

Message Seven

The Reality of the Sin Offering, the Bronze Serpent, and the Destruction of the Devil

Scripture Reading: Lev. 4:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:3;
John 1:14; 3:14; 12:31; 1 John 3:8b; Heb. 2:14

Lev 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.
2 Cor 5:21	Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
Rom 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,
John 1:14	And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
John 3:14	And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,
John 12:31	Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.
1 John 3:8b	He who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. ...
Heb 2:14	Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

I. As the reality of the sin offering, Christ was “made sin on our behalf”—2 Cor. 5:21; Lev. 4:3:

- 2 Cor 5:21 Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
- Lev 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.
- A. Christ did not know sin in an experiential way by contact or by personal experience, for in His nature and substance there was no sin; nevertheless, Christ was made sin (not sinful) on our behalf to be judged by God—v. 21; Rom. 8:3.
- Lev 4:21 And he shall bring the bull outside the camp and burn it as he burned the first bull; it is the sin offering for the congregation.
- Rom 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,
- B. Christ died on the cross not only for our sins but also as sin itself, having been made sin on our behalf by God—2 Cor. 5:21:
- 2 Cor 5:21 Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
1. We were not only sinful—we were sin itself; we were the constitution of sin, the embodiment of sin—Rom. 5:12, 19; 6:6; 7:7, 11, 17, 23.
- Rom 5:12 Therefore just as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin, death; and thus death passed on to all men because all have sinned-
- Rom 5:19 For just as through the disobedience of one man the many were constituted sinners, so also through the obedience of the One the many will be constituted righteous.
- Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves;
- Rom 7:7 What then shall we say? Is the law sin? Absolutely not! But I did not know sin except through the law; for neither did I know coveting, except the law had said, "You shall not covet."
- Rom 7:11 For sin, seizing the opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.
- Rom 7:17 Now then it is no longer I that work it out, but sin that dwells in me.
- Rom 7:23 But I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and making me a captive to the law of sin which is in my members.

2. After God laid our sins upon the crucified Christ, God considered Him the unique sinner—Isa. 53:6b, 11c, 12d; 1 Pet. 2:24.
 Isa 53:6b ... / And Jehovah has caused the iniquity of us all / To fall on Him.
 Isa 53:11c ... / And He will bear their iniquities.
 Isa 53:12d ... / Yet He alone bore the sin of many / And interceded for the transgressors.
 1 Pet 2:24 Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed.
3. When Christ died for us as our Substitute, God considered Him not only the sin-bearer but sin itself; when Christ was crucified, sin was crucified—Rom. 6:10.
 Rom 6:10 For the death which He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life which He lives, He lives to God.
4. As the One who was made sin on our behalf, Christ was judged by God once for all—2 Cor. 5:21.
 2 Cor 5:21 Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

II. As the reality of the sin offering, Christ the Son was sent “in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin” so that God could condemn sin in the flesh—Rom. 8:3:

- Rom 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,
- A. As the Word that was with God and that was God, Christ became flesh—John 1:1, 14:
 John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
 1. In the Bible, especially in the New Testament, *flesh* denotes the fallen man, not the God-created man—Gen. 1:26; 6:3; Rom. 3:20.
 Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.
 Gen 6:3 And Jehovah said, My Spirit will not strive with man forever, for he indeed is flesh; so his days will be one hundred twenty years.
 Rom 3:20 Because out of the works of the law no flesh shall be justified before Him; for through the law is the clear knowledge of sin.
 2. Our flesh is not only flesh but also sinful flesh; however, the flesh of Christ was not sinful flesh.
 3. When the Word became flesh, the flesh of Jesus was joined to fallen man with sinful flesh, but in His flesh there was not the element of sin; Satan could not enter into Jesus’ flesh.
 - B. God sent His Son only “in the likeness of the flesh of sin”; the Son did not actually have the flesh of sin but only the form, the likeness, of the flesh of sin—8:3:
 Rom 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,
 1. That the Word became flesh means that the Triune God became a man of flesh in the likeness of a sinful man—John 1:1, 14.
 John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
 2. Christ became flesh to be indirectly involved with sin—only in the likeness of the flesh of sin but not in the reality—Rom. 8:3.
 Rom 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,
3. By so doing, God entered into humanity and became one with sinful man; however, He had only the likeness of a sinful man but not the sin of a sinful man, only the form of a fallen man but not the sinful nature of a fallen man.
 4. In His death Christ as a man in the flesh caused sin to be condemned in the flesh by God—v. 3:

Rom 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,

 - a. The flesh is of sin, and the Son of God did indeed become flesh (Heb. 2:14; 1 Tim. 3:16); however, He had no participation in the sin of the flesh.

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

1 Tim 3:16 And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.
 - b. When God the Father sent God the Son concerning sin and to deal with sin, even to abolish it, He sent Him not in the reality of the flesh of sin but in the likeness, the appearance, of the flesh of sin—John 1:14; Rom. 8:3.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

Rom 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,
 - c. While Christ was on the cross, God condemned sin in the flesh of Jesus Christ, the One who was sent in the likeness of the flesh of sin—v. 3.

Rom 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,

III. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up”—John 3:14:

- A. As the One who was sent by the Father in the likeness of the flesh of sin, Christ is typified by the bronze serpent in Numbers 21:4-9:

Num 21:4 Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the people became impatient on the way.

Num 21:5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses, Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and there is no water; and our soul loathes this light bread.

Num 21:6 Then Jehovah sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.

Num 21:7 And the people came to Moses and said, We have sinned, because we have spoken against Jehovah and against you; pray to Jehovah, that He may take away the serpents from us. So Moses prayed for the people.

Num 21:8 Then Jehovah said to Moses, Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.

Num 21:9 And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the pole; and if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

 1. When the children of Israel spoke against God and against Moses, “Jehovah sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died”—v. 6.
 2. God told Moses to make “a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole”; “Moses made a bronze

serpent and set it on the pole; and if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived”—vv. 8-9.

Num 21:8 Then Jehovah said to Moses, Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.

Num 21:9 And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the pole; and if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

B. The incident in Numbers 21 was sovereignly prepared by God to reveal a particular type of Christ:

Num 21 be omitted.

1. As a serpent in form, the bronze serpent lifted up on a pole is a type of Christ lifted up on the cross for us—John 3:14:

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

a. In verse 14 the Lord Jesus applied this type to Himself, indicating that when He was in the flesh, He was in “the likeness of the flesh of sin” (Rom. 8:3), which likeness is equal to the form of the bronze serpent.

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

Rom 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,

b. The bronze serpent had only the form of the serpent but was without the serpent’s poison; Christ was lifted up only as a serpent in form, for He did not have the poisonous nature of a serpent.

2. As sinful human beings, we actually are serpentine; in our fallen nature we are children of the old serpent, the devil—1 John 3:10; Matt. 12:34; 23:33; Rev. 12:9:

1 John 3:10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, neither he who does not love his brother.

Matt 12:34 Offspring of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Matt 23:33 Serpents! Brood of vipers! How shall you escape the judgment of Gehenna?

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.

a. We are all serpentine beings with the poison of the serpent in our nature; in our fallen nature we are not only sinful—we are serpentine as well.

b. In the sight of God, the entire fallen human race consists of poisonous serpents—Matt. 12:34; 23:33.

Matt 12:34 Offspring of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Matt 23:33 Serpents! Brood of vipers! How shall you escape the judgment of Gehenna?

3. Because we are such serpents, we needed a Substitute; we needed Christ to die for us in the form of a serpent but without the poisonous element of the serpent—John 3:14; Rom. 8:3.

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

Rom 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,

IV. “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil”—1 John 3:8b:

- A. As sinners, we need God’s salvation, and as those who are snared and troubled by the devil, we need the Lord Jesus to destroy the works of the devil—1 Tim. 1:15; 1 John 3:8.
- 1 Tim 1:15 Faithful is the word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am foremost.
- 1 John 3:8 He who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.
- B. When the Son of God was on earth, He destroyed the works of the devil—Mark 1:23-28; Matt. 12:28; 15:22-28; Luke 4:39; 13:10-17:
- Mark 1:23 And immediately, there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying,
- Mark 1:24 What have we to do with You, Jesus, Nazarene? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God.
- Mark 1:25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Be quiet and come out of him!
- Mark 1:26 And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and shouting with a loud voice, came out of him.
- Mark 1:27 And they were all amazed, so that they discussed among themselves, saying, What is this? A new teaching! With authority He orders even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.
- Mark 1:28 And immediately the report concerning Him went out everywhere into all the surrounding region of Galilee.
- Matt 12:28 But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.
- Matt 15:22 And behold, a Canaanite woman came out from those borders and cried out, saying, Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter suffers terribly from demon possession.
- Matt 15:23 But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and implored Him, saying, Send her away, for she is crying out after us.
- Matt 15:24 But He answered and said, I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
- Matt 15:25 But she came and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me!
- Matt 15:26 But He answered and said, It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.
- Matt 15:27 And she said, Yes, Lord, for even the little dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.
- Matt 15:28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, O woman, great is your faith! Be it done to you as you wish. And her daughter was healed from that hour.
- Luke 4:39 And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her. And she instantly rose up and served them.
- Luke 13:10 And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.
- Luke 13:11 And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and she was bent double and could not stand erect at all.
- Luke 13:12 And Jesus, seeing her, called her to Him and said to her, Woman, you are released from your infirmity.
- Luke 13:13 And He laid His hands on her, and instantly she was made erect and began to glorify God.
- Luke 13:14 But the ruler of the synagogue, being indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, answered and said to the crowd, There are six days in which man should work; therefore, come on them and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.
- Luke 13:15 But the Lord answered him and said, Hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away and water it?
- Luke 13:16 And this woman, being a daughter of Abraham whom Satan has bound, behold, for eighteen years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?
- Luke 13:17 And when He said these things, all those opposing Him were put to shame, and all the crowd rejoiced over all the glorious things that were being done by Him.
1. Often Satan’s work was not obvious; he hid behind natural phenomena.
 2. Although the devil hid behind many natural phenomena, the Lord Jesus rebuked him—Mark 4:35-41.
- Mark 4:35 And He said to them on that day when evening had fallen, Let us go over to the other side.

- Mark 4:36 And leaving the crowd, they took Him along, just as He was, in the boat; and other boats were with Him.
- Mark 4:37 And there arose a great windstorm, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already beginning to fill up.
- Mark 4:38 And He was in the stern, sleeping on the cushion. And they woke Him and said to Him, Teacher, does it not matter to You that we are perishing?
- Mark 4:39 And having awoken, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, Be silent! Be still! And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.
- Mark 4:40 And He said to them, Why are you cowardly in this way? How is it that you do not have faith?
- Mark 4:41 And they became greatly frightened and said to one another, Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?

- C. In 1 John 3:8 the Greek word translated “destroy” may also be translated “undo, dissolve”:
- 1 John 3:8 He who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.
- The devil has sinned continually from ancient times and begets sinners that they might practice sin with him—vv. 8, 10; John 8:44.

1 John 3:8 He who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

1 John 3:10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest. Everyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, neither he who does not love his brother.

John 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks the lie, he speaks it out of his own possessions; for he is a liar and the father of it.
 - For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might undo and destroy the sinful deeds of the devil, that is, condemn, through His death on the cross in the flesh (Rom. 8:3), sin initiated by him, the evil one; destroy the power of sin, the sinful nature of the devil (Heb. 2:14); and take away both sin and sins.

Rom 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,

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

V. “Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil”—v. 14:

- A. The manifestation of the Lord Jesus destroyed the works of the devil, and the death of the Lord Jesus destroyed the devil himself—1 John 3:8; John 3:14; 12:31; Heb. 2:14.
- 1 John 3:8 He who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.
- John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,
- John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.
- Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,
- B. It was through His being a serpent in form that the Lord Jesus crushed the head of the old serpent, the devil—John 3:14; Gen. 3:15; Rev. 12:9:
- John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity / Between you and the woman / And between your seed and her seed; / He will bruise you on the head, / But you will bruise him on the heel.

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.

1. The serpent is a symbol of the devil; the Lord Jesus was crucified as a serpent in form in order to deal with the devil, Satan.

2. In this way He judged the ruler of this world: “Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out”—John 12:31:

a. Satan as the old serpent, the ruler of the world, had injected himself into man’s flesh.

b. Through His death on the cross in the likeness of the flesh of sin, the Lord destroyed Satan, who is in man’s flesh—Rom. 8:3; Heb. 2:14.

Rom 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,

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

c. By judging Satan in this way, the Lord also judged the world, which is hanging on Satan; hence, the Lord’s being lifted up caused the world to be judged and its ruler to be cast out—John 16:11; 12:31.

John 16:11 And concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.

C. In His crucifixion Christ destroyed the devil—Heb. 2:14:

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

1. In verse 14 the Greek word translated “destroy” can also be rendered as “bring to nought, make of none effect, do away with, abolish, annul, discard.”

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

2. In His humanity and through His work on the cross, Christ has destroyed the devil.

3. Christ died not only as the Substitute of fallen men, who had been bitten by the serpent, but also to destroy the devil—John 3:14; Heb. 2:14.

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

D. Hallelujah, through Christ as the reality of the sin offering, the devil has been destroyed!