

Torah has no Provision for Willful Sin

NOT FINISHED

Subtitle: A critique of advocates who make a distinction between Conditional and Unconditional Covenants

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Introduction

When I hear the words “Unconditional Covenant”, it’s like hearing “fingernails on a chalkboard”. This term, “Unconditional Covenant” is oxymoronic.

Living Messiah Ministries – Main Shabbath Service 12/31/2016, Study in Ex 26 & Hebrews 8 Link 1:11:31

<https://youtu.be/Oo-ibKuvTdE?t=4291>

The condition for having being in a situation where

Tod0: All sins may have been caused by ignorance and unintentionally

Aren’t all sins “willful”, but what about Num 15:22-29. The outline heading for this group of verse is “Laws About Unintentional Sins”, and it should be know that this (technically speaking) is a violation of “Sola Scripture” (all of the bible outlines should be written in italics). When God was telling Moses to write this part of the Torah, he said “as for these next 10 verses, they should be interpreted as laws and commandments that define those unconditional sins”. The inference that Num 15:22-29 are “unintentional” suggest that there are sins that are intentional. It is further suggested that because that category of verses is not to be found in the Mt. Sinai covenant, it is therefore deficient and the world is in want of a “better covenant”.

It can certainly be said that the **opportunity** to re-enter into a covenant is unconditional, but once one accepts the opportunity, the covenant remains conditional (by definition). When this opportunity is taken up we have, if you will, YHVH being the “opportunitior” and the House of Israel is the “opportunee”.

Marsing’s Rule #??? aka the “type rule”: An **opportunity** that is given as one being of the unconditional type necessitates that the recipient must accept that opportunity with its type unchanged (i.e. the type must be honored). In the offering of the Son of Elohim that is of the type that is unconditional, we who claim to accept this opportunity must honor this type. [reword this last sentence]

Marsing’s Rule #??? The connection between accepting the salvific work of Yeshua and then walking out the Torah are not miles apart, but rather the next step. The fact that you, who once were afar off i.e. far from being

a good practitioner of Torah, does not mean that your first steps in Torah might be shaky, that does not mean that those first steps are not necessary.

Antinomian Christian type want to impose a condition on the unconditional opportunity by saying e.g. “you risk losing your salvation if you walk out the Torah”. As a pronomian Christian, this is absurd.

Heb 10:26-31 KJV

(26) For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, (27) But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. (28) He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: ^{Num 3:10}

(29) Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? ^{5560 A} (30) For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. ^{5561 B} (31) *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

^A **5560** This is another warning to those who leave the faith, and not to unbelievers. It is worse to have the truth and then abandon it, than to never have known and experienced the truth. The Hebraic idiomatic expression “trample under foot” means to erase Yahshua and His blood from the Torah equation, and try to attain right-standing with YHWH based on other criteria. Those who deny Yahshua in the end have brought great insult to YHWH’s love and Spirit.

^B **5561** YHWH judges Yisrael.

Resources

https://www.therefinersfire.org/deliberate_sinning.htm

Matthew 5: 48. You therefore be perfect as your Father in heaven who is perfect.^C

The crux of this article is short and simple: Yeshua offered Himself as the final sin offering, but He did not die so we could go on deliberately sinning. The Bible makes it clear that there is no sacrifice for the continuous intentional sins of believers.

Many people insist that Grace covers all sins. "But my Christian brother John is such a good guy. Okay, he committed adultery a couple of times, but he's repented and quit since then!" Well, good for John! Let's hope and pray YHWH (Yahweh) has forgiven him. He forgives whomever He pleases because He knows our hearts.

But we need to remember also that YHWH is clear that those who know His Torah are NOT to engage in deliberate sinning and that there is no sin sacrifice for continued, deliberate sinning....so the "good guy" John may have jeopardized his eternal life by "committing adultery" - a deliberate act that took some thinking before doing.

Planning to have an extra-marital affair is not a "mistake" nor "unintentional" sin, such as accidentally letting a cussword slip while angry!

See [Romans 1:18-32!](#)

Numbers 15: 30 "But an individual who does something wrong intentionally, whether a citizen or a foreigner, is blaspheming ADONAI. That person will be cut off from his people.

Hebrews 6: 4. But they who have once descended to immersion and have tasted the gift from heaven and have received the Ruach haKodesh 5. and have tasted the good Word of Elohim and the power of the world to come, 6. cannot again sin and a second time be renewed to repentance; or a second time execute him on a stake and insult the Son of Elohim. 7. For the earth that drinks the rain which comes often upon it and produces the herb that is of use to those for whom it is cultivated, receives a blessing from Elohim. 8. But if it should put forth thorns and briers, it would be discarded and be approaching closely to a curse, and its end would be a conflagration. (AENT)

NOTE: Huge contrast between Aramaic and Greek. The Greek reads: "once having been enlightened..." This "enlightening" seems logical until we look at Aramaic: "But they who have once descended to immersion..." The difference is acute, since baptism is clearly a subject being introduced just two verses earlier. The reason for the Greek redaction to "enlightenment" may well have been due to early Gnostic influence that stressed Mashiyach's knowledge over his actual power and incarnation of Deity. See also Hebrews 10:32.

Hebrews 10: 26 For if we deliberately continue to sin after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but only the terrifying prospect of Judgment, or raging fire that will consume the enemies.

The above Scripture is not referring to those unclean bondages that dwell in our flesh but to the conscious choices believers make. It refers not to our unintentional sins but to those we pursue knowingly and willingly.

^C (Ref: Genesis 17:1; 1 Kings 8:61; Psalm 101:2-6)

2 Peter 2: 19 They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for a person is slave to whatever has defeated him. 20 Indeed, if they have once escaped the pollutions of the world through knowing our Lord and Deliverer, Yeshua the Messiah, and then have again become entangled and defeated by them, their latter condition has become worse than their former. 21 It would have been better for them not to have known the Way of righteousness than, fully knowing, to turn from the holy command delivered to them.

How many of today's believers behave in a way they know is sinful and yet they go ahead and do what they feel like doing, anyway? That's because they mistakenly think Divine grace covers intentional sin. That is a huge misconception! Divine grace has made wonderful provision for unintentional sin. But there is no provision for intentional sin. The Bible tells us so.

Deliberate, premeditated sin is willful disobedience and rebellion against ELOHIM. It results in severe punishment or even loss of our salvation.

Leviticus 26: 23 If, in spite of all this, you refuse my correction and still go against me; then I too will go against you; and I, yes I, will strike you seven times over for your sins.

1 Corinthians 6: 9. Or don't you know, that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of Elohim?* Make no mistake! Neither sexual sinners, nor idol-worshippers, nor adulterers, nor the corrupt, nor men who lay down with other men, 10. Nor the oppressors, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the Kingdom of Elohim. (AENT)

FOOTNOTE: Compare this to Matthew 5:17-20, where we are told that breaking the least commandment of Torah and teaching others to do the same makes a person "least in the kingdom" but they still get in. Y'shua implies that those with more serious sins won't make it in: "Depart from me, workers of iniquity, I never knew you"; but here, Rav Shaul gives a more specific list of what will keep them out.

1 Corinthians 6: 17. But he that joins himself to our Master (Y'shua), is with him one spirit. 18. Flee from sexual sin. For every (other) sin which a man commits, is external to his body*; but he that commits sexual sin, sins against his own body. (AENT)

FOOTNOTE: Actually the sexual sin goes deeper than the body, as the note on Romans 1:26 shows. But the other point is also that a sexual sinner brings sin upon himself rather than his partner, and vice versa, unless rape or abuse is involved.

It is not sin per se that causes a person who professes to be a believer to be eternally estranged from YHWH but, rather, it is our surrender to sin which causes our faith and faithfulness to dim or completely die out. We flirt with spiritual disaster if we - by our thoughts, words, and conduct - deny Messiah, reject grace, spurn redemption, and push away the Holy Spirit.

Under the Old Covenant, YHWH put to death people who willingly disobeyed His commands or offered "strange fire" (Lev. 10:1-2). There was no atonement for intentional sin - and there still isn't. All of the sin offerings of the Levitical Law were for unintentional sin.

Case in point, Numbers 15:32-35 tells us: While the Israelites were in the desert, a man was found gathering wood on the Sabbath day. Those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses and Aaron and the whole assembly, and they kept him in custody because it was not clear what should be done to him. Then YHWH said to Moses, "The man must die. The whole assembly must stone him outside the camp".

The man who sinned willingly was not deceived in any way. He was not driven by uncontrollable impulses. He simply decided to ignore what God had said about the Sabbath. His reward was death.

Leviticus 4: 27 If an individual among the people commits a sin inadvertently, doing something against any of the mitzvot of ADONAI concerning things which should not be done, he is guilty.

Unintentional Sin

A sin can be unintentional when an individual is caught off guard and yields to the temptation to lust or anger, or when the person is not aware of YHWH's commandments.

If the Holy Spirit points out a sin, we are to immediately confess it, denounce it as unworthy of the Kingdom of YHWH, renounce it and have nothing more to do with it, and call on YHWH for the strength to keep us from repeating it.

With the one sin offering in Yeshua HaMashiyach, mankind has been absolved for eternity as far as the guilt of sin and the power of sin are concerned. The catch is, man has to walk this out in the daily conflict as the Holy Spirit enables him to overcome sinful urges. As he continues to obey God strictly, the blood of atonement keeps on cleansing him.

As we can see, deliberate sinning has tragic results. But, what about believers who knowingly, willfully disobey YHWH, and then repent. Can they be saved from destruction?

Yes! God will make it possible for them to enter the new age of righteousness only if they will yield and return to Him!

Deuteronomy 7: 9 From this you can know that ADONAI your God is indeed God, the faithful God, who keeps his covenant and extends grace to those who love him and observe his mitzvot, to a thousand generations. 10 But he repays those who hate him to their face and destroys them. He will not be slow to deal with someone who hates him; he will repay him to his face.

If, after having been chastened a sinner continues in his rebellious ways, there will eventually be no turning back; he will be considered an enemy of God and thrown into the Lake of Fire to spend eternity with Satan.

Yeshua said:

Revelation 3: 16 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.

He loves us, but no sin is acceptable to Him, no matter how great or small. Like a loving parent, He will allow us to learn from our mistakes and forgive, but there comes a time when He will "draw the line" if we continue to rebel.

Isaiah 66: 24 "As they leave, they will look on the corpses of the people who rebelled against me. For their worm will never die, and their fire will never be quenched; but they will be abhorrent to all humanity.

Hebrews 10: 29 Think how much worse will be the punishment deserved by someone who has trampled underfoot the Son of God; who has treated as something common the blood of the covenant which made him holy; and who has insulted the Spirit, giver of God's grace! 30 For the One we know is the One who said, "Vengeance is my responsibility; I will repay," and then said, "ADONAI will judge his people." 31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God

Many pastors around the world are of the opinion that verses such as the above don't apply to Christians because they are "saved by grace." Big mistake! The notion that a person can do whatever he wants after professing faith in Yeshua and not get into the most serious spiritual trouble is a dangerous and an unbiblical one! God has not changed; He loved us enough to give us a final sin offering because man could never "get

right" with God. Yeshua was that final sin offering - but He did not come to abolish Torah (God's original teaching and instruction), or to sacrifice Himself for intentional, willful, ongoing sin....

Matthew 5: 17 Don't think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete. 18 Yes indeed! I tell you that until heaven and earth pass away, not so much as a yud or a stroke will pass from the Torah - not until everything that must happen has happened.

Has everything happened that must happen? Have heaven and earth passed away yet? If not, then Yeshua never "nailed it to the cross" as many in the church have misunderstood (see Book of Romans). He gave us a chance at eternal life; not the permission to break any of His commandments or to do whatever we please.

So, what can I do to stop the sinning

once I've accepted the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and His Messiah?

Dear Refiner's Fire:

I've been a believer for many years, but I just can't seem to quit the sinning in my life. Am I saved, or is it too late? What can I do to "get myself right with God" now?

The bottom line is, if one claims to be a believer and yet continues deliberate and purposeful sinning, chances are good that they were never "saved" in the first place. Those who have the Holy Spirit living within do not want to, nor will they sin purposely/deliberately because to do so would be to force the Holy Spirit to sin with them...This cannot happen because the Holy Spirit is not inside those who are engaged in deliberate, continued sinning. Holiness cannot reside next to sin, period.

All is not lost, however; everybody strays at some point. The key is to recognize it and then get back on track and then do their best to STAY there. The enemy wants us to believe we are too "bad" to ever return to YHWH. That's why we must remember that every one of the patriarchs were guilty of sinning at some point.

Cases in point: Abraham asked his wife to lie for him so that his life would be spared (Genesis 12:11-20). Isaac did basically the same thing in Genesis 26:6-11. In Genesis 27 Jacob deceived his father into believing he (Jacob) was the first-born who should have the blessing of the first-born. And let's not forget that Paul, the most prolific writer of the Gospels, was a murderer (Acts 8:1-5, Acts 9:1-2).

If we were perfect, sinless human beings, Yeshua wouldn't have had to die on our behalf!

What we need to remember is that once we turn and repent because we know "right from wrong" is that there is no sin sacrifice for continued, deliberate sinning. Accidentally letting a cuss word slip when we are angry is not considered "deliberate" or "continued" sinning. But knowing, for instance that the Bible tells us homosexuality or adultery is a sin and then going ahead and engaging in it, anyway - that is definitely "purposeful" sinning. If you have an addiction problem of some kind, pray to be delivered from it AND seek professional help. YHWH won't hold it against you if you CAN'T fight an addiction. But you ARE expected to do something about it/go through a process that ultimately results in your being "cured" of your addiction because we cannot serve YHWH properly until all the members of our body are in synch.

Returning to YHWH has consequences that require some responsibility on our part. "Believing" in God doesn't automatically make us immune from satan's wiles! YHWH gives us all the choice to do things HIS way, or satan's. If we refuse to obey that "small, still voice" in the back of our mind that says, "I know I shouldn't do this," then we need to HEED it and refrain from giving in to our sin natures!

YHWH has given us a way out of our carnal lifestyles: By believing that Yeshua's shed blood at the cross has removed our past sins - we can now turn and repent and do our best NOT to give in to the desire to keep living in our present sins. Our job now is to learn what constitutes sin and practice some self control to STOP the sinning....

It is also good to remember this: Since YHWH wants no one to perish, and He DOES "know our hearts," who is to say one cannot ever be forgiven, especially since the ONLY unforgivable sin is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mark 3:28-29; Matthew 12:31-32)?

What did "blasphemy against the Ruach haKodesh" (Holy Spirit) mean? Scripture itself explains!

Mark 3: 21. And when his own family heard, they went out to seize him, for they were saying he was crazy. 22. And those scribes who had come down from Urishlim were saying, "Beelzebub is in him", and "He casts out demons by the chief of demons. 23. And Y'shua called them and by parables told them, How is Satan able to cast out Satan?

In other words, if a person committed one of the capital offenses that are mentioned in Torah, but confessed and pleaded for forgiveness, the act itself counts towards atonement. But those who blaspheme against the Spirit of YHWH have nothing to make atonement for themselves, nor can they make an appeal in the name of Y'shua; see also Acts 5:1-11; Hebrews 10:28-30. The Ruach persuades and enables mankind to accept YHWH and His Torah (John 16:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12-14; Acts 7:51).

In other words...if you deny that the Ruach is working and attribute the work of God to someone/something else, you're guilty of blasphemy against the Ruach and of rejecting YHWH/Y'shua and His grace....If you know you've been sinning and you truly wish to repent and return to YHWH's Divine Instructions, chances are good that you are forgiven! He knows who is sincere and who isn't.

Lesson 2 Introduction part 2

<http://www.torahclass.com/old-testament-studies/36-old-testament-studies-leviticus/153-lesson-2-intro-to-leviticus-pt-2> pdf^D

Last week we looked at some basics about Leviticus to set the stage for our study.

This week, before we get into the details of the “burnt offering” which is the first subject of the first chapter of Leviticus and a very specific type of the several types of sacrificial offerings, there are some principles we need to address. Some of these principles don’t jump right out of us, and in fact, are not actually stated until we get into Numbers and then Deuteronomy. However, it’s good to know them BEFORE we read Leviticus, because then we don’t make assumptions that turn out to be false.

One of the most enlightening, yet least understood, theological elements of the sacrificial system is this: the Levitical sacrificial system that God gave to Israel did not have a remedy for all sins committed. That is, while the sacrificial system was primarily, though not entirely, established by Yehoveh for the purpose of atonement of sins, not every sin could be atoned for....not every sin could be covered by an animal sacrifice. Chew on that for just a moment, and think about the ramifications, since Jesus Christ is said to be the fulfillment of that very same sacrificial system. This concept is among the reasons why, today, we have these great theological debates between very reasonable, knowledgeable and Godly men over whether or not ALL of our sins, under every possible circumstance, are covered by Yeshua’s passion on the Cross. These debates are typically held under the title of “Eternal Security”...or, as a question that many a Believer has wrestled with, “can you lose your salvation?”

Since the Levitical sacrificial system did NOT provide atonement for some sins, but did for others, which is which? What sins could someone commit for which they could not turn to the sacrificial system to atone for them..... to provide them with Yehoveh’s forgiveness? The Torah is very clear on this: intentional sins (in general) cannot be atoned for. Sometimes we will see words used in the Bible to describe this category of sins as “high handed”, or “great”. The idea is that this is a category of sin for which there is no excuse in God’s eyes. They were premeditated sins. These sins involved denying either the truths of the Holy Scriptures or Yehoveh’s righteousness in pronouncing and enforcing the laws and ordinances He gave to Moses. These were sins of out and out defiance against the King of the Universe. They were planned, or committed with gross negligence; that is, committing a sin that you fully knew was a serious sin, but you did it anyway (has anybody done that recently?). All that the sacrificial system atoned for was UN-intentional, non-high handed sin. We’ll slice than onion a little thinner as we go, but for now, I’d like to give you a couple of examples as to how the Torah classifies sins, in order that you get the bigger picture.

Murder is an intentional and highhanded sin. While we may have an ongoing debate in America about whether ANY killing of a human being is murder....you know, the death sentence for certain criminal acts, or even death resulting from military combat.... Biblical Law made it all pretty cut and dried for the Israelites: the killing of a human fell into two basic categories, justified or unjustified. Justified killing was not murder. Justified killing would be, for example, that you caught an UNARMED thief in your house AT NIGHT, had no way to make a quick judgment as to the level of danger this thief posed to you and your family, and so you killed him. In the Law of Torah, you were justified in killing because you were assumed to be protecting life.... yours, your guests, and your family’s. Killing that same UNARMED thief during daylight hours, however,

^D file:///D:/Download/STCLEVwk2.pdf

when you reasonably could have discerned whether the thief was a known dangerous criminal and whether or not he was armed, is Unjustified. Taking his life, in this case, was only about protecting property, and God does not allow that trade-off.....life for property. Any Hebrew would know this. Therefore, the unjustified killing was an intentional sin and NOT coverable by sacrificial atonement: but the justified killing was NOT intentional, and therefore WAS coverable by sacrificial atonement.

Another example: adultery. If a married man had sex with a married woman who was not his wife, this was an intentional sin. They both knew the Law on this matter, or should have because the prohibition against adultery was common knowledge. It was not accidental nor was it a mistake, and it certainly was not justifiable. Therefore, this was NOT covered by the sacrificial system, and atonement could NOT be made for this. That person was usually cut-off...executed for this sin. And, by the way, execution, usually by stoning, was itself considered justifiable killing, and therefore Unintentional killing, and it was atoned for using the sacrificial system.

So what happened to those who could not make sacrificial atonement for their sins, because the sins they committed were classified as intentional? They were turned over to the other part of God's justice system, the curses of the Law. That is, ALL unintentional sins could be remedied by a proper sacrifice.....the sacrificial system atoned for them....this was a great blessing because by God's grace your sin could be atoned for. BUT NO intentional sins could be covered by the sacrificial system; now it was a matter for the curses of the Law. Let me be clear; I'm not talking about Law in some vague sense, or some local criminal justice system. I'm talking about the Biblical Law as found in the Torah. To be fair, some unintentional sins did require reparation in addition to a sacrifice if there was an injured party. For instance, a man's donkey broke its leg in a hole you had dug and failed to cover up. You would have to make an animal sacrifice at the Tabernacle, AND make reparation to the man for the loss of his donkey. But, in doing so, you have BOTH made peace with God and fairly compensated the injured party for your error. Now you're OK.

Please bear with me as we go through this. This such an important principle to apprehend because it not only will help us understand the OT Hebrew mindset, it will aid us wonderfully in understanding so much of what Paul was talking about in so many of his references to the law in his letters to the various churches.

Turn your Bibles to Numbers 15:27-30.

“If an individual sins by mistake, he is to offer a female goat in its first year as a sin offering. The priest will make atonement before Yehoveh for the person who makes a mistake by sinning inadvertently; he will make atonement for him, and he will be forgiven.no matter whether he is a citizen of Israel or a foreigner living with them. You are to have one law for whoever it is that does something wrong, by mistake. But, an individual who does something wrong intentionally, whether a citizen or a foreigner, is blaspheming Yehoveh. That person will be cut off from his people. Because he has contempt for the Word of Yehoveh, and has disobeyed His command, that person will be cut-off completely; his offense will remain with him”.

This is a great example of what is called the curse of the Law. Now if you ever wondered why so many pastors, teachers, and church leaders prefer not to teach, nor really even have you read, the OT, this passage is certainly at the top of the list. This statement, and the principle it so clearly and unambiguously spells out, is a thorny theological problem when trying to fit it in with modern day doctrines. Because even though most modern pastors are generally unfamiliar with the OT, they would unhesitatingly agree with the statement that Jesus satisfied all the requirements of the sacrificial system. We've all heard that from the pulpit, and probably everyone in this room would agree with that statement as well. But, exactly which sacrificial system are they referring to? That Jesus is the perfect sacrifice, once and for all, and an authorized substitute for all those

prescribed animals deaths that were used to atone for sin within the Bible's sacrificial system, as found in Leviticus, is absolutely accurate.those Pastors and I would have no problem with that. But, what do we do about the stark reality that God plainly said that now that you know what is right and wrong in my eyes, to intentionally do wrong, is to sin against Me...to BLASPHEME against Me; and for that you will be cut-off, and for those sins there is no atonement...they will stay with you forever. Yikes. This is a much more difficult issue when we actually examine the sacrificial system, than when we are blissfully ignorant of it and just assume some things that aren't so; that is, when we look at the actual words of the Bible, in context, and not just accept a greatly distilled and unquestioned doctrine that fits a predetermined agenda.

Bear with me. I know some of you are getting uncomfortable with this, and may think you know where I'm headed. And you're probably wrong so hang in there.

The Hebrews knew they had a big problem here. The Torah simply does NOT provide a way for an Israelite to reconcile with God, once that Israelite commits a "high handed", or "great" sin. So, in time, the writers of the Jewish Traditions took over. You can read of all kinds of remedies for this seemingly insolvable problem in the Talmud. After all, who wants to commit one of these high-handed sins, and then go through life knowing that your fate is inescapable? The great sages and Rabbis made sweeping pronouncements that ranged from saying that the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, was what covered the intentional sins; even saying that doing good deeds and/or showing heartfelt repentance covered intentional sins. Some said that being sorry enough, or studying Scripture enough, or doing a GREAT act of repentance or a GREAT good deed could even, almost magically, turn that intentional sin into a deed that had MERIT in Yehoveh's eyes. Of course, none of this is in the Holy Scriptures. But, this just highlights what a serious matter intentional sin is, and how these Hebrew religious authorities would go to such great length to conjure up these tortured procedures on how to rid THEMSELVES of this rejection by God due to their commission of an intentional sin. Let me put this in modern terms: what we call the unforgivable sin, they called the intentional sin, because, generally speaking, these sins had no available means of atonement...therefore, they remained unforgiven indefinitely.

Back in Exodus we started reading about the 1st of the series of laws given to Israel, which began with the 10 Commandments. In Hebrew thinking there is no difference between religious and civil law....they are one in the same. The religious Biblical Law WAS also the civil law. The Biblical Law was ALL the law that the Hebrew society lived under (at least while they were governing themselves). They would have laughed at our questionable Western concept of separation of Church and State. We learned of laws, in Exodus, prescribing immediate death for adulterers and murders and idolaters, and of other laws that even prescribed death for gross negligence. Some laws dealt with property, and therefore, usually involved reparations when wrong was done. Someone discovered to be a thief was not jailed; instead they had to make reparations to the person they stole from. And, these reparations always involved giving back well more than the amount they took. There were laws involving accidental injuries to people or animals, and the remedy for these was also normally reparation. If you couldn't or wouldn't make any of the required reparations, your life was turned over to that person who had been harmed or suffered loss, more or less as a slave, until you worked off that debt to him. These sorts of issues, their remedies and punishments, are all covered in the Biblical Law.

So a good way for us to understand the justice system God set up for Israel is to think of it as consisting of two primary components: the Law, and the Sacrificial system. Now, a Hebrew would want to argue a little about what I just said on some technical merits, and they would be correct; because technically, the sacrificial system is contained within the Law as part of the Law, at least in the common way of speaking. But the FUNCTIONAL way that the Biblical justice system operated also made the Law and the Sacrificial System as somewhat separate systems, used for different...nearly opposite.....purposes.

Some time ago, back in Exodus, we went into great detail about God's justice, which in Hebrew is called Mishpat. The Law is NOT God's justice, it is but part of God's justice. The Law had a role to play in God's justice system, just as the sacrificial system had a role to play in God's justice system.

One foundational principle underlying God's justice system is quite similar to our American legal system whereby we declare some crimes less serious than others, and so we classify the offenses accordingly and we have different processes of how we deal with the less serious versus the more serious. We generally classify the less serious crimes as misdemeanors, the more serious as felonies. To make an analogy, admittedly imperfect but close enough to make the point, the sacrificial system atoned for misdemeanors..... but NOT for felonies (please don't take that too literally). God, in His justice system, defined a misdemeanor as committing an unintentional sin.....and a felony as committing an intentional sin. Whereas we Believers want to classify sins according to big ones and little ones.....bad ones and not-so-bad ones....a little one is cheating on your taxes, a big one is robbing a bank, and a bigger one is premeditated murder.....it seems that God begins by classifying sins as unintentional or deliberate.

We have to remember that ALL crime among the Hebrews was sin. Everything a Hebrew did wrong was first and foremost an offense to God....and the OT Hebrews saw it that way. Certainly the doing of wrong often, and usually, manifested itself in the form of someone doing harm against somebody else. But the key is that all right and therefore all wrong was defined by God; so in all cases wrongdoing of any kind among Israelite society was in violation of Yehoveh's laws, so every wrong was a sin.

Let's be very clear before we even start to read Leviticus: the sacrificial system's purpose was not to extract a penalty from the wrongdoer. The sacrificial system was not an escalating system of penalty fees or fines in the form of more valuable or less valuable animals, the choice of which depended on the severity of your offense. The idea was NOT so much that the bigger the sin, the bigger and more expensive the animal you had to give up. You didn't pay a dove for a tiny sin, and a bull for a giant sin. The sacrificial system was there to MAINTAIN your relationship with God, and to REPAIR it if it got broken as a result of your sin. It was there to BENEFIT the sinner far more than to appease God. And whatever form the appeasement of God was to be, it was not about paying Him off.....it was about obedience and reconciliation within His system of justice so that you could have your relationship with Him restored.

Let me put it another way, and please pay close attention because it may change the way you've ever looked at the Law: the sacrificial system represented the blessings part of the Law, and the curses of the Law represented the punishment part of the Law.

If an Israelite sinned Unintentionally, he could always turn to the sacrificial system that is laid out in detail in Leviticus, and be reconciled with God. Is that not exactly what we Believers in Yeshua rely on? When we sin we turn to the sacrifice of Jesus as our way out. If in committing a sin a person did harm to another person, either financially or bodily, then some reparation to that harmed person was usually prescribed, together with the appropriate animal sacrifice at the Tabernacle as reparations to God. Further, forgiveness.....real forgiveness, not some inferior kind..... atonement was achieved, and peace with God was restored to the wrong doer, the sinner, through the indispensable sacrificial system that was the agent of atonement. They were blessed by this process, rather than punished.

However if someone sinned intentionally, high handedly, they could NOT go to the sacrificial system and gain reconciliation with God. Instead they were to be dealt with under the curses of the Law. Instead of being under the blessing and grace of the sacrificial system, they were put under the punishment (the curse) of the Law. Let me state that again: the sacrificial system was based entirely on grace. It was the animal that lost its life rather

than the person who committed the sin. The curses of the Law, however, were different. And when a sin was of the type that required a punishment UNDER THE LAW, although Hebrews usually did not lose their physical lives (but sometimes they did), they DID lose their relationship with God, and there was really no defined method to regain it. This was a terrifying possibility that every Hebrew faced every day of his entire life. I mean, did an Israelite honestly believe he could go his entire life and never ONCE intentionally break one of God's laws? Never ONCE have a bad day and deliberately sin?

The sad reality is that as much inner enjoyment as too many of us get in looking back at those stiff-necked Hebrews who tended to wander off into idolatry from time-to-time, and comparing them to ourselves who would NEVER do such a foolish thing as bow down to a pagan god, those Hebrews' sins were almost always unintended. They worked like mad NEVER to sin. How about us? We're almost the exact opposite. Church doctrine and tradition has led us to the point that we hardly ever, IF ever, consider unintentional sin, AS sin. Our view is that if we didn't mean it, or didn't even recognize it, there's nothing to it. As a matter of fact it's almost not a sin if you didn't know you were being disobedient; that ignorance of the Law is an excuse and can actually be to our advantage. And yet it was precisely this KIND of sin, the unintended sin, that the sacrificial system was designed to accommodate. It was the unintentional sins for which millions, perhaps billions, of God's animals were put to death to atone for things men did....things they gave little thought to.

Almost all of the sins that we modern Believers currently think of as the everyday variety of sin actually falls into the category of deliberate and intentional. We mean to do it, even though later we might regret it. We know that its wrong, but we do it anyway. We know it's an offense to God, but we choose to consider the consequences later. When we have sin to confess to God it is usually, by the Biblical definition, an INTENTIONAL sin that we are confessing. And the Levitical sacrificial system did NOT cover this type of sin.

Since the sacrificial system of the Bible only covers sins that weren't intended, and if Jesus fulfilled ONLY THAT system, where does that leave us when most of the time we sin deliberately? Well, here's the good news: just to help demonstrate how Paul saw Christ as fulfilling MORE than the Levitical sacrificial system, with all its definitions of what it could and could not atone for, we only have to go to Romans 3:25.

READ Romans 3:23-25

“.....since all have sinned and come short of earning God's praise. By God's grace, without earning it, all are granted the status of begin considered righteous before Him, through the act redeeming us from our enslavement to sin that was accomplished by the Messiah Yeshua. God put Yeshua forward as a kapparah for sin through his faithfulness in respect to his bloody sacrificial death.”

Now, what did Paul just say here? First, understand that where my Bible has the word kapparah, yours may say “mercy seat” or “sacrifice of atonement” or some such thing. Kapparah is just Hebrew for atonement. But, in the Greek, the word used here is hilasterion, which is used two other places in the NT, and BOTH times is referring to the Mercy Seat....the lid to the Ark of the Covenant. So it's not wrong to translate this as atonement. But when we realize that it is MORE referring directly to the most important furnishing in the most important location of the Tabernacle, which is central to the Levitical sacrificial system, then we see how thoroughly tied together the Levitical sacrificial system and Jesus Christ, is. Yet even that is not FULLY representative of what it is that Yeshua fulfilled.

A key phrase in the verses we just read was “enslavement to sin”. That phrase, or others very similar, has always received much attention among Believers. But if we'll apply what we've learned today.....that once a Hebrew committed an intentional sin, and there was no hope for atonement for that.....it lends NEW meaning to

the words “enslavement to sin”. Commit an intentional sin, and indeed, you are its slave forever. There is no escape from an Intentional sin under the Levitical sacrificial system. THIS is closer to the meaning it had to Paul, because by the Hebrew thinking of that day, it was intentional sins that were the problem because these hung over your head forever. You were not a slave to Unintentional sins, but rather to Intentional sins, because the sacrificial system as it existed from Moses’ day forward was fully capable of dealing with the unintentional sins that Hebrews committed.

Notice the first portion of our Romans 3 scripture that we just read: It says that BECAUSE not one person has ever gone his lifetime without sinning, that by God’s grace there is now a method by which ALL those sins can be atoned for. To Paul it was obvious that Messiah did something MORE than what the Levitical Sacrificial System was capable of doing; and what Christ could do was to atone for the INTENTIONAL sins in our lives as well as the unintentional.

You now have a good idea of the basic principles of the justice system (mishpat) the Israelites lived under. It’s no wonder that over the centuries the Hebrew Scribes, Sages, and Rabbis eventually developed a lot of tradition to deal with the inflexibility and seeming harshness of such a system that had no remedy for intentional sins. And those traditions they developed in many cases simply overturned God’s ways and replaced them with man’s ways, because it better fit with their evolving philosophies of life and fairness and justice and their NEED to get rid of their guilt. They ignored that God had a purpose for this system of Laws and sacrifices that did NOT have a way to atone for every type of sin; and that the prophets told them that a remedy for their predicament was on the way.....to be provided by Yehoveh Himself.....in the person of Messiah.

It helps us to understand why the more educated an Israelite was (in Biblical times higher education was ONLY religious education), the more STRICT he was, generally speaking, in demanding that those around him follow the Law, as well as how scrupulous he was on following the law himself. Because better than most, he understood the limited ability of the sacrificial system to atone for his sins.....that is, what it could atone for, and what it could NOT.

But also look at the burden every Israelite carried. One careless or rash moment basically carried an eternal sentence. Commit a sin that the sacrificial system was not built to atone for and beyond the criminal punishment you might receive from the Law, you were now at war with God forever. Since the only way, in God’s justice system, to atone and be forgiven was an animal sacrifice within the context of the sacrificial system protocols, but what you did was not covered by that system....well.....you were done for. Are you getting the picture?

This, of course, was the world that Paul and all of the Jews in Christ’s day lived in. This was the world the Hebrews of the Old Testament, beginning with Moses, lived in. Paul, as a highly positioned Pharisee, understood the realities of God’s justice system to a degree that the common folk didn’t. It was his profession to contemplate this difficult reality, day and night. Imagine the mental energy necessary to try to control your will so thoroughly as to NEVER in your lifetime commit a deliberate sin; the effort must have been exhausting. But the failure to avoid such sin was so terrible that NOT to work yourself to exhaustion to avoid it was unthinkable. The common folk understood their situation, but they had lives to live, mouths to feed, and most didn’t go to bed at night, and then wake up in the morning, and re-examine their position with God. For Paul, as with all the other Pharisees, however, it was the center of all their thoughts.

You see when Paul and other Pharisees went around strong-arming fellow Jews....it wasn’t only followers of Jesus who they were accusing of crimes and arresting. It was everyday traditional Jews. Because primarily what Paul’s job was, or at least he seemed to take the greatest delight in, was to look for Jews who had committed an intentional sin.....because THAT person NOW was going to be dealt with harshly. That person would now be

UNDER THE CURSES OF THE LAW (how many times have you heard that expression?), as opposed to under the sacrificial system. That person was now out of fellowship with God and subject to punishment by men. This was the system Judaism operated under in Biblical times.

With that as a perspective, is it no wonder that the **SAVED** Paul came to use such harsh words when describing the Levitical sacrificial system and the Law in comparison to Christ? For in fact what made Christ's blood so precious to Paul was that it **DID** cover sins that were intentional. You see, even though Christ is often described as our High Priest, He is not the type of High Priest that Aaron represented; He is **MORE** than the High Priesthood started by Aaron, because He is actually closer in type to what Moses was. The Bible tells us that the Messiah will even be "after the order of Melchizedek", who was both king and high priest. Even though Yeshua provided the once and for all sacrifice that had formerly been the purpose of the Levitical Sacrificial System, He was **MORE** than what that system could provide. He also provided what the Passover provided, and **THAT** was the key.

Let me explain: The Passover sacrifice was not really part of the Law per se or the general Sacrificial System.....it actually came **BEFORE** that. The Biblical Feasts (even though contained within a body of Scripture that is loosely called Law) generally functioned somewhat separately, and had different purposes than the Laws of do's and don'ts. The Passover sacrifice is a case in point: it was not about atoning for sins, was it? The Passover sacrifice was originally established as a means of being protected from death. Lambs' blood was smeared on doorposts in Egypt so that God's wrath, His hand of death, would not come to the homes of His people and kill the firstborn sons. When the Israelites celebrated Passover, it was for them a remembrance, a memorial holiday, to recall God freeing them from Egypt and protecting them from death...it was not about atonement for sins. Of course it had much deeper significance that they didn't comprehend....that it was a foreshadowing of Christ's death on the Cross. But the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb had **NOTHING** to do with the sacrificial system whose job it was to make peace with God by means of atonement.

When Yeshua died on the Cross at least 2 things were accomplished that directly affects us: One, He paid the price with His blood for our sins.....He atoned for our sins.....intentional and unintentional. Two, as the Passover Lamb, His blood marked us to be passed over for the Eternal Death....Spiritual Death....which the Bible describes as, first and foremost, eternal separation from God.

Further what had infuriated the Jewish religious authorities about Jesus, even beyond His claim of being Messiah, was that during the time of His ministry He was running around giving divine forgiveness to those who had committed **INTENTIONAL** sins!! Jesus was pronouncing that the person who put their trust in Him could achieve reconciliation with God even after committing an intentional sin. My goodness, even the sacrificial system, the holiest most blessed, gracious and powerful part of the entire Hebrew justice system, couldn't do that!!

So as we move along through Leviticus keep that perspective in mind. Nothing in the sacrificial system that we're about to study atones for **INTENTIONAL** sins. And as you have occasion to read Paul's books in the New Testament, try to grasp just how **INFERIOR** the sacrificial part of the Law must have seemed to him, once he comprehended what Yeshua's death had accomplished. Paul never says the Law is obsolete or dead; he only says that compared to Christ, the Law (primarily the sacrificial portion) is as nothing. Amen, brother! That by faith in Christ, you now are subject to Christ's grace when you intentionally sin, instead of subject to the curses of the Law when you intentionally sin is too wonderful for words. You can be sure that while Paul is awestruck at how Yeshua can provide for "forgiveness of sins", that what he was thinking about, at least what was in the forefront of his mind, was **INTENTIONAL** sins...because Paul took it for granted that Unintentional sins could

be forgiven.....as they always had, by means of a proper animal sacrifice, since the days of Moses. Also keep in mind that Paul NEVER compared the ability of Christ to forgive against the Law's FAILURE in that same area. The Law never failed in forgiveness because it was never designed to forgive.....or to atone....every Jewish child knew that much. But guess what.....the sacrificial system DID provide a means of forgives but it was limited to the unintentional sin. As an analogy of the Law: when compared to the incredible flying ability of Eagles, are Elephants failures? Of course not. Elephants don't FAIL to fly, because they were never built to fly. The Law portion of God's justice system was not designed to atone or forgive, but to draw a line between obedience to God and disobedience to God. The Law established moral choices for humankind; in doing so it showed us what sin is. The sacrificial system, on the other hand, was designed to achieve forgiveness by means of atonement. But the sacrificial system had limits; it could ONLY deal with a certain class of sin and then on a case-by-case basis. Both systems, both parts of God's justice system, did what they were designed to do, perfectly.

Now using all that I just told you as the lens through which to view Leviticus, next week we'll take a look at the first type of sacrifice addressed in Chapter 1, the burnt offering, and discover what it was intended to accomplish.