

Questions on the Sacrificial Rituals of the Sanctuary

Objections:

Isn't the Old Testament basically about the sacrificial system? Would not having a earthly sacrifice take away from the heavenly sanctuary?

Answer:

The Old Testament is concerned with Christ and the signs with which to recognise His coming as the Messiah. The OT also demonstrates what happens to humanity and the earth, when people choose to live apart from the principles of God's loving law. There is a sacrifice for sins and Jesus made it in collaboration with His Father, but the sacrifice is one that is better portrayed by the words and life of Jesus, than by the sacrificial rituals of the sanctuary. Jesus died for humanity and accepted the sins of the world upon His own self, when He took on sinful, human, mortal flesh and developed a perfect character whilst in that sinful flesh. That was the sacrifice which Christ gave for humanity. It was total sacrifice of His entire being - His entire life. His sacrifice required that He live as a human being until His human mortal life expired. At that point the test of His character would cease. Christ gave us His perfect life - by developing a perfect human character - amidst severe temptations. His act of giving His entire being, was the sacrifice. Hebrews 1:1, 2 "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, (2) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;" The heavenly sanctuary is the real tabernacle designed by God, where no human being or demonic angel can taint or corrupt the system of righteousness conducted by God. Hebrews 8:2 "A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Where is the real sanctuary? In heaven. What is it polluted with? The record of our sins. Only Jesus can remove the record of sins from the heavenly sanctuary and He could only accomplish this saving act by becoming the second Adam and by living a perfect life in sinful flesh. This gift was the sacrifice of heaven which made it possible for the earthly sanctuaries of our bodies to be cleansed of sin and of the power of sin. There are no blood-letting rituals in the heavenly sanctuary or even an altar of sacrifice. The 'sacrifice' was the life of the Son of God who laid aside heaven to take on mortality. Jesus gave us His life - His perfect character - and that life saved humanity. The value of salvation was in His life - up till His death - not in His blood. Jesus did not have to shed blood to save, but He did have to live a sinless life up to the point where He died - i.e. He had to live without sin for every second of His human life until the test ended at His death. Christ was faithful "unto death." Rev 2:10 The Catholic religion glories in a "dead" Christ. That was considered Satan's victory over the Son of God. "Dead Christs" are seen everywhere in Roman Catholic icons, art and statues. Animists also worship the spirits of their dead ancestors. Satan cut short the normal mortal life span that Christ would have lived as a mortal human being. Jesus was born under the law, i.e. mortal. As a human being, Christ would eventually die - be cut off - but not for His own sins (Dan 9:26) but because of humanity's sins which He took upon Himself. Christ did not have to be crucified or to shed copious amounts of blood.

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God did not command that His Son be tortured as a partial payment for sin, although this doctrine appears in Roman Catholic and pagan religions. Paul said

that the wages of sin is death - not torture and intentional suffering (Rom 6:23). The natural consequences of sin (selfishness) result in homicide and suicide - neither of which the Creator inflicts on human-beings.

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Objections:

The Day of Atonement was a type of the cleansing of the sanctuary in 1844. How can it be proved without the sacrificial rituals of the sanctuary?

Answer:

The Day of Atonement involved performing many sacrifices which were said to signify the putting away of sin and cleansing the earthly sanctuary of the year's record of the Israelites sin. Afterwards, the Day of Atonement was to signal the beginning of the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven in 1844. The real cleansing from sin is both in the Most Holy Place in heaven and in the temple of the Christian's mind, where true conversion takes place. Ezekiel pointed this out the real temple to be cleansed is the 'heart' or 'spirit' Eze 36:26, 27. It appears that the original system - "the pattern shown to Moses in the mount" (Exo 25:40) had been a perfectly divinely ordained system which slowly became corrupted over the years and was written down when it was polluted with pagan theology - paganism that was seeped in blood rituals. The date of 1844 signalled the 'time of the beginning of the cleansing of the sanctuary' both in heaven and in a special sense in the minds of Christ's followers. Daniel 8:14 "And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." 1844, a date which comes from the Dan 8:14 prophecy - as explained to a Jewish man (Daniel) by the angel Gabriel - signalled a warning time - to prepare for the end of probation by cleansing the mind, separating from Babylon physically and spiritually; a time to return to the One True God and to "worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water." When the period of the 2300 days ceased, then the sanctuary was to be cleansed. How could this occur without a sacrifice? There was a divine sacrifice, but it was not a pagan, blood-letting sacrifice. Of course all of God's children need to cleanse their minds through submission to Christ every day, but this applies more to those who will be part of the special group - the 144000 - who will reflect perfectly the character of Jesus. Gabriel was instructed to "make this man understand the vision" so Gabriel used language which the Jewish people were familiar within their language and cultural situations. Jesus Himself employed this strategy to teach people, though the people's cultural beliefs were not based on truth. e.g. the parable of the rich man and Lazarus; calling the Samaritan woman "a dog." Daniel's vision predicted the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. The earthly Jewish and pagan sanctuaries extolled the virtues of the physical blood of the sacrifices. But we know that the Jewish people did not believe that simply collecting the blood would provide cleansing from sin. If collecting and applying blood to the was the only requirement for making an atonement, then one must wonder why a person might not preserve the life of the sacrificial animal, and simply have "bled" it as do the Masi tribesmen. After collecting a sufficient amount of blood to perform the sprinkling rituals, there would be no reason why the animal could not have been returned to the herd. However, the blood was not

the important issue. The important fact was that the animal's blood symbolised the animal's death. Christ's sacrifice actually represented His becoming one with the human race, putting on sinful humanity, developing a perfect character over His entire human life – and not just the event of His death. When Jesus, as our High Priest, entered into the heavenly sanctuary in 1844, He presented to the Father, the merits of His perfect life – evidenced by His perfect character. It seems obvious that God would not permit pagan blood-letting rituals to completely obscure the truth which He had originally given to Moses. Despite the pagan influences, God ensured that the truth could still be found by those who were prepared to dig as though for hidden treasure. God overrides many situations that Satan has orchestrated to produce evil. God brings good out of evil situations. e.g. Joseph explained to his brothers, Genesis 50:20 "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. "

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Objections:

Why is Jesus called the "Lamb of God?"

Answer:

John the Baptist was the only person who is recorded to have referred to Jesus as 'the Lamb of God.' Jesus never called Himself, the Lamb of God John 1:29 "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John the Baptist was familiar with the Messianic prophecies. He knew that Isaiah's prophecy declared that the Messiah's character would be as gentle as a lamb for it was predicted in the same prophecy that the Messiah would have 'no violence in Him.' Isaiah 53:7, 9 "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.... (9) And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." John the Revelator wrote (three times) that Jesus appeared as a lamb that was slain, but this lamb had 7 horns and 7 eyes. Such a lamb was not typical of a sacrificial lamb that was slain in the temple, but in typical prophetic symbolism, the lamb represented the resurrection of Someone Perfect who had been slain. Revelation 5:6, 12; 13:18 "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth....(12) Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing....(13:8) And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The Jews believed the sacrificial services were given by Moses, and so God spoke to them in their own language just as Jesus also spoke in symbols and parables to those who couldn't understand heavenly concepts in other ways. John 16:12 (Jesus said to His disciples) "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." To the farmers, Jesus used farming language to demonstrate the 'kingdom of heaven.' To the fishermen, He used fishing language and stories. To the shepherds, He told

parables concerning sheep. However, the prophets who described the Messiah, revealed that He was lamb-like in character.

Christ did sacrifice Himself for us, by risking His eternal existence. He took on Himself human mortality and formed a perfect character for humanity.

His loving character achieved our salvation - not the blood shed at His death.

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Objections:

Would Genesis have to be thrown out as well, as that is where the first account of sacrifice is?

Answer:

We don't need to 'make excuses' for God because of the bad reporting He's received whether in the Bible or elsewhere. The Bible is divinely inspired in its prophetic statements and in its revelation of the law of God. The Bible is proved to be an accurate historical record of ancient Jewish theology and of the Jewish nation's actions. However, if Jewish theology reported in the Bible, contradict the words and teachings of Christ and or are not in harmony with the 10 commandments, we need to question their veracity as theological truths. For example: There is an apparent inconsistency between the Jewish sanctuary and the heavenly sanctuary. While the Jewish sanctuary contains an altar of burnt offering sacrifices, there does not appear to be a corresponding altar in the heavenly sanctuary. In fact, every piece of appears to be mentioned in Revelation where John sees the temple of God - except for outer court items - the altar of burnt offering/sacrifice and the laver. One wonders why is the sacrificial altar and the laver are missing if everything was made "according to the pattern shown in the mount" (Ex 25:40). Paul appears to discount the value of the sacrifices and washings which took place in the in the outer court of the earthly sanctuary. Hebrews 9:9, 10 "Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; (10) Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." If the sacrificial sanctuary services were set up by God to teach the Jewish race about salvation, why didn't they understand the meaning? Why does it appear that there is zero perception from the Jews of a Messiah who would come at the predicted time, to die as like a meek little lamb? Why were the Jews expecting their Messiah to be a conquering war hero? Didn't the sacrificial system work? Was it a faulty system? Does God create faulty systems? No. Rebellious people who wanted to 'be like the other nations' likely absorbed pagan influences into God's holy sanctuary services and this corruption caused the plan of redemption to become almost indiscernible.

It seems that anti-trinitarian people throw out Spirit of Prophecy and then they throw out the Bible." Consider how the Reformers must have experienced similar accusations. It is claimed that after Martin Luther rejected the Roman Catholic belief of justification by works, he was warned by other monks, that if

he continued to question the church's position, this grave 'error' would lead him into deeper darkness and he might also throw out other catholic doctrines i.e. the eucharist and indulgences. Was Luther wrong to continue seeking truth? When God's people cast off error, He will not lead them into sin or into evil. The SDA pioneers had to cast off Sunday-keeping. They also were required to cast off the immortality of the soul and creeds and church membership etc. Perhaps some of their friends in the church warned them that if they cast off the Sunday sacredness doctrine, that it would lead them to cast off the immortality of the soul too. However, the pioneers trusted Jesus to lead them and He did. Christ is still leading His people today if their minds are open to His spirit. He promised "You will hear a voice behind you saying, "this is the way, walk ye in it." It is not going into deeper error when we cast off error! Jesus has said He will lead us and the 144,000 have a LOT of casting off of errors to do, but not of their own doing, but only as Christ leads them.

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Objections:

Is anything definite in the Bible? How do we know whether the words of Jesus Himself haven't been altered?

Answer:

"To the law and to the testimony" - (Isaiah 8:20).

"Keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev 14:12).

"Keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev 12:17).

"On these (2 principles of love-laws) hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt 22:40)

The two pillar supports are a recurring theme in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Jesus upholds His Father's law. We follow Jesus by faith - the same way that Abraham and Noah and Enoch heard and recognised the voice of Jesus. They had no Bible. The voice of Jesus brought by angels to our consciences, is the promise being fulfilled that HE will lead us into all truth. We need to know that God's character does not change because His law never changes. God's law of love is unchanging. Jesus lived the law and upheld the unselfish and loving principles of His Father's character and heavenly government. The overwhelming theme of all the Bible writers who harmonise with Jesus' words also elevate the principles of God's law. Those who don't line up "line upon line" with the commandments and the teachings of Jesus, are not inspired of God and must qualify as writings which have been interfered with by human authors / editors.

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Objections:

Ellen White wrote only inspired writings, not her own thoughts.

Answer:

It is not disputed that when God spoke to Ellen White in vision, that she was receiving a divine, infallible message, however Christ's followers cannot accept that any human being is infallible in things not especially revealed. At times, Ellen White proved that her assumptions were made without divine revelation on the specific subject upon which she had commented and she had to rescind the information in the testimony e.g. claiming that pork eating was not an unhealthy habit. Was it possible also that Ellen White also made comments that were not especially inspired concerning God's character? While she had a better knowledge than others who had no visions of heavenly things, she did not possess complete, infallible knowledge. Only Christ and the Father are infallible and have infinite wisdom. Ellen White herself warned, that no matter how 'righteous' a particular human being appears, Christ's followers are not to establish their faith in that person, for that is making an idol of them.

Questions on the Sacrificial Rituals of the Sanctuary

Objections:

Did Ellen White have a wrong understanding of the character of God?

Answer:

Although Ellen White had special insights into heavenly things, it is possible that she understood God's character 'through a glass darkly' as did Paul. While she was a human being who wanted to advance her spiritual connection with God and to understand God more deeply, she still admitted that we will all be studying the plan of salvation for eternity. All humanity still has a very poor understanding of the character of God and we need to continually look to Jesus and to ask His leading by the holy spirit to increase our understanding. God's character exceeds anything our human minds can comprehend as good. While certainly qualifying as Christ's messenger, Ellen White could not possibly have a perfect understanding of God's character and neither could anyone in the world today, but His people can ask Jesus to continue to enlighten them to the point where Christ's character will be perfectly reproduced in His followers, to prepare them to stand firm during the terrible times ahead. God is still refining and instructing His people. If we are content to remain only as advanced as the pioneers, we are following men and women - not Christ.

Just as the ancient patriarch Job was mistaken about God's character, assuming that the Creator caused the destruction and loss of life of his family, servants and animals, so too has humankind down through the ages.

Isaiah 55:8, 9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. (9) For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."