

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
11-10-21
Numbers 15

The Sacrifice Of A Lamb To Be Accompanied With Grain And Wine - Verses 1-5

¹ The LORD said to Moses, ² "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'After you enter the land I am giving you as a home ³ and you present to the LORD food offerings from the herd or the flock, as an aroma pleasing to the LORD—whether burnt offerings or sacrifices, for special vows or freewill offerings or festival offerings— ⁴ then the person who brings an offering shall present to the LORD a grain offering of a tenth of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of olive oil. ⁵ With each lamb for the burnt offering or the sacrifice, prepare a quarter of a hin of wine as a drink offering.

15:1-2 Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: Israel was at one of its lowest points in history. It had just rebelliously rejected God's offer to bring the nation into the Promised Land. God had consigned them to wander in the wilderness for 38 years, until the unbelieving generation had perished in the wilderness and a new generation of faith would take the Promised Land. Yet, immediately after this stinging rebellion and the chastisement from the LORD, Israel received precious tokens of God's mercy, care, and help to Israel.

15:3-5 And you make an offering by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering or a sacrifice: God was merciful to Israel, in that this section deals with sacrifice, sacrifice to cover sin and sacrifice as an expression of thanksgiving. Israel, at their point of failure, needed to be reminded of sacrificial atonement, and the need to give thanks - even in the wilderness. When you have come into the land: God cared for Israel. These were commands that could only be fulfilled in the Promised Land. Inherent in these commands was the promise that God would lead them there, and would not leave them in the wilderness forever.

The Sacrifice Of A Ram And Bull To Be Accompanied With Grain And Wine - Verses 6-10

⁶ "With a ram prepare a grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with a third of a hin of olive oil, ⁷ and a third of a hin of wine as a drink offering. Offer it as an aroma pleasing to the LORD. ⁸ "When you prepare a young bull as a burnt offering or sacrifice, for a special vow or a fellowship offering to the LORD, ⁹ bring with the bull a grain offering of three-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with half a hin of olive oil, ¹⁰ and also bring half a hin of wine as a drink offering. This will be a food offering, an aroma pleasing to the LORD.

15:6-10 Fine flour mixed with half a hin of oil: The offering of the ram and bull each needed progressively greater amounts of grain and wine to accompany them, because they were

progressively bigger sacrifices. The greater our sacrifice unto the LORD, the more thanksgiving and joy should come with the offering.

The Universal Character Of These Laws - Verses 11-16

¹¹ Each bull or ram, each lamb or young goat, is to be prepared in this manner. ¹² Do this for each one, for as many as you prepare. ¹³ "Everyone who is native-born must do these things in this way when they present a food offering as an aroma pleasing to the LORD. ¹⁴ For the generations to come, whenever a foreigner or anyone else living among you presents a food offering as an aroma pleasing to the LORD, they must do exactly as you do. ¹⁵ The community is to have the same rules for you and for the foreigner residing among you; this is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. You and the foreigner shall be the same before the LORD: ¹⁶ The same laws and regulations will apply both to you and to the foreigner residing among you."

15:11-16 Thus it shall be done for each: Everyone who made a sacrifice had to bring it with the thanksgiving of grain and the joy of wine; God did not want grudging, griping sacrifices brought to Him. If one could not serve the LORD with gladness (Psalm 100:2), then God didn't want his service at all.

A Heave Offering Of Thanksgiving To The LORD - Verses 17-21

¹⁷ The LORD said to Moses, ¹⁸ "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you enter the land to which I am taking you ¹⁹ and you eat the food of the land, present a portion as an offering to the LORD. ²⁰ Present a loaf from the first of your ground meal and present it as an offering from the threshing floor. ²¹ Throughout the generations to come you are to give this offering to the LORD from the first of your ground meal.'

15:17-21 When you come into the land in which I bring you: This shows how rich in promise and encouragement these commands are. God sets their mind on the Promised Land, even though they are a long way away from it. Keeping their minds on His promise will help see them through the wilderness and prepare the hearts of the new generation to succeed where the old generation failed.

15:19-21 Then it will be: This set their minds forward to the promise. Even if a child of God isn't walking in the richness of God's promises now, they need to set their mind on heavenly places. Ephesians 2:6 says God has raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus - even if it doesn't feel like it now, set your mind on those heavenly places!

Offerings for Unintentional Sins - Verses 22-29

²² "Now if you as a community unintentionally fail to keep any of these commands the LORD gave Moses— ²³ any of the LORD's commands to you through him, from the day the LORD gave them and continuing through the generations to come— ²⁴ and if this is done

unintentionally without the community being aware of it, then the whole community is to offer a young bull for a burnt offering as an aroma pleasing to the LORD, along with its prescribed grain offering and drink offering, and a male goat for a sin offering. ²⁵ The priest is to make atonement for the whole Israelite community, and they will be forgiven, for it was not intentional and they have presented to the LORD for their wrong a food offering and a sin offering. ²⁶ The whole Israelite community and the foreigners residing among them will be forgiven, because all the people were involved in the unintentional wrong. ²⁷ "But if just one person sins unintentionally, that person must bring a year-old female goat for a sin offering. ²⁸ The priest is to make atonement before the LORD for the one who erred by sinning unintentionally, and when atonement has been made, that person will be forgiven. ²⁹ One and the same law applies to everyone who sins unintentionally, whether a native-born Israelite or a foreigner residing among you.

15:22 If you sin unintentionally: Significantly, the Bible talks about sins unintentionally committed. Many today think and live as if an action is unintentional, it cannot be sin. But many of the worst sins are committed with the best of intentions. Intentions matter nothing when the result is sin.

15:23-29 That the whole congregation shall offer one young bull as a burnt offering: Unintentional sins needed a blood atonement; a bull had to be sacrificed with the nation as a whole was guilty, and a female goat had to be sacrificed when an individual was guilty. You shall have one law for him who sins unintentionally: There was to be no exception. Sin is sin, and must be accounted as such, even if the motive seemed good.

Addressing Presumptuous Sin - Verses 30-31

³⁰ "But anyone who sins defiantly, whether native-born or foreigner, blasphemes the LORD and must be cut off from the people of Israel. ³¹ Because they have despised the LORD's word and broken his commands, they must surely be cut off; their guilt remains on them."

15:30-31 God was willing to forgive those who made unintentional errors if they realized their mistakes quickly and corrected them. However, those who defiantly and deliberately sinned received a harsher judgment. Intentional sin grows out of an improper attitude toward God. A child who knowingly disobeys his parents challenges their authority and dares them to respond. Both the act and the attitude have to be dealt with. **15:32-36** Stoning a man for gathering wood on the Sabbath seems like a severe punishment, and it was.

The Sabbath-Breaker Put to Death - Verses 32-36

³² While the Israelites were in the wilderness, a man was found gathering wood on the Sabbath day. ³³ Those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses and Aaron and the whole assembly, ³⁴ and they kept him in custody, because it was not clear what should be done to him. ³⁵ Then the LORD said to Moses, "The man must die. The whole assembly

must stone him outside the camp.”³⁶ So the assembly took him outside the camp and stoned him to death, as the LORD commanded Moses.

15:32-36 Stoning a man for gathering wood on the Sabbath seems like a severe punishment, and it was. This act was a deliberate sin, defying God’s law against working on the Sabbath. Perhaps the man was taking advantage of everyone else while they were at home resting, in addition to breaking the Sabbath.

Tassels on Garments - Verses 37-41

³⁷ The LORD said to Moses, ³⁸ “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘Throughout the generations to come you are to make tassels on the corners of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel. ³⁹ You will have these tassels to look at and so you will remember all the commands of the LORD, that you may obey them and not prostitute yourselves by chasing after the lusts of your own hearts and eyes. ⁴⁰ Then you will remember to obey all my commands and will be consecrated to your God. ⁴¹ I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt to be your God. I am the LORD your God.’”

15:39 The tassels were to remind people not to seek after their own lustful desires, but to seek the Lord. Idol worship is self-centered, focusing on what a person can get from serving an idol. Good luck, prosperity, long life, and success in battle were expected from the gods. So were power and prestige. The worship of God is the opposite. Believers are to be selfless rather than self-centered. Instead of expecting God to serve us, we are to serve him, expecting nothing in return. We serve God for who he is, not for what we get from him.