

The Male in the Offerings

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Extracted from Scripture Truth magazine, Volume 15, 1923, pages 66.

In the beginning the male was put in responsibility over the sphere allotted to him; and the female was given to him as a helpmeet, his like, to be of him and for him (Gen. 2). Eve was brought to Adam, an individual upon whom he could set his affection and who could share his pleasures and privileges; yet not accorded the same responsibility.

It seems that in the institution of the offerings, this principle is recognizable; for where Christ is typified as answering the wide glory of God, as in the burnt-offering, or where He is typified as sin-offering for a whole community, or for a priest or ruler whose whole sphere of responsibility was affected by his sin, it is a male victim that is presented (Lev. 1 and Lev. 4).

It should affect us that a leader erring is evidently a more serious matter among saints and before God than the erring of a simple soul who is led. How softly should "ministering brothers" who travel about, or "local leaders" who are more fixed, or "missionaries" walk; and how careful should they be in the example set before the people of God.

Moreover, when we find that in some detail or practice we have erred, and have soiled our whole sphere of responsibility and service, how much more deep and searching should be our self-judgment, and the sense of our indebtedness to the death of Christ which alone makes atonement for our wrong. Our want of instruction, our ignorance, is no excuse for the error. As in British law courts no one may plead ignorance of the law to cover transgression of it, so is the saint of God responsible to know the truth of Christ and to walk according to it in life, service, and worship. Sinning through ignorance required atonement.

Christ suffered for our individual sins, but He also became representative of man in every sphere of responsibility in which man has failed; bringing sweet savour by virtue of His atonement into the very place where had been the ill-savour of man's sin. His death was one and indivisible; yet the diversities of its application are many, and require our reverent exercise and study.