
WHY DID GOD COMMAND HIS PEOPLE TO OFFER SACRIFICES IN WHICH HE DID NOT TAKE PLEASURE IN?

Answering Some Few Questions in the Bible: Episode 4

LYENGAMUWA WAKUNG'OLI

ABSTRACT

In this article we are dealing with the very important subject that finds its theme in the New Testament and that is the pleasure of God and the sacrifices. As we study, we are going to learn how the sacrifice of Christ is of great value and in Him alone the LORD God is pleased.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION 1

WHY THEN DID GOD GIVE THE LAW TO HIS PEOPLE WHICH REQUIRED SUCH SACRIFICES WHICH HE DID NOT TAKE PLEASURE IN? 1

 a) Broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart is the end to which the sacrifices were given..... 2

 b) God Is Not Pleased in Sacrifices Because They Are Not a Payment for One’s Sins For No One Can Pay for His Sins by Those Means 2

 c) God’s Grace Is the Means for Restoration Not the Sacrifices Offered to Him 2

 d) The Sins Were Accounted to The One the Sacrifices Was Pointing to Not in The Sacrifices Themselves..... 3

SECOND: A BETTER SACRIFICE IS NEEDED IN WHICH GOD IS PLEASED TO TAKE AWAY SIN 3

INTRODUCTION

You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise (Ps 51:16-17, NIV).

This is the confession of David after he was confronted for the act of adultery. It is evident in this Psalm that David was indeed broken over his own sins. Not only does David recognize that forgiveness is from God, he also acknowledges the pleasure of God in brokenness not sacrifices.

Contrite: feeling or expressing remorse at the recognition that one has done wrong.¹

¹ “Contrite,” accessed October 15, 2021, https://www.google.com/search?q=contrite&rlz=1C1GCEU_enNL890NL890&oq=contrite&aqs=chr

With this there is a proclamation of humility of the worshiper of God. One of the ways *humility* expresses itself in its manifold expressions is:

- Toward others we consider others as better than ourselves (Phil 2:3).
- Toward God we regard God as God and obey Him. Pride would be the opposite of this. “Yet they say to God, ‘Leave us alone! We have no desire to know your ways. Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him? What would we gain by praying to him?’ (Job 21:14-15).”
- When one is convicted of sin, he/she feels sorry and sees the grace of God as the means of restoration to God and others (James 4:4-10).²

Comfort that the soul gets from God is that He is pleased in such a one who seek restoration from God when convicted of sin. The verse exalts us to such a life before God.

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. (Ps 51:10-12, NIV)

WHY THEN DID GOD GIVE THE LAW TO HIS PEOPLE WHICH REQUIRED SUCH SACRIFICES WHICH HE DID NOT TAKE PLEASURE IN?

“You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.”

Concerning the sacrifices, one would ask why then did God give the law to his people which required such sacrifices which he did not take pleasure in?

ome.0.69i59j0i51219.2194j1j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

² Borrowed list with verses added to it.

First is the motive that God requires when he commanded His people to offer such sacrifices:

a) Broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart is the end to which the sacrifices were given

The end to which the sacrifices was given show that the sacrifices themselves are not the end. In light of our relationship with God, they were not things to pay God so that He does not show His anger toward the worshiper for his sins. For instance, one sins, and God shows His anger toward that person and when that person sees that, he thinks in his heart, “mmmh let me take this sacrifice and God’s anger will be taken away.” O poor Soul! No, that is not what God takes pleasure in. *“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”*

b) God Is Not Pleased in Sacrifices Because They Are Not a Payment for One’s Sins For No One Can Pay for His Sins by Those Means

What can the poor soul give God to turn away the Anger of the Lord? Moses proclaims this in Psalm “Who knows the power of your anger? For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you (Ps 90:11, NIV).” We have no idea of this fear, we all have fallen short of it. The wrath of God is put on same scale with the fear that is due to Him. For this very reason that David proclaims the sacrifices that pleases God when God confront the sins of men are broken spirit and broken heart because that is the only thing that God requires from the worshiper. **A better sacrifice that covers for the sins of the worshiper the Lord will provide and the worshiper is to relay on the mercy of God. The sacrifices were a shadow of the sacrifice that was to come through Christ thus they Lord took not pleasure in them.**

It is so natural to us to think of paying off for the wrongs we have done by doing

what is good. When I was growing up, one of the common habits I had and my other family members I was growing up with was to think of doing good when we sin against our parents in order for our parents to forgive us. I have seen this in my young brother’s life too. When he offends his mom, because he knows his mother might need containers filled up with water, he would fill all the containers and come back to her and say, “are you still angry with me?” one would judge right that, what he applies is that, look at the good work I have done, that must be enough payment for me to be forgiven.

Even our good deeds cannot pay for our sins. Our good deeds fail us on the day of wrath.

c) God’s Grace Is the Means for Restoration Not the Sacrifices Offered to Him

The pleasure of God proclaims the grace of God sought by the broken heart knowing that it cannot do anything to pay for its salvation. **God’s grace is the means for restoration not the sacrifices to Him.**

David knew that even if he would bring all sacrifice, all kind of burnt offerings before God without being broken for his sin that is meaningless, for God would not accept such offering. One thing should be clear from here: **A sinner under God’s wrath is called to be broken before God and seek mercy and grace from God and through that God will restore the sinner**

The end of the confrontation is not to proclaim that there is no way but that there is a way: “For God is pleased.” The pleasure of God in the brokenness of our heart spares our souls to think of ways we can save ourselves from God’s anger. Our salvation from the wrath of God then remains by faith not by work. Faith in the fact that God has opened a way for us

through His mercy and grace to come to Him in brokenness and contrite heart.

d) The Sins Were Accounted to The One the Sacrifices Was Pointing to Not in The Sacrifices Themselves

God's people in the Old Testament were to learn brokenness in seeking of God's mercy. God offered mercy to the worshiper not that the sacrifices in themselves were enough to take away sin or cleanse the worshiper but that **the sins were accounted to the one the sacrifices were pointing to**. One thing that we should note is that, it is God, who account the sins of the worshiper on the sacrifice not the worshiper. Isaiah says,

We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all. (Isa 53:6
NIV)

He continues to say,

Yet it was the LORD's will to crush
him and cause him to suffer,
and though the LORD makes his life a
guilt offering, (Isa 53:10, NIV)

Thus, why our confession of sin does not solve the problem that is brought by our sins—that is the violation of God's holiness of which the only way to be saved is when God vindicate His glory through a better sacrifice of Christ. **The sacrifices proclaimed the mercy of God that was to come through Christ upon which the sinner was to depend on**. This is the language we find when we talk about justification.

Rom 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 (NIV).

Though the Lord is pleased in our brokenness as we come to seek His mercy, our brokenness is not what solve the big

problem caused by our sin—that is the violation of God's holiness which calls for separation from God. It is the Lord who provided the sacrifice of His Son to uphold His glory so that by faith we may be saved. It is on this foundation of this better sacrifice that our fellowship with God is founded. We are forgiven and restored because God's mercy is available through Christ. **Even though in the Old Testament Christ did not yet come, the sacrifices taught the people that God is the one who gives mercy and they were to depend on the mercy from God for the forgiveness of their sins as they waited when the Lord God would reveal His mercy proclaimed through the sacrifices.**

SECOND: A BETTER SACRIFICE IS NEEDED IN WHICH GOD IS PLEASED TO TAKE AWAY SIN

A better sacrifice is needed to take away sin and cleanse the conscious of the worshiper before God. In light of the work of Christ, the sacrifices were a shadow of things to Come through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Heb 10:1-10 says,

The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming — not the realities themselves. For this reason, it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said:

"Sacrifice and offering you did not desire,
but a body you prepared for me;
with burnt offerings and sin offerings
you were not pleased.

Then I said, 'Here I am — it is written
about me in the scroll —
I have come to do your will, O
God.'"

First, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them" (although the law required them to be made). Then he said, "Here I am, I have come to do your will." He sets aside the first to establish the second. And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

We have learnt that the theology in the confession of David find its fulfilment in Christ. Christ is the only sacrifice in which God is pleased, for He is the one who takes away the sins of the world as John the Baptist said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29)."

We have also learnt that the foundation of our fellowship with God is based on God's mercy which was proclaimed in the sacrifices in the Old Testament and in Christ in the New Testament. In both Testaments sinners are to depend on God's mercy to be in fellowship with Him.