

## A Life Given to God

2 Tim. 4:6-7

### Introduction:

1. The O.T. sacrificial system with its offerings of the lives of animals was a constant reminder of the severity of sin.
2. As described in the books of Leviticus and Numbers burnt offerings were accompanied by libations or drink offerings.
3. These burnt offerings with their drink offerings were said to provide a “soothing aroma” to God.
  - a. What does this mean they provided a “soothing aroma to God”? Is this some kind of aroma therapy for God?
  - b. Paul speaks of his life being “poured out as a drink offering.” When we give our lives in service to the Lord is there some sense that this has a soothing effect for the Lord?
  - c. What is the O.T. context against which this N.T. concept is set? And what does it mean to me?
4. For the next few minutes I want to consider how your life given to God has a soothing effect on the Lord’s anger against your sin.

### Discussion:

- I. The “soothing” of God’s wrath against sin traces back to the earliest days of history.
  - A. Gen. 8:20-21.
    1. After the flood Noah emerged from the ark and built an altar and offered burnt offerings on the altar.
    2. The text says: “The Lord smelled the soothing aroma; and the Lord said to Himself, ‘I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done.’”
    3. One might get the idea, like the pagan’s had, that God’s anger would be satisfied by the offering of some gift. But such an idea is never associated with the sacrifices of the O.T.
  - B. Indeed, Scripture reveals that only one sacrifice can take away sin and that is the sacrifice made by God of His own Son.
    1. Thus, He is the propitiation that brings satisfaction to the wrath of God (1 Jn. 2:2).
    2. The writer of Hebrews reminds us that all the sacrifices of the Mosaic system were not effective in taking away sin. He said, “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (10:4).
    3. If their blood would not take away sins then certainly the smell of their burning carcasses would not.
  - C. Yet the O.T. is replete with statements about animal sacrifices along with their drink offerings being burned as a “soothing aroma to the Lord.” Ex. Lev. 23:13, 18, 37; Num. chapters 15, 28 and 29. (The drink offerings were considered “a soothing aroma to the Lord.” See Num. 15:10.)
    1. While these sacrifices pointed to death as the consequence of sin and the burning

of such sacrifices seems to be a reference to the fiery indignation of God against sin (cf. Deut. 32:22; Num. 11:1; Matt. 3:11-12, etc.) these sacrifices were insufficient to satisfy God's wrath.

2. They pointed to the sacrifice of Christ. Only His sacrifice was sufficient. Eph. 5:2 even refers to His sacrifice as "a fragrant aroma" to God.
3. But what about the burnt offerings that the people offered then?
  - a. They had the significance of demonstrating the broken and contrite spirit that the Lord desired.
  - b. Psa. 51:16-17 says, "You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise."
4. Have you ever done something for someone that cost you a lot and they seemed to take what you had done for granted? Perhaps they asked for you to do more. Maybe they criticized what you had done. Or they were simply unappreciative, not understanding how much you had given up to be able to do this for them. Connie Adams told a story about taking his two young sons on a vacation trip through the spectacular Blue Ridge Mountains. Typical of children I guess, Wilson and Martin were carrying on in the back seat. You know how young kids do, drawing imaginary lines on the seat and challenging the other to cross them under the penalty of death. It made Connie mad and he blurted out, "We have made great sacrifices for you to see this and you're going to enjoy it whether you like it or not!!"
5. If you have ever made sacrifices for someone you have probably experienced the same frustrations that Connie felt.
6. A little appreciation, a little gratitude goes a long way. It doesn't pay for the trip, but it is soothing to the one who did!
7. The offering of O.T. burnt offerings recognized God's gift. It did not pay for it, but it acknowledged it and it had a soothing effect.

## II. We do not offer burnt offerings today, but Scripture does teach us to make sacrifices.

- A. We can make the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit (Psa. 51:16-17).
  1. Sometimes when we are caught in sin we are mostly sorry we got caught.
  2. We do not want to have to endure the consequences of having gotten caught.
  3. We see this in defensiveness, denials and distractions from the sin. Ex. "I did wrong, but I have done a lot of good."
  4. This contrasts with the sorrow of the broken and contrite spirit, the recognition of spiritual bankruptcy of a genuine change of heart.
  5. In our relationships one with another when we see this spirit in one who has sinned against us our anger is often soothed and we extend forgiveness. They did not pay for their sin. We carried the pain; paid the penalty and allowed them to go free.
  6. Arrogance often gets in the way of the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit.
- B. Heb. 12:28 says, "Since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and

awe;

for our God is a consuming fire."

1. First, notice that our God is a consuming fire. How are you going to sooth it?

2. With an offering to God in gratitude of acceptable service with reverence and awe.
  3. No you do not have to satisfy the wrath of God against your sin, but it is appropriate to show gratitude and to offer your service.
- C. In Rom. 12:1 Paul says, "I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship."
1. As we give ourselves to the Lord we become living sacrifices.
  2. It is lives given to the Lord that become a "soothing aroma." Lives that show gratitude and good will for what the Lord has done.
- D. This is what the saints of Macedonia had done (2 Cor. 8:4-5).
1. There were needy Christians in Jerusalem.
  2. The Macedonians begged to help. Seems they had "first given themselves to the Lord and to the will of God."
- E. In Phil. 2:17 Paul wrote, "If I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all." He was giving himself as a sacrifice for them as he poured himself into their faith.
1. Teachers, preachers, elders, leaders, servants you are pouring yourselves out for others.
  2. All you receivers out there be thankful. These are making sacrifices for you that you cannot comprehend.
  3. As you give your hearts to the Lord you bring soothing to them for all the sacrifices they have made for your benefit.
- F. In 2 Tim. 4 Paul reflects on the end of his life. "I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come" (6).
1. As you look back on your life given to God may you have poured out your life as a drink offering.
  2. May that drink offering, reminiscent of that drink offering accompanying the burnt offerings of old be a soothing aroma to the Lord.
- G. It would seem appropriate that our offerings be lavish and not minimalistic.

#### Conclusion:

1. When you make sacrifices for others it is certainly soothing when they show gratitude, when they respond with attitudes and actions that reflect some level of awareness of the price you have paid.
2. Our lives given to God, our broken and contrite spirits, do not satisfy the wrath of God against our sin. Only the sacrifice of Christ can do that.
3. But our sacrifices, as meager and insufficient as they are, like the burnt offerings and their drink offerings of old, provide a "soothing aroma" to our God.