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The Chatta'th Offering: Communicating God's Forgiveness

6: 24-30

The chatta'th offering DIG: What was the purpose of the chatta'th offering? Who needed to offer the purification offering? Where was it to be offered? By the common people? By the priest? What were the regulations for the clothing and utensils? Why was this necessary? How did the priests assure the worshiper that ADONAI had forgiven their sin?

REFLECT: How do you deal with each kind of sin? How does this help to mend your relationship with God? What steps does a believer today take to restore his or her relationship with YHVH and the community of fellowship? What does "washed in the blood" mean to you? How could you explain it to an unbeliever? How do you show it to others?

The Purification Offering from the perspective of the priests.



People need to know that they have been forgiven and that they can enter **God's** presence with confidence; they need the reality of forgiveness, not simply the hope of forgiveness. If people come away from a worship service unsure of their standing with **ADONAI**, then something has gone terribly wrong. This is the subject addressed by the ritual of **the chatta'th offering**. In this section of **Leviticus** it replaces the peace offering in the order

of sacrifices because it was a required offering for **the priests**. And **it** must have been a very frequent one, testifying to the fact that not a day went by in which people did not defile the holiness of **God** by their actions or their lifestyles.

Believers today also have to admit that we **sin** every day, either by what we do or don't do, and we need regular cleansing and renewal for our fellowship and service. Just living in **the corrupt world (First John 2:15-17)** and coming in contact with all **its** defilements and influences calls for spiritual renewal on a regular basis. The Bible is very clear that such cleansing is readily available for the **confessing** believer.⁶⁸ **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (First John 1:9).**

The priests needed to ensure that worshippers found forgiveness from God alone (6:24-26): ADONAI said to Moshe, "Tell Aaron and his sons, 'This is the mitzvot for the chatta'th offering: the chatta'th offering is to be slaughtered before ADONAI in the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered; it is especially holy. But then the instructions for the ritual of **purification** started with its precise location. To stress **the holiness** of this special food, **God** stated that **the priests** could only **eat it** in a place separated from the common people. **The priest who offered it for purification was to eat it in the courtyard of the Tabernacle.** The point is that since forgiveness comes from **God**, **the chatta'th offering** must be brought into **His** Presence. It was to be slaughtered **in the courtyard of the Tabernacle** and **eaten** there.

The priests needed to prevent the chatta'th offering from becoming commonplace (6:27-28): The theme of **holiness** here extends to the discussion of **clothing** and **utensils**. To further impress upon **the priests** the holy character of **the meat**, **God** added a number of warnings. **The priest** had to go to great lengths to ensure that **the chatta'th offering** was set apart, as being **holy to ADONAI** and not blasphemous or common. **Whatever the priest touched its meat it became holy** by contact. Nevertheless, **if any of the blood of the sacrifice splashed on any of the priest's clothing, he was to wash it in the bronze basin** (see the commentary on **Exodus**, **to see link click [Fh](#) - The Bronze Basin: Christ, Our Cleanser**). It had to stay in the **holy** confines of **the Tabernacle courtyard**. The same mitzvah applied to the utensils used. **Blood** offered for **sin** could not be carried away in **pots** or **clothes**. It was now **holy**, and set apart for **the chatta'th offering**. **The clay pot in which it is cooked must be broken; if it is cooked in a bronze pot, it must be scrubbed and rinsed in water**, restored to **their** former status so **they** were no longer **holy**.

This was the enigma: **the blood** was **holy** but needed to be **washed** because anything touching **it** became **holy**; yet **the blood** was treated impure and needed to be washed. This was the nature of **the chatta'th** offering: **the blood** was part of **the purification offering** (see [A1 - The Purification Offering](#)) as well as a source of impurity. In sum, the ritual was designed for the forgiveness of sins. And since **the purification offering** had that distinctive purpose, it was sacred. It could not be treated carelessly, as if it were ordinary.⁶⁹

The priests needed to assure the worshiper that ADONAI had forgiven their sin (6:29-30): Any priest could eat the purification offering of a worshiper. However, **the blood of the priests' own purification offering had to be taken inside the Holy Place to make atonement and the meat was to be burned up completely (6:30)**. The greater the violation of **God's** holiness, the greater the **purification** required. Yet when **the priest** did eat **the chatta'th offering** of a worshiper, **his eating** was more than the normal **priestly** portion. It was a sign to the worshiper that his **purification offering** was accepted and his **sin** was covered. **The priests** were expected to discern the worshiper's attitude to see if they had a truly contrite heart, a broken spirit, an awareness of the seriousness of their **sin**, and genuine repentance. **A** conscientious **priest** would deliberate, accepting the word of the worshiper only upon the presentation of evidence to support his claim of repentance, but hesitating if there was any doubt. If convinced, **the priest** would eat **the purification offering** and the worshiper would go home knowing that his **sin** had been covered. **How blessed are those whose offense is forgiven, those whose sin is covered (Psalm 32:1)**.

The final note in the passage must not be overlooked: **the priest** himself gave a **chatta'th offering**. This stands in strong contrast to **Yeshua Messiah**, who did not have to make a **purification offering** for **Himself**, first, because **He** was the only perfect **High Priest** (see the commentary on [Hebrews Ay - Messiah's Qualifications as our Great High Priest](#)). Yet all human pastors and Messianic rabbis stand before **God** on the same basis as the worst sinner - the shed **blood** of **Messiah**. In **Isra'el** the people knew that **the priest himself** was a **sinner**, for they witnessed **his chatta'th offerings** and **his** confession (which they might not actually hear, but could see). **The priest** may have been at the head of the people spiritually, but **he** was a recipient of grace like them. Leaders must certainly demonstrate righteousness by their relationship to **ADONAI**. But they must never lose sight of the fact that they too are sinners and that their lives must be regularly examined through **God's Word**. No one can tell others to renew their hearts and cleanse their souls if they themselves do not regularly **purify** their hearts.⁷⁰

The Messianic significance: The **chatta'th offering** is brought as a **purification** from

ritual uncleanness and the stain left behind by **sin**. **The blood of the purification offering** is brought before **ADONAI** as a vicarious substitute for **the worshiper**. In that regard, it acts as a cleansing agent. **God** recognizes it as **the worshiper's** soul in a purified state. In the same way, when we identify ourselves in **Messiah**, **His** absolute **purity** compensates for our uncleanness. **The** precious **blood** of **Messiah** is so holy and pure that through it we are cleansed of our uncleanness, forgiven of our **sin**. Hence the expression, "washed in **the blood**." **He** is our korban **Chatta'th**, our means of **purification**.

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, **You** are so holy and pure! I stand amazed that **You**, my **Father**, **the Sovereign King** over the universe, would so graciously forgive my **sins** and put my **sins** where they cannot be found. **For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His mercy for those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us (Psalms 103:11-12)**. We bow before **You** in humble worship and in great adoration. In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*