

Numbers 15:22–31
Mercy and Warning for the Church

Friday, June 21, 2024 • Read Numbers 15:22–31

Questions from the Scripture text: What might the whole congregation do, without meaning to or knowing it, and what must be done in that case (v22–25)? With what result (v26)? Who else might do this (v27, 29)? What must be done, with what result (v28)? But what is done in the case of high-handed sins (30, 31b)? What three things has he done (v30–31a)?

What must God's people do about sin? Numbers 15:22–31 prepares us for the evening sermon on the Lord's Day. In these ten verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **God gives His people procedures by which to take sin, atonement, and forgiveness seriously.**

For unintentional sin, whether by all the people or one, atonement was necessary. And, praise God, He provided it! A Christian doesn't even need to offer a sacrifice; he has immediate recourse to the blood of Christ. But the one who sins "with an exalted hand" (v30) blasphemes YHWH, despises His Word, and breaks His commandment. Then, as now, such open defiance and unrepentant sin calls for excommunication. Thus, sinners would feel the weight of their guilt upon them. By implication, if Israel (or your church) permitted unrepentant sinning, the church as a whole would blaspheme the Lord.

How do you come to realize your sin? How ought you to respond? What can be (has been!) done about it?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for testifying about Your Son, by Your Spirit, that He is our life and sacrifice. Amen!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH51C "God, Be Merciful to Me"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Number is 15 verses 22 through 31. These are God's words. If you send unintentionally and do not observe, all these Commandments, Which over has spoken to Moses. All that Yave has commanded you By the hand of Moses. From the day Yahweh gave commandment and onward throughout your Generations. Then it will be if it is unintentionally committed without the knowledge of the congregation that the whole congregation So, all for one, young bull is a burnt offering.

As a sweet Aroma to Yahweh with its green offering and its drink offering according to the ordinance and one kid of the goats as a sin offering. So, the priest shall make atonement for the whole Congregation of the children of Israel? Then it shall be forgiven. Then for it is unintentional.

They shall bring their offering an offering made by fire tiamafe. And their sin offering before you offer for their unintended sin. And shall be forgiven, the whole congregation, or the children of Israel, and The Stranger who dwells among them, because all the people did it unintentionally. And if a person sends unintentionally, then he shall bring a female goat in its first year as a sin offering.

So, the priest shall make atonement for the person who sins unintentionally. When he sends unintentionally before, Yahweh to make atonement for him. And it shall be forgiven him. You shall have one law for him. Who sins unintentionally for him? Who is native born among the children of Israel? And for the stranger who dwells among them, But the person who does anything presumptuously.

Whether he is NATO born or a stranger? That one. Brings reproach on Yahweh. And he shall be cut off from among his people. Because he is despised the word of Yahweh. And has broken his commandment to that person. Shall be completely cut off. Is guilt. Shall be upon him.

So for the reading of gods, inspired and inerrant word. We've had this in offering and the trespass offering for unintentional and Uh, even The defilement of. The conscience. Before back in Leviticus 4 and 5. And so this is a mercy of God, reminding them that there continues to be.

Sacrifice by which, They? Have their conscience, cleansed in order to come draw near to Yahweh. And the Offerings that the Lord has provided. And the bulk of the section. However, is On the unintentional sin of the congregation as a whole. And we see God's Great Mercy to them that.

Uh, just one goat as I said, offering and one bull as an Ascension. Would be for the whole congregation, for the whole people of Israel. And so, here is great Mercy from the Lord. But then, there is also A great warning here. Because in addition, To that, which is for the people as a whole for unintentional sin verses 22-26.

He gives instruction for Uh, Individual. Who commits unintentional sin for verse, in verse 27 to 29. But then he warns against the willfulsen. The person who, Not because they weren't thinking about it not because they didn't realize it. Uh, but someone who sins with a raised hand unrepentant, Sin.

Really? Is here. Not just like figuring out. Did you mean it or did you not mean it? The word presumptuously. Uh, means high-handed sinning. This is actually where we get the Uh, the English idiom or the English phrase. Although I suspect that it's not. In such common usage anymore, but he did that high-handedly.

Or a high-handed. Um, Uh, Crime of some sort of high-handed Thief. Uh, high-ended theft or high-handed treason maybe or something like that. And so, if the Sin is committed. Rebellion, and scorning. It's rebellion and scorning of the Lord because it's Rebellion and scorning of his word notice. Connection of those two things in verses, 30 and 31.

And so nobody, who Um, reject or Um, Disregards. The word of God can claim. Uh, to love the Lord or honor the Lord. Although there are many, who do This passage of course, warns us that Their claims are false. That someone says, I don't really care. To be. So, precise about what the Bible says.

Uh, because I honor God. No, he says. The person who sins high-handedly.

Scorns the Lord, blasphemes the Lord. Because verse 31, he has despised. The. Of the Lord. He Uh, blasphemes Yahweh because he's despised the word. Of your And that person is. For this passage to be. Excommunicated. And not just excommunicated before men. But notice the last phrase there, his guilt shall be upon him the last Clause there, his guilt shall be upon him.

As a reminder to us that excommunication. On Earth is a reflection of a heavy, a Heavenly reality. Uh, and that it's not just the church that inflicts the penalty of excommunication. But it is meant as a warning to the person who is excommunicated that God. Places his guilt or her guilt upon.

Upon him or upon her. Well, then in the

Dynamics of the passage. There is an imbalance. Because we have something for The unintentional. Sin of the congregation, we have something for the unintentional sin of an individual. We have something for the high-handed s. Of the individual. But what about the high-handed sin of The congregation. And the implication here.

Is that a an assembly of God's? Uh, was just Dreadful in the time of Israel because there's only the one assembly An assembly of God's Church can come collectively under

excommunication and their guilt be upon them. Uh and this is happening to the Assembly of those who have been numbered 20 years old and upward that's part of the implication here.

Um, but part of the implication is that it is also true going forward. And eventually it becomes. It is inflicted upon them in the Exile, and then most dreadfully. As a congregation as Covenant. What comes upon them? Further rejection of Christ. Is not merely. The Dreadful happenings of ad67 to 70 with the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of Jerusalem, destruction of the temple.

Uh, but Uh, the Lord by that Providence. Um, Testifying that. Uh, that their guilt was upon them. That they had been cut off and cut out. And of course, the only way to be grafted back in is not for some Uh, repentance of the Jewish people to be restored.

To the Covenant under Moses of the Covenant under Aaron. But to be grafted into Christ himself. Uh but then this is also a warning to our own congregations the church as a whole has Jesus. Now as Prophet and priest and King the church corporately generally universally Um, The old word used to be Catholic, but now the word Catholic.

So, closely associated with the papists, we Uh, we can barely stand to use it. Um, the church Universal, the church visible. Uh, well, the church Universal as a Especially the church invisible. Who's never gonna come under the ban of God because she is led by Christ. But there are congregations.

There are congregations like Jesus warns Ephesus in the Book of Revelation. From whom, he removes his lampstand. And they cease to be. Um, even a less pure. Congregation of Christ's Church. They become a synagogue of Satan. And they are. Excommunicated by God. And their guilt is upon them. So there's Great warning here.

And great necessity. Then that we would Follow God's instruction. With unrepentant, sin of individuals. Because sin is, Um, It has a leavening effect. In which we lead each other, to more, and more sin. And once we begin to tolerate Uh, unrepented sin, whether it was Unintentional to begin with and then especially Defiance in and high-handed sin.

Uh, we can be sure. That, that which Uh, being done by the individuals will soon come to characterize. The congregation as a whole. And how Dreadful then? That will be. And so a great warning here, a helpful, merciful warning from God. Even as Uh, he gives also the Merciful reminder that there is sacrifice for sin that there is atonement even for unintentional sin.

Uh, but coming out of the incident with the spies, Necessary for both. The reinforcing of God's mercy to us. And the reinforcing of the danger. Of unrepentance. Against him. Let's pray.

Father, thank you for Your word. Thank you for how it addressed. Your people just as they needed. Thank you for how to dresses us just as we need. Grant to us, that we would always remember. Christ, our sin offering who has Sacrificed once, for all That we may calm and quickly have our consciences cleansed and Restored to peace with you and joy.

Diligence and Zeal resolve. To honor you and obey you in all that we do. Thank you for. The reminder of How your church is to deal. Uh, Uh, high-Handed centers and I ended cynic. Grant that our congregation would deal rightly with it. Grant, also our Presbytery or Senate. And all of your churches.

Lest. Come to the place where A whole congregations. And Presbyteries and synods and assemblies. Would be high-handed against you, even as we have seen. There are many that are And so they have Lost their lamp stand and become. Synagogues of the devil. So Lord, we have pray that you'd have mercy on your church.

Forgive us and help us. We ask in Jesus name. Amen.