and the serpents that bit the children of Israel. The serpent on the pole was a bronze serpent without the serpent’s poison. The bronze serpent typified Christ who became sin on our behalf and who was in the likeness of the flesh of sin. He only had the likeness of the flesh of sin; He did not have the reality of the sin of the flesh. Having been made sin in this way, He went to the cross as our sin offering to be judged and condemned there. When He was condemned, sin was condemned. Because man is sin, when the Lord Jesus became man, He became sin. When He went to the cross, He brought us—sin—with Him to the cross. When He was judged, we were also judged; that is, sin was also judged. When He was condemned, we were also condemned; that is, sin was also condemned. By being judged and condemned He became the sin offering; as such, He died for us not in name but in reality. As the sin offering He dealt with us, the sinners.

**BELIEVING IN THE LORD
IN ORDER TO BE REGENERATED
AND TO SOLVE ALL THE
PROBLEMS OF SIN**

Therefore, if we would receive God as our life, we must believe and receive this Savior

who died on the cross. As soon as we receive this Savior, we receive the redemption that He accomplished on the cross, which solves the problems of our sinful deeds, our sinful nature, and the record of sin that we have before God. The Lord Jesus solved all the problems of sin. After He died, He released the divine life, and He resurrected from the dead to become the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). Now He is presented to us in His word. If we believe in His words, He, as the life-giving Spirit, will enter into us to be our life.

Once we believe into the Lord Jesus, we pass out of death into life. Formerly, we were those who were bitten by the serpent and were under the pole on which the bronze serpent was set. But as soon as we look at the bronze serpent, we become alive. We come out of death and will not perish. We have eternal life. The Lord Jesus was sinless and did not know sin, but He put on the likeness of the flesh of sin to become sin in order to solve all the problems of sin. Now through faith we may have the life of God and become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). We have died to sins so that we can live to righteousness (1 Pet. 2:24). In this way all the problems brought in by Satan are fully resolved. We have God as our life. We have the eternal life within us. This is regeneration.