

DID GOD WANT ANIMAL SACRIFICES?



"Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come ...to do thy will, O God." Hebrews 10:5-7

The passage above speaks of when Christ came into the world. This is the "incarnation," when "The Word," who was "with God" and who "was God," was "made flesh, and dwelt among us..." John 1:1-14. Who would know the attitude of God toward animal sacrifices better than He? The absolute failure of such a system was the reason Christ came. "A body hast thou prepared me" speaks of the infant body, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. This was "Christ, the Lord from heaven" Luke 2:11, who was "come into the world" both to "take away the sin of the world," and to "redeem them that were under the law" Galatians 4:4-5.

The Law of Moses with its sacrifice system was "imposed upon" Hebrews 9:10 the children of Israel as punishment for refusing the voice of God at Sinai. As a parent, did you ever have to discipline your child severely when it had been in your heart to bless them beyond measure? God's will for the children of Israel, when He brought them out of Egypt, was to make them "a kingdom of priests" and "a holy nation" if they would simply "obey His voice" and "keep His covenant." We can remember their protest to Moses when God began speaking to them from the mountain, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" Exodus 20:19. Out of this sad incident "the Law of Moses" was born, and the first commandment to Moses was "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen..." Exodus 20:24. The children of Israel had agreed to "obey the voice of Moses" Deuteronomy 5:27, if only God would not speak to them again. What a poor choice they made! They would have been blessed beyond measure if they had chosen God instead of Moses. The apostle Paul tells us the Law of Moses "... was added because of transgressions till the seed (the Christ) should come ..." Galatians 3:19.

There were those who loved God and "endured His chastisement" Hebrews 12:7, by keeping the commands and ordinances of Moses, and they were blessed by God. Yet there were others who saw the sacrifices as "permission to sin." As long as they offered another lamb, they believed their sin was covered. As in every age, those who believed God were righteous. Those who thought to "cover their sins" eventually suffered the wrath of God.

God gave a clear record of His feelings concerning animal sacrifices. We see the record in the writings of several of His prophets.

Jeremiah: "Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt

offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God..." Jeremiah 7:21-23

Isaiah: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats." Isaiah 1:11

"He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. **Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.**" Isaiah 66:3

Samuel: "Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to **obey is better than sacrifice**, and to hearken than the fat of rams." 1 Samuel 15:22

David: "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Psalms 51:16-17

Amos: "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. **Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them:** neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.

Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." Amos 5:21-24

It seems an incredible thought, but, as Jude said they did to the grace of God, ungodly men had also "turned the Law of Moses into lasciviousness." They believed they could sin with abandon as long as they covered it with another sacrifice.

"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." Hebrews 10:4

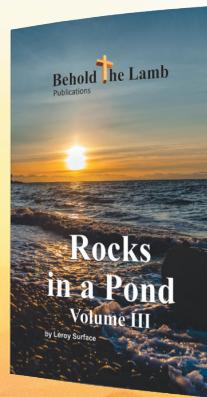
Contrary to popular opinion, the blood of animals could not "cover"

the sins of those who did not "repent with broken spirits and contrite hearts" Psalms 51:17.

Still, in any circumstance, it could not wash a single sin from the heart of any person.

The blood of Jesus was not shed as a covering for sin. It was shed to wash us from our sins. The Bible tells us, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Hebrews 13:12

Christ came into the world "to make an end of sins" and "bring in everlasting righteousness" Daniel 9:24-25. The apostle John said, "...and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" 1 John 1:7. Those who are not "cleansed," yet seek a "covering" in grace to "continue in sin" will meet the same fate as those who "continued in sin" under the Law Romans 2:12.



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