

Fueling Station 8:
Scapegoat mentality



Key Introduction

The two goats that God instructed His people to sacrifice were significant to His legal and personal character. Blood represented “life”, there is no life without blood circulating through the body. It gives life to the heart and the heart sends it out to give life to the rest of the body. The bloodstream can also be contaminated by foreign substances that poison the body. It was for this reason, through the contamination of sin that poisoned our hearts that Jesus became the Lamb that was slain. His sinless blood satisfied a Holy Gods separation from His creation. Then came the scapegoat, the one whose outside “skin” was covered with the sins of the people and remained living to be let loose in the wilderness or Azazel representing the valley of fire outside Jerusalem. This sin was external and needed to be refined like gold through fire also representing the trials of life. The removal of sin from intimate fellowship with God is significant to our story as followers of Christ. Jesus also had to go outside the “camp” to bear the reproach of our sins. He endured much suffering and disfellowship with the Father to restore our intimacy with God. Jesus performed all of this to satisfy Gods requirements both legally and personally. But this is not where the story ends but begins.

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Romans 12:1-2 ESV

*Notice the clear parallel between the scapegoat and the call on our lives. This is an exact parallel of the reminder to “pick up our cross daily” in order to be a follower of Jesus.

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed,”
Romans 15:13, 15-16, 18 ESV

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”
Romans 5:1-5 ESV

*Suffering is a key ingredient in Gods design, it actually separates how much we love Him.

“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”
Romans 6:4 ESV

*Since the Lamb of God died on our behalf we have also died on Gods behalf with Him. So that now, we can “live” for Him walking in this new life as a “living sacrifice”. This is “scapegoat mentality”.

“We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.”
Romans 6:6 ESV

*Notice the 2 goats present in this verse: our old self was crucified and died, so that, the body of sin(scapegoat with sins placed on him) might be brought to nothing! The idea is that through cleansing and refining we would mature and live less and less sinful and more and more righteous.

“Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.”
Romans 6:13 ESV

“I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.”

Romans 6:19 ESV

*Because of what Christ did for us, we are responsible and accountable for maintaining this victory in the way we live our lives for God. This is the scapegoat mentality!

“But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 6:22-23 ESV

*Eternal life is dependent now with us bearing fruit that leads to sanctification. This type of “eternal life” presented here is “age-like” life due to the fact that we have been freed from slavery to sin. What “age” is it like? The dominion and rulership in the millennial kingdom age! We can live with the same dominion and rulership now over the forces of darkness.

“So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”

Romans 8:12-13 ESV

*If we don't “use” the death of Jesus on our behalf to put to death the deeds of the body and live a life pleasing to God, we will die! As we have stated in many articles in the race to the kingdom, this death will be a death to inheritance inside the kingdom. Those who are cast out will continue to represent the scapegoat life in the wilderness for cleansing and refining.

*It is important to point out that throughout history God has provided atonement for sin. Every generation was held accountable to faithfully follow Gods methods to accomplish this. It is very important to understand that these methods never provided an escape from the practical consequences of our sins. Gods law always held the offender accountable for restitution when sin affected others and sins that were considered “high handed” were still liable to death by stoning. The animal sacrifices that were a foreshadow of Jesus death as the Lamb of God and the church now looking backwards at the cross is no different concerning the seriousness of sinning. We are still held accountable for making restitution for those we have injured with our sins. Our “high handed sins” may still lead to physical death like Ananias and Saphira. In the Old Covenant, we were able to lose the blessings of God and still incur the disciplining judgement of God. We have the same warnings to the churches in the New Covenant. John reminds us that there are still sins that lead to death:

“If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life—to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I

do not say that one should pray for that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death.”

1 John 5:16-17 ESV

*The key difference in this death was that it wasn't necessarily physical. This was a death to fellowship with God and those who would receive the inheritance in His kingdom to come! To be “adopted” by God is to be considered an “heir” of God. The rebirth of our spirits was a guarantee of right judicial standing with God through the work of Jesus and a guarantee of being made holy through fire, but not a guarantee to future kingdom inheritance. This is made clear by many warnings to the churches about losing their inheritance in the future kingdom of our Lord! In fact in the New Testament the “bar” of accountability to receive the promises of God has only risen, not lowered:

“whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.”

Romans 3:25-26, 30 ESV

“Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.”

Romans 3:31 ESV

“and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised. For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.”

Romans 4:12-13 ESV

*Did Abraham have to be obedient to Gods commands, Yes!! Did he have to leave his home and go to a land God would show him? Yes!! Did he have to persevere in the belief that God would give him a promised son? Yes!! Did he have to take Isaac up a mountain and prepare to sacrifice him? Yes!! But how was he able to do this? Through Faith! Not through a written code of instructions and rituals kept to appease God but obedience from the heart through faith! Since the Holy Spirit is the free gift of grace in Christ, we are now in dwelt with this incredible power to overcome sin and fulfill the Law through faith! This is why the “bar” has risen!

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Romans 5:1-2 ESV

*Notice again all 3 parts to the New Covenant story: by faith in Jesus' obedience on the cross we have been justified, we now by this faith have access by this grace through faith to live a life pleasing to God, If we do we will gain the inheritance of the glory of God which is our hope!

“So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons(heirs) of God.”

Romans 8:12-14 ESV

*This is why Scapegoat mentality is so important. We must present ourselves to God as “living sacrifices” and go outside the camp to bear our reproach:

“Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears. Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,”

Hebrews 12:12-15, 17, 28 ESV

*Again this “offer acceptable to God” is a ‘living sacrifice’.

“For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured.”

Hebrews 13:11-13 ESV

*This was the same understanding of releasing the “scapegoat” into the wilderness outside Jerusalem!

The instruction given to the church of Laodicea is an important understanding of how we were meant to offer ourselves as a scapegoat for the refining fires:

“I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.”

Revelation 3:18 ESV

What does it mean to be bought with a price?

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 ESV

“You were bought with a price; do not become bondservants of men.”

1 Corinthians 7:23 ESV

*Remember a “bondservant” is someone who willingly offers themselves in service to another.

Questions for reflection and Contemplation:

1. Most scholars believe that the specific place called Azazel means a rough, rocky terrain, similar to what Jesus said about the two roads one that leads to destruction but is easy and the other that is difficult but leads to life. How does this apply to scapegoat mentality?
2. Consider the verse below, what do you believe is meant by shedding your blood?

“Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him.”

Hebrews 12:3-5 ESV

3. I know “scapegoat mentality” does not sound pleasant, but take inventory of similar themes in your life that you were willing to go through sacrifices and suffering to achieve a desired outcome: school? Diet? Pregnancy? Physical fitness? A raise at work? Athletics? What else?
4. What can you do practically in your life to help you keep the “eyes of your mind” on the prize? What do you do to remind you of your earthly goals?

*Remember be a good Berean and be diligent in studying the scriptures to show yourself approved and encourage others to do the same!



