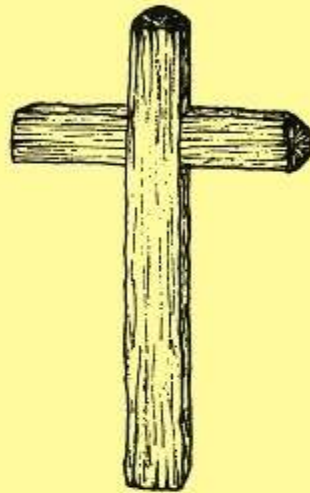


# THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM



**Old  
Covenant**



**New  
Covenant**



—Gerald Paden

## PREFACE

This book is the result of many hours of study of the book of Hebrews and the book of Leviticus. The writings are easily read but will require some thought and meditation to comprehend fully the study and preparation which has been presented. In my judgment, the author has done excellent research of the Scriptures and has put them into word pictures that will be of much help in the understanding of the Old Testament system commanded by God. Then the author skillfully shows Christ as the fulfillment for those in the Christian age. The author spent many hours preparing this material for a course taught by him in the Sunset School of Preaching. As can be seen, it required extensive research into the typologies of the book of Leviticus. The author's motivation to put this into book form is that it will help explain and enhance the reader's understanding and devotion to the Christ.

Brother Gerald Paden, the author, served in the U.S. Navy from 1943 to 1946. Upon discharge, he returned to Lubbock, Texas, where he met and married Bobbie Rhea Johnson. After receiving a B.A. degree from Abilene Christian University in 1951, he served as the local minister of the Church of Christ in Meadow, Texas. From 1953 to 1971, he served as a missionary in Rome and Pisa, Italy. In 1971, he was invited to become a member of the teaching staff for the Sunset School of Preaching, Lubbock, Texas, and still serves in this position at this time. In addition to his teaching in the Sunset School, he is also the Chairman of the Sunset School of Missions. He is a frequent lecturer on the Sacrificial System. Other special involvements are mission work, research and training for various special requests from congregations over a wide area. He also conducts church growth studies and seminars to help in the progress of the Kingdom of Christ. He is highly respected by his fellow teachers, preachers, and church leaders as well as his present and former students. I have personally known Gerald for about 25 years and have found him to be sound in the faith and vitally interested in teaching the lost and he has been an encouragement to me through these years. Your time will be well spent in not only reading this material but also spending some time in a further study of the information contained in this book.

Harold (Rusty) Russwurm

## **COURSE INTRODUCTION**

We want to welcome you to the study of the sacrificial system. This study will come out of the book of Leviticus. As an individual reads Leviticus he gets the impression that it is a very dull and perhaps uninspiring book. And yet it is one of the most interesting studies in the entire Old Testament. In this first lesson we will introduce the study of the sacrifices of the Law of Moses and give an explanation of the different kinds of prophecy that the Old Testament contains. Then we will study the concept of typology. This is a term that needs to be identified and explained. And then we will enter a study of the sacrifices as a system of shadows, or better—a foreshadowing of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Leviticus begins in the Hebrew text with the word “and,” showing that it was the continuation of the story that was begun in Exodus, with which it stands as a unit. Exodus closes the primary state of Hebrew history and begins the story of God’s legislation to His people through the Law of Moses. Exodus is a prelude to, and an introduction, to Leviticus.

### **“A Kingdom Of Priests And A Holy Nation”**

We begin in Exodus 19:5-6 where God makes the statement to the children of Israel after he had rescued them out of Egyptian bondage that: “Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” The fundamental purpose of the priests is to offer sacrifices unto God. Thus, God wanted the entire nation of Israel to be His holy priesthood and to become a holy nation. The word “holy” not only suggests the idea of belonging unto God, but also defines the moral qualities that Israel must exercise in its relationship with God.

Then, in Exodus 20, from Mount Sinai God gave the law of Moses with its ten commandments that form the constitution, the undergirding principles, on which the entire government of Israel would be conducted. There were 613 other laws that were contained in the Mosaic covenant. They are called statutes and ordinances and commandments. Then after chapter 20 the rest of the book of Exodus is devoted to the explanation of the building

of the tabernacle, the ordination of the Levitical priests into their sacred functions and then some initial explanations of the sacrifices that those priests would offer at that tabernacle according to the demands of that law.

These are the four ingredients that go into constitution of the sacrificial system of the law of Moses: the law itself (the covenant, the priests, the tabernacle, and the sacrifices. These form the fundamental basis of the study of the sacrificial system for the book of Leviticus.

### **Important Lessons From Leviticus**

Now Leviticus offers unto the student of the Bible many important lessons about God, about daily living under his government, and about the daily religious life of His people under the law. Some of those lessons are extremely important, even for Christians today.

One of the first lessons that Leviticus teaches us relates to the holiness of God. As a matter of fact, His holiness might well be the major theme of Leviticus. The word “holy” and its derivatives appear at least 83 times in this book. Such extensive usage of the word “holy” tells us much about the thrust of the Law of Moses and particularly about the book of Leviticus. Not only is God holy, His people also are to be holy. His sanctuary is holy and its sacrifices are holy. And, therefore, everything is special in the book of Leviticus.

The second lesson we learn from the book of Leviticus is the way in which God establishes what is called “theocratic rule” in the nation of Israel. A theocracy is God ruling the people. God wanted to be their king. And, therefore, He wanted them to respect and to observe his laws because he was considered as sovereign over the people.

Lesson number three that Leviticus teaches us is how this book and its worship ordinances consecrated Israel to a very sacred, historical mission that God had in mind for that nation of people to accomplish. That mission will become evident as we study the various sacrifices demanded in the book, for those sacrifices are prophetic of the sacrificial mission of the future Messiah.

Lesson four from Leviticus derives from its revelation of the nature and the consequences of sin. It shows how sin can frustrate and even break the relationship between God and His people. Sin destroys the fellowship. It destroys covenant relationship. Therefore, those sins and trespasses that have been committed violate the initial government of God and disrupt their fellowship with God and their covenant relations cannot be restored. But the book of Leviticus also demonstrates through the sacrificial system how God has been able to manifest his mercy and his grace in granting forgiveness to the people of Israel.

The next lesson we want to learn from Leviticus is how this whole system of sacrifices, priests, tabernacle, and covenant prepares the nation of Israel for the coming of the Messiah. The apostle Paul will tell us in Galatians 1:17 that the law was a tutor, or like a primary school teacher, or like a kindergarten designed to bring the nation of Israel to the feet of the great master teacher, the Messiah Himself. And so Leviticus helped prepare Israel for the coming of the Messiah. It also confirms the faith of Christian people in the mission Jesus accomplished through His sacrifice on the cross.

Again, Leviticus demonstrates how God intended to regulate the natural tendencies, the natural desire and urge on the part of man to worship his God. And, it is this book that will give the details of how God wants His people to worship Him. He will explain to them what is acceptable worship and what is not acceptable. There will be examples of those that have violated the worship patterns, as in the case of Nadab and Abihu, and that of the sober consequences recorded in Leviticus chapter 10. Such episodes assure us that God is interested in the worship of His people, but according to the rules He establishes.

The next lesson we learn out of book of Leviticus is how this book defines, through its symbols, through its ceremonies, and especially through its feast days, the ultimate destiny of man. Man, quite evidently, was created for fellowship with God, not only in this world, but particularly in the world to come. His sacrifices were destined to atone for the sins that would alienate man from God. Through those sacrifices, the sinner was brought back into fellowship and thereby was assured of his ultimate destiny with God after this life is over. In other words, God is

not simply interested in fellowship with man here and now. He wants that fellowship in the eternities beyond time and that in heaven. Even their Sabbath rest was a figure used by the writer of the book of Hebrews to foreshadow the believer's eternal rest with God in heaven (Hebrews 3 and 4).

Also, Leviticus declares those eternal, unchanging principles of law that are called ordinances, statutes and commands by which God intends to govern His people through their obedient faith in response to His Law and to His goodness. Law, to be law, must reward those who obey its mandates and punish those who violate its sacred ordinances. The requirements of God's Law may change, and does change, for each of the major periods of Biblical history; the patriarchy, the Mosaic economy, and the Christian age. But each dispensation is bound to observe the laws exclusive to it and will be judged by the laws in vigor during the age under discussion.

### **Redemption By Blood**

Clearly Leviticus establishes inevitably and indelibly the concept of redemption by sacrificial blood. We read from Leviticus 17:10 that God prohibited the children of Israel from eating blood. In verse 11, He explains: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul." So, when the Law says, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:20), either that soul dies under sin or else presents to God an acceptable substitute that dies in his place. Such is called sacrificial atonement. Therefore, when the animal gives its blood, it gives its life.

### **The Great Future Sacrifices Demanded**

Of course, all of that is symbolic of the fact that Jesus will voluntarily give His life for the redemption of the whole human family. Leviticus builds the "blood-redemptive" concept into the whole Mosaic system of sacrifices. And there will be built into the Mosaic system, evidence of the Law's inability to really handle the sin problem. It was never designed to take care of the sin problem. There will be a number of ways in which this book gives ample demonstration of what the Hebrew writer will tell us in Hebrews

10:4: “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.” And, therefore, built into the constitution of these sacrifices of the law, God has given ample evidence that there must be one great, ultimate sacrifice as symbolized by all those Levitical sacrifices that will in reality take care of the sin problem once and for all. And that final sacrifice is going to be Jesus himself.

At the same time, God builds into the sacrificial system evidence that the Law of Moses is not intended to be a permanent system. It is temporary and transient in nature. Its portable tabernacle was evidence of its eventual termination.

### **Two Different Types of Prophecy**

Therefore, the Levitical system becomes a prophecy. It becomes prophetic of Jesus Christ and, in some way, even of Christians themselves. There are two major prophetic forms that are used in the Old Testament. There is one form called “verbal prophecy.” It is just a simple declaration in verbal form, in word form, of some aspect of the coming Messiah and of His life. There were over 300 specific words or verbal prophecies giving information about the coming of Christ. Let me give an example of what is meant by a verbal prophecy. In Psalm 2 verses 6 and 7 God had said, “Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My son, Today I have begotten You.’” And so that is a prophecy of the resurrection of Christ. The apostle Peter will make mention of that in Acts chapter 2, in that God would not leave Jesus’ soul in Hades after His sacrifice on the cross. Not would He allow the body of Christ to see corruption. Psalm 16 prophesies that in verbal form.

In Isaiah 7:14, there is the declaration that Christ would be born of a virgin and His name shall be called Immanuel. In Psalm 22:16-18, there is a verbal description of the crucifixion of Christ. “They pierced My hands and My feet ... They divide My garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots” at the foot of the cross. Those are some of the more interesting details that explain the sacrifice of Christ many centuries in advance. In Micah 5:2, it was prophesied verbally that the Messiah would be born in the city of Bethlehem, “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah ... out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From Everlasting.”

## **System Prophecy**

There is another form of prophecy that is called “system prophecy.” A system prophecy is composed of a whole series, a whole complex of events, persons, circumstances, and activities that are rolled up into a kind of prophetic form. Such “systems” predict and prophesy out of the whole historical context and thus foretell some aspect of the mission of Christ. Let me give an example of that.

In Numbers 21:6ff, Israel had been murmuring against God because of their lack of faith and God sent fiery serpents among the people and many of them were bitten and many of them died and were dying. Then, to cure them of the fatal bite of the serpent, God commanded Moses to make a symbol of a serpent out of bronze and place it on a staff in the center of the camp of Israel. Any Hebrew that had been bitten by the fiery serpent could go to the center of the camp. He could look upon that serpent and he would be spared from death.

It is from that whole series of events that John Draws a prophetic analogy relating to Jesus Christ. John 3:14-15 says: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” Evidently, John sees a prophecy of Christ on the cross of Calvary in the overall episode in Numbers 21. For verse 16 explains the prophetic analogy.

So, the fiery serpent becomes a symbol, a system prophecy of Jesus Christ.

## **Israel’s Wilderness Experience**

There is another prophecy that is contained in a whole series of events described in the book of Exodus: the story of Exodus itself.

Moses had led the children of Israel out of Egypt and had brought them into the wilderness and they are going toward the promised land. Hebrews chapters 3 and 4 tell us the story of Jesus beginning a new exodus. He is taking His people out of their :”Egypt” of sin into the kingdom of Christ, headed for the promised land which is heaven itself. And, so the whole story of the exodus becomes a kind of prophecy of Jesus Christ and His people under His exodus.



## **The Prophetic Passover**

In Luke 22:15-15, the last time that the Passover was celebrated with any kind of historic or religious significance was that night when Jesus celebrated it with His apostles. At that time Jesus told them, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” It is clear from Jesus’ words that he considers the Passover to be prophetic and that its prophecies must be fulfilled by Him. That is what prophecy demands. Prophecy has to be fulfilled or the prophetic anticipation will automatically fail. Jesus knows that He must fulfill the prophecies that are contained in the Passover itself.

The apostle Paul will tell us in I Corinthians 5:7-8 that “... For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast...” In other words, “our Passover” says that we Christians have a Passover, too. Our Lamb has been slain! The Hebrew people had theirs: it was a physical lamb. Our sacrifice is the loving “Lamb of God”—Jesus Christ. His blood has been sprinkled around the “doorposts” of our hearts through faith, and we have been delivered from slavery to our sins. We are now headed for our promised land of heaven itself. This is a system of prophecy.

## **No Broken Bones**

An interesting, but providentially included, detail of prophetic information associated with the Hebrew Passover lamb, was the fact that none of its bones should be broken (Exodus 12:46). There would appear to be no particular significance to the demand that no bones of the lamb be broken. But that apparently insignificant detail assumes great meaning when we examine that crucifixion scene where Jesus’ bones were not broken. “Not one of His bones shall be broken” (John 19:36). The legs of the two thieves that were crucified with Jesus were broken because they were still alive when the soldiers came. This was done to hasten their death, so they would not hang alive on the cross on the day of the Passover and thus desecrate the feast. But, since Jesus was already dead, they did not break His bones. Clearly God had already built into the old Hebrew Passover

ceremonials confirmation that Jesus did actually die on the cross rather than go into a coma as some have proposed in their attempt to deny the resurrection. System prophecy builds our convictions and our faith about history.

Evidently God foreknew the attempts some would make to deny the resurrection of Christ, so He built into Passover typology the details about the bones to confirm future history.

### **The Prophetic Flood**

The apostle Paul draws a prophetic analogy by presenting a parallel between the flood in Genesis chapter 7 and Christian baptism. As the world was overflowing with sin, God brought about a raging flood of water to destroy the flood of sin. The apostle Peter will point out the fact that there were eight souls that were saved through water (I Peter 3:20). In verse 21, he makes the spiritual application to that physical flood that destroyed that sinful, physical world. The spiritual application is that “an antitype which now saves us--baptism.” So there is a parallel. There is a type of prophecy in the flood of the Old Testament that has its fulfillment in Christian baptism. And so the apostle Paul instructs that the waters of the flood saved Noah from a world contaminated by sin, lifted him out of that world, and transported him into a world that was cleansed by the blood of Christ. It is not that we are cleansed by water but it is at the baptistery that we come into contact with the blood of Jesus Christ that does the cleansing.

### **Isaiah's Contribution to System Prophecy**

All of these are physical events; a series of events with spiritual implications. You can read Isaiah 35 and you will find the prophet giving some details about the coming kingdom of Christ. There is going to be a way, he will tell us, and a highway. It is a great way of holiness. The unclean shall not enter in it. The wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err in his adaptation to this new way of life. But the prophet gave some physical illustrations of the spiritual realities that Christ is going to bring to His people. Isaiah speaks about a desert that will be turned into a veritable garden of Eden. He tells about the deaf that will begin to hear, the blind that will begin to see, and the lame that will begin to walk. Those are physical descriptions of the

future spiritual realities that will be accomplished in Jesus Christ. Jesus will turn our sinful desert into a spiritual garden of Eden.

All of those are physical representations with spiritual application.

### **Types and Antitypes**

There is a principle of study in the Old Testament that is called “typology.” Actually, there are two Greek words that are often used to define this: *tupos* and *antitypos*. *Tupos* is a type and the *antitypos* is a counter-type. It is the opposing type. It is a little bit like an architectural drawing; a blue-print that gives some amazing details and defines the structure that will later be turned into a building. It is like a pattern that woman uses to cut out the cloth with which she will make a dress. Typology deals with models of future realities. They are a kind of mock-up; a prototype of things that are yet to come.

The writer of the book of Hebrews quite extensively uses the concepts of type and antitype to draw either parallels or even contrasts between the Old Testament systems and those of the New Testament.

### **Shadows and Realities**

There is another system that belongs to typology and it is called “shadows and realities.” It is the substance that casts shadows. Now the New Testament will use that concept of shadows a number of times. In the third and fourth chapter of the book of Hebrews, as we have already noted, the children of Israel in their exodus from Egypt and journey to the promised land, is a shadow of which heaven is the ultimate reality. Even the Hebrew Sabbath in that same context is presented as a shadow of the future rest of the people of God.

In Hebrews 8:5, the writer will talk about that old Hebrew sanctuary, the tabernacle, itself. It was physical in structure, but it foreshadows the spiritual realities of the sanctuary of Jesus Christ. The Hebrew writer will use three Greek words to define the parallel and the contrast. He will talk about a “shadow” and a “copy” of a “pattern.” The Greek words are *skia* (shadow), *hupodeigmati* (pattern), and *tupos* (copy). The old Hebrew Tabernacle was a shadowy copy of a pattern of the

future sanctuary of Christ Jesus. In Hebrews 9:23, the writer tells us that the copies of the things in the heavens, which represented the Old Testament system, had to be cleansed with animal blood. But the heavenly things themselves, the New Testament counterparts, had to be cleansed with better sacrifices than these—the sacrifice of Christ.

Hebrews 10:1 tells us that the Jewish sacrifices were a shadow: “For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.” The Hebrew sacrifices were shadows.

In Colossians 2:16-17, Paul, as he talks about Jewish food requirements—their drinks, their festivals, their new moons, their Sabbath days—says that no one was to judge Christians for their non-observance of those shadow systems. for they were only for Jews. “So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.”

All the above passages deal with Biblical typology that is prophetic in purpose. Actually, Jesus used this form of teaching quite frequently in the many parables He gave about the future glories and duties of Kingdom people.

### **The Limited Nature of Shadows**

Shadows not only predict, but they demand the substance that cast the shadow. In Genesis 1:26, we are told that man is created in the image of God. The Hebrew word for “image” is shadow. So man bears the deep spiritual, intellectual shadow of God himself. And that shadow of man demands the reality, the spiritual realities of the intellectual, spiritual qualities of the God who created us.

One thing is clear about shadows: they do not have independent existence. There is no such thing as a shadow without the substance that casts it. You cannot build a house out of the shadow of a tree. Shadows occasionally precede in time the arrival of the substance. Maybe this has been your experience. Late in the evening, you see the sun going down and, as the shadow of an airplane passes before your eyes on the ground, it becomes evident to you that an airplane has passed between

you and the sun. The shadow may arrive before the substance is visible, but, after a short period of time, you begin to hear the hum and the drum of the airplane motor and you know that the shadow has simply predicted and demanded the coming of the airplane, the reality that cast it.

### **Christ Fulfills It All**

Hebrews chapter 9 tells us that Christ's sacrifice once and for all was plural in nature. In His single sacrifice, He covers the many difference aspects of the Jewish sacrificial system. In other words, there were many sacrifices under the Law of Moses and these predicted, foreshadowed, and prophesized different aspects of the sacrifice of Christ:

- In the Hebrew burnt offering, you will see the consecration of Christ to God.
- In their cereal offering or grain offering, you will see Christ presenting unto God the redeemed of the world as the first-fruits of His labor.
- In the peace offering, you see the reconciliation that Christ brings to the human family.
- In the sin offering, you see His atonement.
- In the trespass offering, you will see Christ defending the righteousness and the justice of God.
- In the Day of Atonement, you will see Christ, not only as a sacrifice fulfilling all the sacrificial topology of the Old Testament, but also as the fulfillment of the priestly functions involved in that sacrifice.
- In the Passover, you find Christ liberating His people from the bondage of sin.
- And, in the red heifer sacrifice, you will find Christ eliminating and removing all of the physical and the spiritual defilements that sin brings upon the human family.

And so in this study we will be investigating the system of sacrifices under the Law of Moses, but we will really be getting a picture of the ultimate glorious sacrifice of Jesus Christ which was offered ultimately on the cross of Calvary.

## **EXPLANATION OF THE SACRIFICES**

This study of the sacrificial system has the purpose of presenting some of the major lessons that we need to learn from the book of Leviticus as they apply to the sacrifices themselves. To the superficial reader of Leviticus, it may appear that there is not much distinction between the different sacrifices demanded by the Lord, yet, when further study is made, the apparent similarity gives way to the very unique character each sacrifice possesses. This will become evident as we proceed through the study.

We will study each sacrifice, its distinctive ritual, and the animals, grains, or liquids required. Clear definition of the sacrificial nature of worship and of sacrificial atonement will be given. We must see the definite distinction between sacrifices of worship and those of atonement. There is a definite relationship between sacrifices and the Law of Moses. It is the Law that establishes the difference between the sin offering and the trespass offering.

Leviticus is basically a study guide to all the sacrifices that were offered in Israel. There are two exceptions; two great sacrifices that were celebrated by the people of Israel that are not contained in the book of Leviticus. The first one is the Passover. To study about the Passover you must go back to the book of Exodus, chapter 12. The second non-Levitical sacrifice was the Red Heifer. The sacrificial explanation relative to the Red Heifer is given in Numbers 19. Outside of those two exceptions, all other sacrifices that were offered in Israel are legislated in the book of Leviticus.

### **Important Lessons**

There are several important lessons that can be learned about the sacrifices and the characteristics that were built into each one of them. One thing we need to remember is that each sacrifice was distinct in its purpose. It had a distinctive ritual that defined the fundamental reason and the thrust of the sacrifice.

Therefore, we need to be aware of the fact that these sacrifices were not interchangeable. The sin offering could not take the place of the peace offering or vice-versa. Each sacrifice was distinct. It had a distinctive ritual carrying its distinctive message.

The sacrificial victims or the material of the sacrifice were drawn from the animal kingdom or from the vegetable kingdom. Each sacrifice required its distinctive animal. Not only was the sacrifice distinctive, the animals that were designated for each sacrifice were distinctive. In those animal sacrifices, there was always the shedding of blood. Thus, the element of atonement is built into those sacrifices.

There is another kind of sacrifice that did not involve the shedding of blood. Each Hebrew was required by the Law to offer the firstfruits of the harvest from the field. These were grain offerings and, sometimes, liquid offerings that came from the harvest of the field. They were presented as firstfruits in praise and gratitude to God.

### **Sweet Savor and Most Holy Sacrifices**

Each sacrifice belonged to one of two categories. They were either a sweet savor or a most holy sacrifice. Worship sacrifices were called “sweet savor” offerings. “Sweet savor” is a term frequently used concerning some of the sacrifices. The expression of an individual's devotion to God was the thrust of all sweet savor sacrifices. Sweet savor sacrifices ascended from the altar of burnt offerings as a “fragrant aroma.” offering to God. In a column of smoke that ascended into heaven, the sacrificial victim was being transferred to God in the form of incense. The sacrifice was being “fumed” to God from the altar in a curl of smoke. The victim was not conceived of as being destroyed or burned; it was seen as being converted into smoke and thus transferred directly to God for His pleasure.

Now we will notice the two distinct kinds of sacrifices under the Law of Moses. The first sacrifices belong to the worship order. They were the fragrant odor, the sweet smelling sacrifices. They were seen as a sweet incense. The animals were turned into this smoke (Leviticus 1:9) and ascended unto God as an expression of the individual's devotion and exclusively for God's divine pleasure. They smelled good to God as the very terminology used would indicate. The first of the worship sacrifices was the burnt offering. Through it, the Hebrew consecrated himself, his entire life, to God. The second sacrifice was the grain-offering, or the cereal offering. In this sacrifice the Hebrew consecrated the firstfruits of his harvest to God as a gift and an expression of gratitude.

Burnt offerings were offered by individuals and by the nation. Likewise grain offerings were sacrificed by individuals and by the nation. Then the third sacrifice of the worship type, the fragrant odor series, was called the peace offering. It was offered by the individual and by his family. It was a family celebration in which they rejoiced together when one of the family members was restored to fellowship with God.

In all the sweet savor sacrifices it was imperative that the worshiper be in good standing with God. His covenant relationship with God must be correct for him to presume to offer to God acceptable worship. Divine worship was an exclusive privilege to those people who knew God and who were faithfully serving Him according to covenant demands. Worship is both natural and honorable but it is restricted to those who know God and conform their devotions to His holy nature.

### **Atonement Sacrifices**

The next series of sacrifices are called the atonement sacrifices. These are demanded when there has been a breakdown in one's consecration or devotion unto God. When there is a failure in the proper worship that God deserves, sin has been committed, and the fellowship with God has been broken. In such instances, the first sacrifice the sinner must offer is the sin offering. The sin offering is required under the law of Moses when an individual has abusively violated one of the first five of the ten commandments that God gave unto the children of Israel in Exodus chapter 20 and Deuteronomy chapter 5. Those first five commandments have to do with God's nature. Therefore, when a man violated the man-to-God commandments the fellowship was broken and the sin offering was required before fellowship could be restored.

The trespass offering involved the man-to-man commandments contained in the second five of the ten commandments. Of course there were the other 613 ordinances and statutes that Israel was expected to observe. Basically those 613 laws simply gave explanatory definitions of the ten commands. But still the violation of any law—the ten or the 613—could result in the disruption of the covenant relation between man and God. In such cases of violation of the man-to-man ordinances, the transgressor must offer the trespass offering.



The sin offering does not take the place of the trespass offering, nor vice-versa. The sin offering has to do with the violation of God's nature. The trespass offering has to do with the violation of God's government. The sin offering restores fellowship between God and man. A trespass offering restores harmonious relationship between man and man and restores the fellowship within the congregation of the children of Israel. And quite evidently it restored the man-to-God fellowship.

The third great atonement sacrifice was offered on what was called in Hebrew the *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. It was offered by the high priest alone who functioned on that day on behalf of the nation. And it indicated not only that it was a national sacrifice but also had individual implication. The *Yom Kippur* sacrifices will be explained in the last two lessons of this series.

### **Offering Gifts To God**

The sacrifices of the Law of Moses were basically gifts to God—man offering to his God a present out of his desire to please Him and to seek His favor. It has been said that man's first attention to fire was for the purpose of offering gifts to God. Any time a man wanted to present God anything under the Law of Moses, or even back during the Patriarchal dispensation, he would build an altar, place wood, lay his sacrifice on top, kindle the fire, and thus transfer his sacrificial gift to God in the column of smoke that ascended into heaven. It is probably true that man's first attention to fire was for the purpose of sacrifice because Abel offered his burnt offering unto God in the very shadow of the Garden of Eden.

Now the word sacrifice is primarily and initially an offering, a gift to God. But the term sacrifice has taken on a secondary meaning in our language. Originally it contained the import of a gift to God, but now it has taken on the meaning of privation, personal renunciation, self-denial. Now it seems to have more the meaning of giving up something than as an expression of appreciation to God. It was probably David himself who was the first to add this concept of personal cost and of personal sacrifice or privation in his offerings unto God. In II Samuel 24:24, David said: "...neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing." So David added to the

concept of a present, a gift to God, the concept of personal privation. Actually the primary concept is what the book of Leviticus is built around, not so much the concept of personal privation.

### **The Animals Required For Sacrifice**

The animals that were required for all sacrifices has to have certain qualities. They had to meet a certain standard. Quality number one was that they had to be domesticated animals. They had to be tame. And that simply means that there were laws that were laid down by God in the regulation of these covenant sacrifices. You find the concept of the first covenant sacrifices offered in Genesis 15:8-17. Abraham had offered the sacrifices required by God.

It was through those sacrifices that God made His covenant with Abraham. The animals that were required that day were “a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.” These all came from the “herd, or of the flock, or the fowl,” all domesticated animals. “Of the heard” meant they must be either oxen or cattle. They could come out of the flock. And that means that they belong to the sheep and the goats. Or they could be out of the fowl and therefore they had to be the pigeon or the turtle-dove.

The qualities or the qualifications of those animals used in the sacrifices demanded first of all that they be tamed, as already mentioned. They had to be domesticated animals. That indicated a kind of close relationship with the owner who offered them in sacrifice. That means they could not be the hapless victim of the chase or of the hunt. They were not the rogue. They were not the savage, the untamed animal. They were not mavericks. They were not wild. They were not the ravenous type of animal. They could not be the wild creature like the lion or the vulture out of the bird family.

The second qualification demanded that they be clean because these animals were symbolically representative of Jesus Christ. And Jesus was not dragged to cross of Calvary, at the unwilling victim. We talk about victims of the sacrificial offerings in the Law of Moses because the animal was the hapless victim of circumstance. He knew nothing about the Law of God, about

sin, about the need of life making atonement for sin. He was totally uninvolved and dumb concerning all of that. But that is not the nature of Jesus Christ. He was a volunteer. He was not a “victim” of the sacrificial atonement that He made.

Therefore, the animal had to be tamed. It had to be clean because that means it symbolized the spiritual purity of Jesus Christ Himself. To be a clean animal it had to belong to the generic family of the “herbivore.” That means it had to be a vegetable eater, to be by nature a vegetarian. It could not be a “carnivore,” that is, a flesh eater. The lion, the vulture, the ravenous kind of beast would not be a proper representation of Jesus Christ. The *Carnivore* live by destroying the lives of other animal creatures. But Jesus Christ had to be one that gave His life, not take life.

So the animal had to be domesticated, herbivore and “clean.” It had to be without defect. The priests scrupulously inspected their animals to be sure that there were no defects of any kind. Physically “without blemish,” those animals materially symbolized the spiritual perfection and purity of Jesus Christ Himself. For a clearer description of the physical blemishes that would hinder sacrificial acceptance, read Leviticus 22:20ff. An explanation of what is to be considered to be a blemish is given: a wart, any kind of a scar, any kind of defect in the animal would disqualify the animal for sacrificial acceptance before God.

Generally the male animal was preferred in the sacrifices. He was the most common victim of the sacrifices, for he symbolized strength. But at times God specifies that the female be offered in sacrifice, and she was a symbol of fertility. As far as the vegetables were concerned that were offered unto God as cereal or grain offerings, they had to be herbs, cereal grains or juices that came from those grains. They had, therefore, to be cultivated produce, suitable for human foodstuff. They were not voluntary growth. It was not growth that was gathered out of the wild, off the mountainside. They had to be the firstfruits of the man’s labor.

In the burnt offering, actually a man symbolically consecrated himself to God. He seemed to be saying, “I give to God all that I am.” But in the grain offerings he consecrated all that he had to God. The cultivated grains were never presented to God in their crude form. At least they had to be ground or parched. Generally

they were made into cakes or patties and were then presented to God on the altar of burnt offerings. It becomes evident that these sacrifices carried deep spiritual implications for the Hebrews. Their devotions were given ample opportunity for expression and significant ceremonials through which to express them.

### **Order Of Importance**

It is generally understood that the sacrifices are listed in the book of Leviticus in the order of importance. We see the sacrifices listed in their proper order in Leviticus. I was a little bit surprised as I began some of the early studies out of this book to find the burn offering took precedence to the sin offering. I would have thought that the sin offering was the most important among the sacrifices, but it will become evident as we will continue the study that the burnt offering is the most important of all the sacrifices. It stands for total consecration of the worshiper to God.

The sin offering stands for the violation of or the default of consecration. God is much more pleased with an individual who is so totally and completely consecrated to Him that he seldom needs atonement sacrifices. Where consecration is perfect, as in the life of Jesus, atonement is never needed. Consecration is more important than atonement because if an individual is completely consecrated to God, atonement is eliminated as a need in his life.

The second great sacrifice, the grain offering, appears in order of importance in the book of Leviticus. It was offered as we mentioned by individuals at any time they wanted. The peace offering is the third great sacrifice. These three are all worship sacrifices, and they do not take precedence to the sacrifices that were offered for atonement. No Hebrew out of covenant relation with God because of sin was accepted ever if he offered any of the sweet savor, worship sacrifices.

Then those that strayed from the Law of God had to offer the sin offering or the trespass offering to make atonement for their sins or trespasses. The atonement sacrifice for sin could be offered by an individual at any time that he felt his life, his soul, was in jeopardy before God. Likewise the trespass offering was demanded to restore broken fellowship between God and man.

Either could be offered by the Jew when he felt that his fellowship with God had been broken. The Day of Atonement was offered only one time each year for the entire nation.

### ***Mizbeah*—The Altar**

The altar at which these sacrifices were presented to God was the altar of burnt offerings that stood out in the courtyard of the tabernacle. And that was the only place where God authorized the presenting of both worship and atonement sacrifices. The word altar in Hebrew is *mizbeah* and it just simply means the place of slaughter, the place of the killing of the sacrifice. Any time an individual wanted to present to God any kind of a gift there was no other way than to place it on the altar and “fume” or “incense” it to heaven. When an individual wanted to give himself to God, he could either place himself on the altar, or else place a substitute victim on the altar that would represent him.

The blood of the animal used in making atonement would be placed on the altar. The fat which was removed from all of the sacrifices was given to God as a fragrant odor, and was “incensed” to heaven. Even the cereal offerings, the grain offerings, were presented upon the altar and transferred unto heaven in a column of smoke. The drink offerings were not poured upon the altar. They were poured out at the base of the altar to Jehovah God. So all gifts to God, therefore, had to be offered upon the altar.

In Exodus 20:24, God explained to the children of Israel that they must make an altar out of crude stones. No attempts must be made to beautify the altar because Israel will not be accepted before God because of the size or the beauty of their altar. Israel will be appreciated for the devotions of their heart. God promised that He would come to the altar: “I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.” In Deuteronomy 12:5, He had laid down the rules that Israel must bring their sacrifices of praise and of atonement to the altar where Jehovah had put His name. And Jehovah placed His name at the Tabernacle.

### **The Fire Is Very Important**

The fires that consumed the sacrifices upon those altars are actually one fire, but they were defined with two different

words. There was the *katar* as a kind of fire that consumed the worship sacrifices. Those were the fires that caused this sacrifice to ascend unto God. And that was called *katar* in Hebrew. It characterized all of the sweet odor sacrifices that were presented to God. Actually it was not thought of as consuming the sacrifices, of burning the sacrifices. It was thought of as transforming it into sacrificial smoke that would ascend into heaven itself. We get our word “cauterize” from the word *katar* in the Hebrew. It means “to cleanse.” And so this is a sacrifice where the fires ascend into heaven.

There was another kind of fire that consumed the atonement sacrifices. Some of the sin offerings and some of the sacrifices on the Day of Atonement were burned with fires that were called in the Hebrew *seraph*. *Seraph* is the root word for *seraphim*. They were the avengers of God, who rained fire and destruction upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. And therefore those fires did not ascend to God in praise and devotion. Those were the fires that descended from God in judgment upon sin. And though fire is fire, there are two different kinds of fire that characterized the sacrifices offered to God.

There is perhaps a third kind of fire that is mentioned in Leviticus 10:1 where Nadab and Abihu offered to God “strange fire.” The Hebrew word for “strange,” *zar*, means any element, action, or person unauthorized by God, whether related to personnel or function in service to God. There was a way in which God intended for them to offer their sacrifices. And all violations of those rules that governed the sacrifices not only nullified the worship, they also nullified the atonement. It brought the offending individual under the wrath of God.

### **The Rituals Are Communication Vehicles**

The ceremony of each sacrifice is distinct and must be so understood. Though the rituals involve deep ceremonials, they are not simply ceremonialism or ritualism. It would be easy for the sacrifices of the Law of Moses to fall into pure ritualism. Ritualism exists where there are present the externals of a sacrifice without any spiritual devotions being expressed by them. The rituals are as characteristic of each sacrifice just as the animals were characteristic of each sacrifice. The ceremonials may be similar in some of the sacrifices up to a particular point

in the unfolding of the stages of the sacrifices. But there will be a particular point in the unfolding ceremony and ritual of each sacrifice that will exalt the central concept that belongs to the sacrifice. The specific aspect of the ritual will define the basic thrust of each sacrifice.

Where is the blood sprinkled in atonement for the sacrifice? What happens to body of the sacrificial victim that is being offered to God? What is the disposition of the body? Is it totally consumed in the fire, and that exclusively toward God? Some sacrifices could be consumed by the officiating priest in the courtyard of the tabernacle as a kind of festive celebration hosted by God. Thus God honored His priests for their sacrificial intervention that made it possible for the restoration of fellowship between God and the straying child of Israel. And the priest is to be celebrated for his participation in the processes that bring about restoration. In certain sacrifices the body would be burned with the fires that came down from heaven as an expression of wrath upon the sin that had been committed.

And so what happens in the unfolding of the ceremony will indicate to us something of the deep significance that each sacrifice has. What part does the worshiper play in the offering of the fragrant aroma, or sweet savor, sacrifices? How far can he go and then he must step back and allow the priest to continue the unfolding of the ceremony in his behalf? How far does the sinner go when he is offering sacrifices for atonement and how far does the priest go as they carry out these sacrifices? these are important parts of the sacrificial repertoire or series of sacrifices that were offered under the law. Though they are ritualistic, though they do involve extensive ceremonies, nevertheless they are vehicles for the expression of deep spiritual value in the heart of the Hebrew people.

## EXPLANATION OF THE BURNT OFFERING

This lesson will introduce the study of the first and most important sacrifice offered by the Hebrew people—the burnt offering. This sacrifice stands apart in its importance from all other offerings in the Law of Moses. Its ritual will be explained in greater detail. The animals required for this offering and the use made of it will underscore the fundamental, spiritual lessons the burnt offering was to teach the Hebrew people. It belonged to the “sweet savor” category of sacrifices and was therefore fundamentally a worship offering.

### ***Olah* — That Which Ascends**

The name “burnt offering” in Hebrew is *olah*. It is translated into the Greek with the word *holocaustoma*. We get our word “holocaust” from this term out of the Greek language. A holocaust means total destruction. Of course, we are going to understand that this sacrifice was not conceived of as being totally destroyed. It was simply transferred to God in heaven in a pillar of smoke. It was the most God-ward of the sacrifices and was given completely for His divine pleasure.

The burnt offerings were the first and the most important of the Hebrew sacrifices and there are a number of reasons that lead us to that conviction. Not only because it appears first in the book of Leviticus, but also because it was one of the purest and the most comprehensive forms of worship unto God. It belonged to the pleasing aroma, the sweet savor, sacrifices. As that fire ascended from the altar to God, the worshiper could spiritually conceive of God taking a deep, pleasing breath of that sacrifice simply because of the implications of the sacrifice itself. As He breathed deeply, He seemed to say: “My, that smells good.” There were some deep spiritual values that were being expressed through the sacrifice.

### **Its God-ward Thrust**

It is the most important because it was the most God-ward of the sacrifices. In other words, it was addressed exclusively to God, wholly and completely consumed for His individual pleasure. No part of this sacrifice will be given to anyone else. It is for God and for God alone. All other sacrifices of the animal and



vegetable kingdom have others who participate in the privileges of the sacrifice. They will receive portions of the sacrifice, but not so of the burnt offering. This one is exclusively and totally for God.

Another reason that this sacrifice is important to the Hebrew thinking derives from its not being conceived of as being consumed. In Leviticus 1:9, the statement is made: “and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord.” In the original Hebrew of Leviticus 1:9, the statement was made, “... and the whole shall be turned into smoke as it ascends unto God.” Thus the sacrifice is simple transferred to God as a sweet smelling incense. It is therefore being fumed unto God as it ascends from the altar into heaven itself. As the word *olah* in Hebrew implies: “that which ascends.”

### **The Animal Substitutes For The Man**

The animal becomes a substitute, a stand-in, for the worshiper. Then whatever happens to the animal is conceived of as happening to the worshiper. And as this animal is consecrated in totality to God and is transferred to Him, incensed to Him, so the spiritually minded Jew with this sacrifice would be expected to say unto God, “As this animal is totally given for Your pleasure and for Your pleasure alone, so I want my life to be given only to You for Your pleasure.”

Now all of the sacrifices of the Law of Moses involve the concept of vicarious substitution. In other words, there is this stand-in, there is this substitute that takes the place of and stands in the stead of the worshiper himself. And therefore what physically happened to the animal was expected to be a spiritual expression of the worshiper’s desire. “I want my life to be totally consumed for God’s pleasure.”

### **Abraham Offered Isaac To God**

In Genesis, chapter 22, God had asked Abraham to offer Isaac to Him as a burnt offering. The history of this episode sheds much light on the nature of the burnt offering. In verse two, God told Abraham: “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a

burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” God wanted Abraham to place Isaac on the altar and convert him into that sweet aroma that ascends to heaven. Abraham had offered burnt offerings before and he knows exactly what is going to be left when the sacrifice is completed—ashes!

What does God want Abraham to learn from this experience? He is demanding: “Give Me the boy, Isaac, without reservation. I want him to be totally Mine.” Abraham departs from his home in Heron with Isaac. He takes a three day journey with some of his servants and they go to the foot of Mount Moriah. And when they arrive there Abraham tells the servants: “Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you” (Genesis 22:5).

Abraham knows exactly what he is going to do: offer Isaac as a gift to God, a present to God, but he calls it worship. Such an expression of worship defined the basic thrust of the burnt offering. There is an interesting postscript that Abraham adds: we will “worship and we will come back to you.” Abraham is expressing his faith that even though he offers Isaac, he is confident that somehow the boy will survive the offering. He knows that God has already made some promises to him and has already made a covenant with him in Genesis, chapters 12, 15, and 22. In Isaac, Abraham is going to have a great posterity. A great nation will be born out of the seed of this child, Isaac.

And yet God is asking Abraham to reduce him to a pile of ashes. And Abraham is going to comply. For he believes that God who is able to give life is also able to give it again. Therefore in Hebrews 11:18-19, the writer explained Abraham’s faith in these words: “[Abraham] of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called,’ concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.” Abraham plans to offer his son and then step back and watch God raise him from the dead.

Let us initially view this episode from Abraham’s perspective. “Abraham, I want that boy to be mine. Give Me Isaac. No strings attached. No reservations. Give him completely to Me.” And Abraham consents. Then let us view the sacrifice from Isaac’s perspective as his father laid him on the altar. Isaac certainly does not understand. If he does understand, it is without

any real knowledge as to the purpose, but Abraham has raised the knife and is ready to slay his son and then to convert him into that sweet aroma that ascends into heaven. But then God intervened and said, “Do the boy no harm.” And there was a ram, a male sheep, whose horns were caught nearby. And Abraham took this ram and placed him upon the altar in the place of Isaac. There is the substitution. The ram becomes the vicarious substitute sacrifice in the place of Isaac.

### **Isaac’s Perspective**

What does God want Isaac to see in this event? “Isaac, that ram is taking your place, but I want you to understand out of this that you are not released from your responsibility. I want you to be My sacrifice. I want you to be a living sacrifice, where your whole life is dedicated and presented to Me.”

Think as Isaac would as the fire’s first curl of smoke began to ascend from the altar that Abraham had built and the ram begins to be consumed by the fire and is transferred as a column of incense unto God. Isaac now understands. “That ram IS Isaac.” That is what God wants—He wants Isaac, but not Isaac reduced to ashes, a sacrifice that is reduced to ashes! Rather, God wants Isaac to be a living sacrifice, constantly presenting himself unto Jehovah God. Abraham named the spot where the ram was offered *Jehovah Jirah*—which means Jehovah Provides.

Isaac must have been very thankful that his God is called *Jehovah Jirah*! Clearly God did not cease to be the provider of substitute sacrifices when the events of Mt. Moriah were over. He has provided us with Jesus!

Quite evidently, that is the reason the burnt offering had such deep significance for the Hebrew people. The concept it conveyed to them is: “This is your opportunity to commit yourself, to dedicate yourself, to give yourself to God.” In II Corinthians 8:5, we read of the brethren in Macedonia: “... but they first gave themselves to the Lord.”

Quite evidently, Jesus did the same. He gave Himself totally and completely without reservation unto God. Jesus was one constant burnt offering out of the New Testament references made to it.

## **The Most Common Hebrew Sacrifices**

The burnt offering was also the most common among the Hebrew sacrifices. It was central in all their worship activities. It was the most frequently offered. It was central in all of their individual and in their collective sacrifices. An individual could offer the burnt offering any time that he wanted. But it was offered also on behalf of the nation every day in the morning and in the evening.

Every day those sacrifices were offered. And God, in Leviticus 6:9, 12 and 13 had insisted that the fires of that sacrifice of the burnt offering must never be extinguished. “Do not let the fires go out.” Three times He says in those three verses, “Keep the fires burning” Twice He says, “Do not let those fires go out.” In other words, five times he says, “I want your devotion as a nation of priests to be constant. You worship through the giving of yourself to God must never end. Your worship must not be seasonal or sporadic. I want those devotions to be a constant expression of your surrender to me.”

It is not simply a Sabbath function. It is every day of every month of every year that God wanted the people to be a part of this sacrificial commitment unto Him. The altar from which all Hebrew sacrifices were presented was classically called the “altar of burnt offerings.”

### **Central In Worship**

The burnt offering was also the central act of worship. It was the heart of Hebrew worship and all of their feast days and particularly upon their Sabbath day. And as already mentioned, it was the most God-centered and therefore the most deeply spiritual of the sacrifices. Israel must recognize that God has a right to man’s highest devotion. Man owes to God his entire being—first by virtue of creation and then again by virtue of redemption from sin. Such convictions for the Hebrews are best expressed in his personal consecration to God. It is offered from believing hearts that are filled with unreserved love and devotion in recognition of his goodness to Israel. For these clear reasons the burnt offering takes precedence to the sin offering. Consecration, as already mentioned in the last lesson, is more important than atonement. When atonement is needed, that

means there has been a breakdown in the consecration. Worshipers have not been as devoted and sanctified as they should have been.

### **Offered From The Shadows Of Eden**

The burnt offering is the most ancient sacrifice mentioned in the Bible. As a matter of fact, it is the first sacrifice that we read about in the entire Bible. It seems evident that the sacrifice of Abel, offered to God in the shadows of the Garden of Eden, was a burnt offering (Genesis 4:4). When Noah came out of the ark after the flood, he offered to God burnt offerings from all the clean animals that were placed in the ark. Genesis 8:21, commenting on Noah's sacrifices, says "And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma..." and made a covenant with Noah and with his descendants.

The covenant was that God would never again destroy the earth with a flood. He confirmed that covenant with the beautiful rainbow that forever stands to testify to the fidelity of God to His covenant. All the patriarchs were constant in presenting their burnt offerings to God.

### **The Rituals Of The Burnt Offering**

The rituals of the burnt offering, the stages of the ritual, indicate the movements of these sacrifices from one aspect of its devotion to another. As we mentioned in our earlier lesson, there were specific rituals that were required in each sacrifice. It is in the unfolding of the rituals that we move from one action to the next. Those movements are important. Each action that is a part of the ceremony conveys deep spiritual messages and has religious implications that the Hebrew was supposed to learn.

### **States Of The Ceremony**

By way of review, let us for a moment look at the initial stages of the burnt offering ceremony. There are four of them that are presented. Actually there are eight that will complete the ceremony. In our next lesson we will cover the last four stages. The stages are simply different actions that make up the ceremony performed by the worshiper or the priest. Each action carries its own distinctive message.

- Stage One: The worshiper presents himself and his sacrificial stand-in to God. From that moment the animal belongs to God, who then has the right to ordain its usage.
- Stage Two: The worshiper lays one hand on the head of the substitute, vicarious victim.
- Stage Three: The worshiper slays his vicarious victim.
- Stage Four: The priest sprinkles the blood of the victim in the appropriate fashion upon the altar as ordained.

### **The Presentation**

Now let us go back and look at the stage of presentation. The word “present” in English is both a noun and a verb. It is a verb when it defines the action of offering a gift to someone. The accent is on the :last syllable: *pre-sent*’. It becomes a noun when it defines the object that was given. The accent is then moved to the first syllable: *pre*’-sent. So we *pre-sent*’ a *pre*’-sent. In the stage of presentation, the individual is seen as presenting himself and his animal as presents to God.

Such is actually what is intended by this stage in the ceremony. as the worshiper appears before the Hebrew altar with his animal, he expresses this desire: “God, I want to give you this animal as representation of myself. I want to give myself unto you.” Now this is generally the first stage of all the sacrifices except that of the trespass offering.

It is from that moment forward that this animal, having been given to God, is conceived of as belonging to God. It is no longer the worshiper’s animal. He has brought it from his herd, from his flock, maybe from the fowl that is in his pen. But these are animals that belonged to him until he presented them unto God. From that moment forward they are God’s. And so this presentation really finds the worshiper presenting himself to God while simultaneously presenting his sacrifice.

Having made the presentation, the worshiper doesn’t just turn and walk away. He is still involved in the ceremony. Throughout the ceremony the Hebrew thinks of himself as being the object of the remaining stages of the offering. As the ritual moves from stage to stage, the worshiper is either directly participating in person, or else participating in his representative stand-in.

Mentally he is meditating on the spiritual implications of his actions and is concentrating his heart-felt devotions toward God as a worshiper. He is reflecting on his personal love for God and on God's right to his personal devotion. He is not simply spending his time as he sees the ceremony continue. He identifies with it.

### **Laying On The Hand**

Stage number two: the worshiper will then lay one hand upon the head of his victim. Now that is not simply to indicate that this is the animal I brought to designate ownership as some have supposed. For, from the stage of presentation, the animal belongs to God. Rather, by laying his hand on the head of his substitute, he is thereby appointing the animal to be his stand-in. A special function is being conferred on the animal. Such is characteristic of all of the blood-letting sacrifices. There will be the laying on of hands, whether of the individual Jew or of the priest, on the Day of Atonement as he lays on his hand to represent the nation.

Through the process of laying on of the hand the animal is being appointed to accomplish a specific purpose. He is being assigned a function. There is an office that he is going to fulfill. In Leviticus 24:14 is another example of the laying on of hands. When a man was guilty of blasphemy, the individuals that heard his blasphemous words against Jehovah God would be the first to lay their hands upon that individual and assign to him the penalty of death. And then they would cast the first stones. So when the witnesses laid their hands upon the head of the blasphemer, they transferred to him the penalty due to his sin.

Another example of the laying on of hands comes in Numbers 27:23. Moses will call Joshua into his presence. He will lay his hands upon him and transfer to Joshua the position of leadership over the nation of Israel because Moses knows that he is going to die.

In a third example of the laying on of hands indicating to us that there is always some assignment or substitution process that is taking place, the Levites would take the place of the firstborn of all of the other tribes of Israel. And the father of the firstborn child of any tribe would bring his child to the Tabernacle. A

child would be brought simultaneously. All firstborn sons belonged to God (Exodus 13:2, 12), but God allowed for substitution through the Levitical clan. The Levites were brought forward and the children of Israel laid their hands on them signifying the Levites took the place of the first born of Israel (Numbers 8:10).

On the great Day of Atonement. Aaron would lay both of his hands upon the head of the goat that was called for Azazel. In Leviticus 16:21ff, it is said that Aaron would lay his hands upon the head of the goat and he would confess over him all of the sins and iniquities of the children of Israel and he would symbolically transfer all of those sins to the victim. And then the goat would be led out of the camp and, therefore, all of the sins symbolically were removed from the camp of Israel.

So, in the burnt offering, when the worshiper laid his hand on his victim's head, he symbolically transferred to the animal his sins. And for the sins of the worshiper, the animal would have to die in his place.

### **The Killing Of The Sacrifices**

The third stage of the ceremony involved the killing of the victim. It was the worshiper that was required to slay his substitute victim. Through the slaying of his victim, he confessed his sin. He acknowledged his thankfulness unto God for the grace of forgiveness as he transferred to that victim the responsibility of atoning for his sins. The worshiper was required to slay his substitute. The word "slay" in Hebrew is *shahat* and it means a sacrificial kind of slaying. You read the Hebrew word for "You shall not murder" in the ten commandments: *Tiretsah*. There is a difference between manslaughter and the *shahat*, the killing of the sacrificial animal. Different words are used. This is sacrificial slaying.

It was required that the worshiper kill his own victim because he was a stand-in for the worshiper. He realized that he was responsible for the death of his substitute. He saw immediately the terrible consequences of his sin. He saw that the life of this animal was given vicariously, as a substitute in his stead. It made him conscious of the mercy and the grace of God because he should be the one that would die, but God allowed the introduction of the substitute in his stead.



It was in this way that the Hebrew killed his own stand-in. By carrying out heaven's penalty against his sin, he was expected to manifest his agreement with heaven's judgment against his sin. The Law had said, "The soul that sins, it shall die." And he so agrees with judgment of God against his sin that he is literally saying, "Any creature that has the wrong that I did to its credit does not deserve to live." And, therefore, he so agreed with heaven's judgment that he carried out heaven's penalty against his sin. In substance he was saying, "I hate my sin. I kill it. I want to destroy it. I repudiate it and I destroy it in my substitute sacrifice."

Quite evidently Christians do much the same thing to Christ because Christians die to their sin at the baptistry and they transfer their guilt to Jesus Christ. And, therefore, the Hebrew kills his sacrifice before Jehovah says Leviticus 1:5. After all, this is a sacrifice that atoned for the wrong that this individual had done against God's law. It was his failure in consecration to God that brought about the sin. God's most righteous law had to be defended.

This is how the Jew had direct, hands-on contact with his substitute victim. The apostle Peter says much the same thing of us in relation to Christ: "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death" (Acts 2:23). It was our sin that nailed Jesus to the cross (1 Peter 2:24). When we agree with his death, and we have to consent to his death if we want redemption, it is simply our concurrence with God's judgment against our sins.

We will cover the rest of ceremony of the burnt offering in out next lesson. In that lesson we will present the many ways this sacrifice has its primary fulfillment in Christ and then, by implication, to Christians, also.

## **RITUAL OF THE BURNT OFFERING**

This lesson will present the completion of the ritual of the burnt offering and then proceed to explain the way in which Christ fulfilled the typology of that sacrifice. Further applications will be made of how the burnt offering has some implications for Christians today.

Let us review the stage of the ritual that we studied in our last lesson. Stage one explained the presentation. It was at this stage that the worshiper presented himself unto God as a gift. "I want to give myself to God." Simultaneously, he presented to the Lord the animal that would be the stand-in for that act of presentation. From that moment forward, the animal belonged unto God.

Stage two: the worshiper laid his hand, in Hebrew actually "leaned upon," his substitute victim to symbolize the transference of his sin and its guilt to his substitute victim. That was only symbolic transference of sin, not literally so.

Hebrews 10:4 assures us that it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats can take away sin. And so there was no literal transfer of sins to this substitute victim, only symbolic. In that way the Hebrew manifested his faith that God would provide the atoning sacrifice that would eventually handle the sin problem.

In stage three, the worshiper then was required to slay his own sacrifice. He did the killing because it was in that way that he manifested his acceptance of God's judgment against his sin. He so agreed with heaven's judgment against his violations of heaven's law that he personally was required to carry out the sentence that God had imposed upon his transgression.

### **Sprinkling Of The Blood**

We are now ready to go into the study of stage four. The worshiper has gone as far as he can go. Now he depends upon the priest to intervene and to carry on the ritual necessary to obtain atonement for his sin and to complete the rest of the sacrificial ritual. The sprinkling of the blood is done by the priest himself. In the Hebrew tongue the word "to sprinkle" is *zaraq*, and it literally means "to splash." Now the worshiper depends on his

sacrificial animal as his substitute, and on the priest to carry on the ritual essential for atoning processes in compliance with the law.

We as Christians today by faith lay our hands upon Christ as He is hanging on the cross and literally, not symbolically, but literally, transfer to Him our sins. And then we depend on Him as the sacrifice and priest to carry out the atoning process through his blood. We also depend on Him to complete the priestly function of sprinkling the blood in the appropriate fashion toward God.

### **Our Sins Crucified Jesus**

I believe that it would be beneficial to us from a spiritual point of view if we could understand that literally we were responsible for the death of Christ. We must agree with God's judgment against our sin in Jesus Christ. We have to so agree with Jesus' death to cover our sins that we would be willing to join that mob in Pilate's courtyard and cry with the Jews: "Let Him be crucified." Knowing what we now know, we would have to add our voice to the condemnation of Christ and so agree that our sin was so grievous in the eyes of God that it actually and literally demanded the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We must agree to the point that we would be willing to drive the nails and to cast the spear into His side to bring about His death because there is a literal way in which our sins were responsible for nailing Jesus to the cross of Calvary.

### **Where The Blood Is Applied**

The use of blood in the sprinkling ceremony varies according to the different sacrifices, depending upon the prominence that the element of atonement is given in the sacrificial ceremony. In some of the sacrifices, the blood is sprinkled before the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies. Atonement would be central in that sacrifice. For there was a very close, intimate relationship with God as the source of forgiveness. On the Day of Atonement, the blood was taken into the sanctuary.

But in the burnt offering, peace offering, and trespass offering, atonement was a marginal consideration in the sacrifice because there were other stages that were exalted to primary position in

those sacrifices. The atonement concept gives way to the primary purpose of the sacrifice: that of the consecration of the worshiper's life to God.

Thus the blood was sprinkled by the priest on the sides of the altar, the lower part of the altar of burnt offerings out in the courtyard. In those sacrifices where the blood was applied to the sides of the altar of burnt offerings, the purpose was to confirm that atonement was not the central point of the sacrifice. In the sin offering and on the great Day of Atonement, the sprinkling of blood was central because atonement was the central, primary purpose. But it was secondary to consecration in the sacrifice of the burnt offering. And, therefore, blood is sprinkled on the lower half of the altar of burnt offerings, round about. That means on all of the sides.

The reason the blood was sprinkled on the altar is explained in Exodus 20:24. God instructed the children of Israel to build the altar. Then He said that it is there that "I will come to you, and I will bless you." The blessing under discussion quite evidently was to be atonement for their sin. It is quite clear that the marginal aspect of atonement is indicated by the use of the blood.

### **The Life Is In The Blood**

Blood stood for life. We read the passage in Leviticus 17:11 that the life of the creature is in the blood. "and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls." And it is because of the life that is given that the atonement is accepted. God told the children of Israel when the Passover lamb had been slain and its blood had been sprinkled around the doorposts of their homes: "And when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). So, in the burn offering, quite evidently that same concept is present. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

### **Removing The Skin**

Let us now go to the next stage of the ceremony. After the sprinkling of the blood, the priest would then "flay the sacrifice," that is, remove the skin. The only sacrifice where the skin was not removed was that of the red heifer. She was sacrificed outside the camp, not on the side of the altar of burn offerings. She was

totally burned, skin and all. Her ashes were used for the cleansing of ceremonial contamination.

There are several possible explanations as to why the skin was removed. Some have supposed a remote analogy to God slaying the first animal and making garments of its skin for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Thus God covered their nakedness. They suppose there might be some kind of symbolic tie-in between the Eden episode and this sacrifice. There is one major problem with such an unverifiable hypothesis. In the burnt offering sacrifice the skin was not given to the sinner, as in the case of Adam and Eve, but to the officiating priest according to the dictate of Leviticus 7:8: "And the priest who offers anyone's burnt offering, that priest shall have for himself the skin of the burnt offering."

Others have suggested that it simply means that Christ covers us with His righteousness when we are baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27). Once again the same problem as above remains, for it was not the sinner who received the skin but the priest.

My personal conviction about the skinning of the sacrifice is that the animal was to be burned on the altar. Removing the skin would eliminate the stench of burning hair from the temple courtyard. It would be quite evident to us that after a series of sacrifices both of animals and of birds the burning of hair and feathers would create an odious smell and would make the Tabernacle a place that would not be at all pleasing unto the priest that had to serve there. I believe that they simply removed the skin in order to eliminate the stench of burning hair.

### **Renewing The Covenant**

In stage six, the priest divides the sacrifice into two distinct parts. He divides it right down the middle. One-half of the sacrifice is placed on his left side and one-half is on his right side. Now quite evidently this is the Semitic way, the Hebrew way of making a covenant. When two Hebrew people wanted to make an agreement, may be selling a piece of land, each of them wanted to guarantee to the other the fulfillment of the conditions of the covenant that they were making. Then they ritualistically would divide an animal and then literally both of them would pass between those parts. As they did, each would

vow to the other God with these words: “May God do unto me as we have done unto this animal. May God divide me down the middle. May He feed me to the vultures if I break covenant.”

In this way, the Hebrew committed himself to covenant-keeping responsibility. Let me give an example of that out of Genesis chapter 15. God is ready to make an agreement with Abraham, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them ... So shall your descendants be” (Verse 5). Abraham wants some kind of confirmation of that. It is not that Abraham lacks in faith. God told him to take some of the animals that had been prescribed in the later verse of Genesis chapter 15, to divide them down the middle, and to lay each part one over against the other. And then we read that a deep sleep came over Abraham that evening. And when the sun was set, verse 17 and 18 of Genesis 15 says “... behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram.” So the flaming torch that passed between the pieces was symbolic of the fact that God was involving Himself in this covenant-making process.

### **Covenant Making Sacrifices**

The animals that were required were a heifer, a goat, a ram, a dove and a young pigeon (Genesis 15:9). These are the same genera of animals later required in Leviticus. God commanded Abraham to cut the animals in two parts and “placed each piece opposite the other, but he did not cut the birds in two” (Genesis 15:10). Cutting them in two and passing through the pieces, was symbolic of God’s covenant-making purpose before Abraham.

In Jeremiah chapter 34:17-21, God had called Israel to account for their sins and their deviation from the covenant they had made before God. And, therefore, He makes the statement in verse 17 of Jeremiah 34, “Therefore thus says the Lord: ‘You have not obeyed Me in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother and every one to his neighbor. Behold, I proclaim liberty to you.’ says the Lord ‘to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine! and I will deliver you to trouble among all the kingdoms of the earth.

And I will give the men who have transgressed My covenant, who have not performed the words of the covenant which they made before Me, when they cut the calf in two and passed between the parts of it.' ” In other words, I will do unto them as they did unto the calf. “ ‘the princes of Judah, the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf ...’ ” God said, “Their dead bodies shall be meat for the birds...”

This system of making covenants underscored the sober, serious obligations made in such agreements. There was a slight variation in the cutting of the animal in the ceremony of the burnt offering. Normally the process would be done to contract a covenant, to create a covenant. In this sacrifice, it is clear that the worshiper is already in covenant relationship with God, and could not, therefore, be seen to originate that relationship. It was simply that God-given ritual that allowed the worshiper to renew his covenant commitment to God. There seemed to be no literal passing between the parts by the worshiper himself, but at least mentally and by faith he did pass between the parts to reconfirm his commitment to keep the covenants and the conditions of the covenant that God had made with him and he with God.

### **Washing The Body**

In stage seven of the ceremony, the priest washed the body of the sacrifice to remove any extraneous blood. The blood was not to be burned upon the altar. It was to be sprinkled upon the altar for atonement. Whatever was burned ascended unto God as a sweet savor or a fragrant odor sacrifice to God. It was incensed unto God. And all of the blood was intended to be given to the altar in atonement. The body of the victim was washed in order to remove the extraneous blood and anything else that might have gotten into the body that would contaminate it as a clean sacrifice to God. All the blood that was not used in the sprinkling ceremonials was taken to a clean place outside the camp.

### **“Incensing” The Sacrifice To God**

Stage eight is the central part of the ritual. This final action is the sacrificial burning of the animal’s body on the altar of burnt offerings. The priests would lay the wood, then the sacrifice on

the altar and then, according to Leviticus 1:9, he would convert that whole sacrifice into smoke. It was “fumed” as incense on the altar as an offering made by fire unto Jehovah God. Of course, the worshiper is still an observer at the ceremonial unfoldings. And mentally, devotionally, and religiously he personalizes the whole ritual to himself. It is he who is being given to God!

### **Christ—The Burnt Offering**

Now, quite evidently, the burnt offering is symbolic of the sacrifice of Christ. And we need to understand that Christ on the cross does not represent the burnt offering. Calvary is a sin offering. It is not the burnt offering. And, therefore, it is clear that the sacrifice of the burnt offering would rather involve the entire life of Jesus as He presented Himself as one continuous burnt offering unto Jehovah God.

### **The Continual Burnt Offering**

There was by Divine command in Leviticus 6:8 through 13, the rituals governing the “continual burnt offering.” Burnt offerings were offered not only by the individuals, but were also the sacrifices on a daily basis for the whole nation. They were to offer one burnt offering every morning and another every evening. The priest would supply the sacrifice. And according to Leviticus chapter 6 it was necessary for them to present the offering upon the altar on a daily basis and to keep the fires burning. Some three times in Leviticus 6:9, 12, and 13, God said do not let the fires of the continual burnt offering go out because that would indicate that the worship, devotions, and commitment of the nation to God no longer existed. They no longer are worshiping and consecrating themselves unto God.

Twice in that context He says to keep the fires burning. Or rather three times. He says to keep the fires burning and twice He says to not let the first go out. That indicates that God intends for Israel to see its responsibility of worshiping and serving Him as a daily responsibility. As the fires of that national, continual burnt offering ascended unto the Father each morning, the spiritually minded Hebrew would personally identify with it and would make this kind of a vow in his mind and through his faith as he would ask God, “Would you please



let that sacrifice that is being consumed upon the altar of the burnt offering in the courtyard of the Tabernacle early in the morning represent me. I want my entire day to be devoted unto You.” Then, he would renew his prayer in the evening sacrifice.

### **Ritual Changes**

There are some differences in the continual burnt offering. The priest would provide the sacrifice for the entire nation, and it was intended that this sacrifice be a constant reminder to the children of Israel of their obligation to devote themselves to God, to renew their commitment to Him. It was to be a constant expression of their worship of God, and a reminder of the privilege that they had in their fellowship with Him. A spiritually minded Jew would easily identify with the sacrifice of the continual burnt offering on a daily basis.

The ritual of the sacrifice of the burnt offering was basically the same with some significant exceptions. There was no laying on of the hands, and therefore no symbolic transfer of sin. And, that just simply tells us that marginal element of atonement was eliminated from the continual burnt offering. This gave prominence to the concept that its purpose was primarily for consecration and not atonement. The animal was provided by the priest and by him offered on behalf of the nation. The priest carried on the ceremonials without involvement of other individuals.

### **When God Hated Burnt Offerings**

There were times when God despised and rejected burnt offerings of the children of Israel. In Isaiah 1:11 and again in Amos 5:21, you hear God saying some amazing things about these sacrifices that He had ordained. He said I hate them, I despise them, I reject them. Basically, the reason that God rejected their burnt offerings is because the whole ceremony of the burnt offering indicated individual or collective devotion to God,, but in these instances the nation is carrying on the external ceremonies, but internally they have no devotion to God. They are spiritually committed to the serving of other god. and, therefore, God rejects the burnt offerings on the part of Israel because it is hypocritical to the core.

In Isaiah 1:10, God called Israel by the very uncomplimentary names of “Sodom and Gomorrah,” indicating the wide-spread idolatry and immorality of the nation. Therefore, in verse 12, God says: “When you come to appear before Me, Who has required this from your hand, To trample My courts?”

Then, He proceeds to denounce the hypocrisy of their burnt offerings. Such offerings speak of deep devotion to God, but their lives spoke of total disregard of God and for His Law.

### **From The Shadow To The Reality**

Now we proceed to the interpretation of the sacrifice of Christ as a fulfillment of the typology contained in the burnt offering. The Old Testament shadow must correspond to its New Testament reality. Hebrews 10:1 says: “For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.” This verse insists on the “shadow to reality” relationship between Old Testament and New Testament sacrifices.

There are a number of other passages in the New Testament that present Jesus as a continual burnt offering to God. From Matthew 3:17, God is heard to say of Jesus: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Again, on the Mount of Transfiguration, that same Divine appraisal of Jesus is given as recorded in Matthew 17:5. The words “well pleased” suggest the concept of a “sweet savor” devotion God found in Jesus.

Jesus had devoted Himself. “Not My will, but Yours, be done.” Such consecration to God was characteristic of the entire life of Christ. In John 17:19, Jesus said in prayer to the Father: “And for their [the apostles] sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.” In other words, “I consecrate Myself to You so that the apostles may have a living example of the total devotion every man owes to God.”

There is a beautiful passage of scripture in Ephesians 5:1 and 2 where the apostle Paul makes mention of the fact that Jesus is a burnt offering sacrifice unto God Himself. “Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering

and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling [fragrant offering] aroma." "Fragrant offering" and "pleasing sacrifice" is terminology that has to do with worship sacrifices and it comes fresh from the pages of Leviticus. And, therefore, it is evident to us that Jesus presented Himself constantly as the continual burnt offering to God, never reserving for Himself any service and never committing a sin.

### **Thirty-two Years On The Altar**

In reality, the burnt offering of Christ covered 32 years of His life and that made it possible for Him then to ascend the cross of Calvary as the sin offering without blemish, without spot. He was pure because He never allowed the "fires on His altar" of devotion to go out; He "kept them burning" always! Day after day, month after month, Jesus gave Himself completely to Jehovah God. Hebrews 10:7 contains a citation from the fortieth Psalm, verses 7 and 8: "Behold I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God." Such was always the ultimate purpose, the consuming desire of Jesus Christ. In John 2:17, the disciples remember that it was written of Him, "Zeal for your house has eaten me up." That is what the Hebrew language says in Psalm 69:9 from which John quotes. Jesus' entire life is the fulfillment of all the shadow sacrifice of the burnt offering. He placed Himself upon the altar of burnt offerings and consecrated Himself, incensed Himself, to God without interruption. And the fires of His zeal for Jehovah God never terminated.

### **We Are To Be Living Sacrifices**

Do Christians offer continual burnt offerings? Not in fact, but spiritually, yes. We Christians are required to imitate the Christ. Ephesians 5:1-2 says: "Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma." Let us remember that this passage does not discuss the Cross of Calvary. The Cross was not "sweet savor" to God, though He required it for our salvation.

There is a beautiful passage in Romans 12:1. Paul said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present [offer] your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to

God, which is your reasonable service.” The Greek word for “offer” conveys the meaning of “pleasing to God.” with means sweet savor or fragrant odor. Such burn offering of Christians is seen as “their spiritual worship.”

Christians are expected to imitate the Christ and to give their life in devotion to God. Paul added in verse 2 that we must not conform to the world because that would taint the sacrifice. And so Christians are expected to ascend the altar as an expression of praise and to allow the fires of their zeal and their consecration for Jehovah God to ascend continually to Him as their part in the fulfillment of the typology found in the great burnt offering sacrifice in the book of Leviticus.

## THE GRAIN OFFERING

*Korban* is the Hebrew word that defines this sacrifice, Its basic meaning is “Given to God.” So Mark interprets the word in 7:11. There were several examples of these kinds of gifts that were given in the Old Testament. Generally they were given in recognition of the worthiness of the person who received the gift. Too, it seems evident they were given to increase friendly relationships between the donor and the receiver.

In Genesis 32:13, we read of Jacob sending a gift to Esau—quite evidently to seek his favor. In Genesis 43:11, Israel, the father of the twelve tribes, sent a gift, a *korban*, to Joseph who was then regent over the land of Egypt. In II Samuel 8:2, there is another example of gifts that were given by the Moabites to David. Always those gifts were given in recognition of the dignity of the person who received them. And they were given to God not only in acknowledgment of His worthiness and dignity, but also as a deep expression of gratitude for His goodness and providence.

### All That I Have

The firstfruits of the land were always required by God on the part of Israel. Firstfruits were demanded from the land and from their beasts. It is a sacrifice bellowing to the sweet savor or the fragrant odor category. It is therefore patently a sacrifice of worship and praise to God. Just as in the burnt offering the Hebrew seems to be saying to God, “I want to give all that I am to You.” And then in the grain offering the Hebrew is found to be saying, “I want to give You all that I have.” When the Hebrew gave “all that I am” in the burnt offering and then gave “all that I have” in the grain offering, there was absolutely nothing left to give. These two sacrifices, viewed together, communicate to the Hebrew just how completely and unreservedly he belongs to God. God’s total claim on his life is vindicated by these two sacrifices.

### No Atonement Concepts

There are some significant differences between the burnt offering and the grain offering. Though both were “made by fire” and both belong to the fragrant aroma category and both are

“fumed” to God on the altar of burnt offerings, each is unique in several ways. In the burnt offering, life is given; not so of the cereal offering. Blood was shed in atonement in the first, but there is no atonement concept associated with the grain offering. There is no confession of sin in the grain offering. It was strictly a gift of gratitude to God. There was absolutely no thought of buying the favor of God associated with this sacrifice. It’s ceremonials will amply confirm this fact.

### **Only Products Of Man’s Toil**

Only cultivated grains could be presented in this sacrifice, never in their original or crude state. At the very least they had to be ground into flour or had to be parched before they were presented. Generally, the Hebrew would make this flour and the grains that he would cultivate into cakes, and would lay those cakes before the priest who would then place them upon the altar as an offering to Jehovah God. It was to be offered on the altar as was the burnt offering. It was fumed or incensed to God and, therefore, manifestly was an act of worship. As a matter of fact, it was one of the purest forms of worship. For in the burnt offering there was a secondary purpose of atonement. But in this sacrifice there were no secondary purposes. The original and only purpose was to consecrate to God, out of a deep sense of gratitude, the unmixed devotions of the Hebrew through the consecration of all his substance to God.

### **All Of Life Is Sacred To God**

Now, in the meal offering, the basic thrust is consecration of an individual’s possessions unto God. It was given in daily recognition of God’s worthiness of Israel’s praise, thanksgiving, and was to be given without reservation. It insists that there is no essential separation between the religious life of a person and what might be called his secular life. Because all of a man’s life—body, soul, and spirit—belong to God simply in virtue of creation.

But since Israel had been redeemed then, not only in creation, but also in recreation, Israel belongs to God. Therefore, all of the resources of body, soul, and spirit belong to God as an expression of religious *korban*. Paul said in I Corinthians 10:31 that there is no separation to be made between the religious life

of an individual on Sunday and the rest of the week. He said: "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

### **The Basis Of Praise**

In Deuteronomy chapter 26, there is an interesting passage of scripture that will explain something of the background out of which this sacrifice arises. It begins by telling about the early history of the children of Israel. They went down into Egypt and then while enslaved there they became a numerous nation. They were delivered by God and brought into the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey. God's redemptive activity toward Israel evoked grateful acknowledgment by the people. As the Hebrew harvested his crop, he would bring the firstfruits as a gift to God.

At the offering of the gift he would say: "My father was a Syrian, about to perish, and he went down to Egypt and dwelt there, few in number; and there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous. But the Egyptians mistreated us, afflicted us, and laid hard bondage on us. Then we cried out to the Lord God of our fathers and the Lord heard our voice ... So the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders. He has brought us to this place and has given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey; and now behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land which you, O Lord, have given me. Then you shall set it before the Lord your God, and worship before the Lord your God. So you shall rejoice in every good thing which the Lord your God has given to you and your house."

So it is quite clear that this sacrifice is an expression of praise and gratitude for the providence of God who not only gave them Canaan, but also firstfruits in the land. And they bring some of the "milk and honey," the firstfruits of their crop, and present it in expression of praise to Jehovah God.

### **One Tenth Of An Ephah**

The amount of grain that was required in the offering was not the total crop, quite evidently. They only offered what was

called a tenth of an ephah, which was called in Leviticus 2:2, a “memorial portion.” In Hebrew measure that would be about three quarts of ground flour. That was about the amount that would be required to sustain a man in his daily food. The Lord always required the firstfruits of man, of animals, and of the field.

### **The Total Harvest Is Holy To The Lord**

Paul makes a statement in Romans 11:16 that needs to be remembered; that should have been remembered by the Hebrew, but particularly remembered by the Christian. “If the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy.” In other words, that portion that is presented upon the altar is holy. It belongs to God. It is special. It is dedicated in sacrifice to Him. It is consecrated to Him. But that does not mean that the rest of it is unholy, or that it is to be treated or used however a man may choose. It means that everything a man has must be dedicated to God. All of a man’s resources must be used for purposes God sanctions and in ways consistent with His law.

### **Added Ingredients**

Let us notice that there were certain required ingredients that were included in this sacrifice. The first ingredient was incense. In the entire Bible, incense is always a symbol of prayer. Quite evidently as the Hebrew presented to God the firstfruits of his harvest, he did so with a prayerful expression of gratitude, as Deuteronomy 26 commands, To represent the prayer, the Hebrew was to add incense to express externally his external gratitude.

In Psalm 141:1-2, we read these words as David is presenting his prayer to Jehovah God: “Lord, I cry out to You [quite evidently in prayer]; Make haste to me!” In other words, give attention to my prayer. “Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You. Let my prayer be set before You as incense.”

That sweet savor column of incense that ascends to the Father arose from a devoted heart of gratitude. David says, “[May] the lifting up of my hands [be] as the evening sacrifice.” The evening sacrifice related to the continual burnt offering. The continual burnt offering, presented every morning and again each evening, was to be accompanied by a continual grain offering.



## **Incense As A Symbol Of Prayer**

In Exodus 30:8, God commanded the Levitical priests to offer incense every day as a part of the national worship in the Tabernacle to Jehovah God. In Luke 1:9, we find Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, offering incense in the temple in Jerusalem at the hour of prayer. To confirm that incense is symbolic of prayer, read Revelation 5:8. You will find the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders, twenty-eight personages, standing around the throne of God, each of them “having bowls of incense,” at least 56 bowls in all. John explains that the incense “is the prayers of the saints.” Then, in Revelation 8:3, an angel comes and “he was given much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints.”

Possibly the “much incense” that was added to the 56 bowls is symbolic of the intercession of Christ on behalf of His people. These 56 bowls of incense and the “much incense” representing the intercession of Christ are all poured out on the altar before God. Thus it is evident that Christ joins together with His church to share in their praise and supplications. When He, being the head and the church the body, joins His intercession with ours, immediately things begin to happen on the face of the earth. God is sensitive to the prayers of His people.

All our gifts to God—all of our contributions, whether in the collection plate on the Lord’s Day morning or whether gifts to others out of the resources we have from God’s providence—ought to be given with a prayerful heart that gives with a deep sense of gratitude. “I thank you, God, for giving me the opportunity to share with others and to express to You my gratitude for Your gift to me.”

## **Oil Of Consecration**

The second ingredient that was added to the grain offering was oil. It was probably olive oil or oil extracted from other vegetables. Oil was always, in the Old and New Testaments, a symbol of consecration. As in the burnt offering there was the final stage where the entire body of the sacrifice is consecrated to God, so, in the ceremony of the grain offering there is the addition of oil, symbolic of the anointing process. In the Old testament, individuals that were inaugurated into sacred service

were always anointed with oil. Prophets, priests, and kings in Old Testament times were anointed with oil to consecrate them to their divinely appointed ministries.

### **Oil Upon The Head**

In Psalm 133:1 through 3: “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forevermore.” There is something sacred about unity among brethren, for it consecrates their fellowship.

Leviticus chapters 8 and 9 describe the ceremony used by Moses when he consecrated Aaron and his sons into the priestly office. He poured great quantities, about three quarts, of oil on Aaron’s head. It is called the oil of consecration and that indicates that Aaron is now devoted exclusively to the service of God.

Hebrews 1:8-9 quotes from Isaiah 61:1-3 as the Father is speaking to Jesus: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” The “oil of gladness,” symbolic of divine gladness, indicates that Jesus was always consecrated unto Jehovah God in that great office of His kingly/priestly/prophetic function. And, therefore, the Hebrew would add this element of consecration by adding the oil of his grain offering.

### **The Salt Of The Covenant**

The third ingredient that was added to the grain offering was salt. Salt is always, in Old Testament and, I believe, in New Testament symbolism, a sign of covenant. Just as incense is a symbol of prayer, and oil is a symbol of consecration, salt is always a symbol of covenant. It was used to establish covenant relation, or confirm standing covenants or in covenant renewal processes. As the burnt offering was cut down the middle in renewal of the covenant, so salt was added to the grain offering in renewal of covenant responsibility in the use of resources.

In Leviticus 2:13, God says, “And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt.”

Definitely salt is intended by God to stand as a symbol of their two-way covenant. There are other passages that indicate the same concept. In Numbers 18:19, God explained to Israel that He has given the Levites their share, their portion, from the altar. They get to participate in the animals that were sacrificed there. They will get their share, for God said: “... it is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord with you and your descendants with you.” The Levites had no land inheritance in the division of the land of Canaan once Israel had conquered the land. Therefore, God gave them their portion from the nation’s offering to Him—with “a covenant of salt.”

In II Chronicles 13:5, God explains to Israel: “Should you not know that the Lord God of Israel gave the dominion over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons, by a covenant of salt?” Since this is a worship sacrifice offered by one who is already in covenant relationship with God, then the salt is added to confirm and renew the covenant obligation.

### **Incense, Oil, And Salt Added To All Gifts**

When Christians make their contribution to God, mentally and with deep spiritual implications, they should add these three ingredients. There should be the incense of prayerful gratitude. They should add the oil of personal and substantial consecration to God. And the salt of their covenant responsibility should be generously added to their gifts.

In Mark 9:49 and 50, Jesus said: “For everyone will be seasoned with fire ...” The fire discussed in this verse evokes the language of Leviticus, Chapter 2. The fire must relate to the altar where the individual consecrated a sweet savor sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Since Jesus is giving Kingdom legislation, He demands that everyone have this covenant commitment to the Lord God as he presents himself at the altar.

Of course, there is no literal “altar” in the New Testament church, only symbolism borrowed from the Hebrews.

Then, Jesus said in verse 50: “Salt is good, but if it loses its flavor, how will you season it?” In other words, if a man loses his covenant standing before God, how can he ever be “sweet savor” to God? There is no way he can be pleasing to the Lord. His gifts are not sweet savor unto God. They are not fragrant odor. Then, imperatively, Jesus commands: “Have salt in yourselves and be at peace one with another.” In Matthew 5:13, Jesus said that Christians are the salt of the earth. That means that they are God’s covenant with this world. Now that does not mean that we are the preservers of the world. Quite evidently Jesus Himself is the One that keeps the world and not Christians. We are just simply God’s covenant with this earth.

### **Excluded Ingredients**

As there were three ingredients that were added, there were two ingredients that were excluded in the grain offering. The first one is yeast. The second one is honey. As the incense symbolized a prayer, as the oil symbolized consecration, as the salt symbolized covenant, yeast or leavening symbolizes also the corruption and decay that is characteristic of it.

Even honey is subject to fermentation and therefore was excluded as an additive to the grain offering. They were not intrinsically evil elements for Leviticus 2:12 demands that they be brought as a part of the firstfruits gifts. They were simply excluded from the grain offerings because of symbolism.

At the Passover of the children of Israel, they were required to remove all leaven from their homes because that was symbolic of Egyptian immorality and idolatry. Jesus had said in Matthew 16:6, “Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.” And, in Luke 12:1, He explained what that Pharisaical leaven was: “which is Hypocrisy

Jesus warned the disciples concerning the Pharisees who played at religion. On the outside they appear very religious. They are like white painted tombs; beautiful on the outside, but on the inside they are full of dead men’s bones.

In I Corinthians 5:6 through 8, the apostle tells us our Passover has also been sacrificed, “Christ our Passover.” Then Paul urges us to purge out the old leaven so that we can keep the feast of

Christianity with the unleavened bread of sincerity and of truth, not iniquity and unrighteousness. In Galatians 5:9, Paul said, "A little leaven leavens the whole lump." In other words, a little leaven leavens the whole lump.

### **The Firstfruits Of Jesus**

Evidently the grain offering typology has its fulfillment in Christ Jesus. There are several passages of scripture in the New Testament that give confirmation of the fact that Jesus also offered the firstfruits of His activity. Basically, the question is what was the activity of Christ? A carpenter? No! Jesus' activity was that of a Savior, and therefore those that are saved are His firstfruits give to Jehovah God.

Paul says in II Corinthians 2:14-15, "Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance [the sweet savor] of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing." Christians are Christ's fragrant aroma gift to God.

James 1:18 says of God: "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." Christians are the firstfruits of the redemptive activity of Jesus Christ. We read in Revelation 14:4 about the 144,000. He tells us: "These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes." Therefore, they are Christians.

Then, John adds this thought: "These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb." Jude informs us that on the great day of days, Jesus will "present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24). All these Biblical references confirm that Jesus is the primary fulfillment of the typology built into the old Hebrew grain offering.

### **Christians And Their Grain Offerings**

Of course Christians offer the sacrifice of grain offerings not in the physical sense of the Hebrews, but spiritually. Our gifts are the firstfruits of our labor and they belong to God. Our gifts to God of a financial nature are defined by Paul: They are "a sweet-

smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God” (Philippians 4:18). There are three phases Paul used in this verse to convey the concept of sweet savor sacrifices. Again Hebrews 13:15-16 says: “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” The series of “firstfruit offerings” include praise, confession, doing good, and sharing.

Naturally the passage of I Peter 2:5 and 9 is a must when examining the Christian’s fulfillment of the Old Testament grain offering typology. Peter presents Christians as a “holy temple” and the “royal priests” that serve in that temple, with the people of God being themselves “spiritual sacrifices” offered to God. “You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house,, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” The concept of “acceptable sacrifices” suggests that they belong to the sweet savor category.

### **Evangelism Is Seen As A Christian’s Gift To God**

The terminology used by Paul in Romans 15:15 and 16 is highly suggestive of priestly sacrificial activity. The passage reads: “Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”

The word “minister” comes from the Greek and is a word defining “a liturgical service.” Liturgy in the Greek always relates to a religious ceremony devoted to God. Paul saw himself as “liturgically” presenting the gospel to the Gentiles. Actually, the Greek word “priestly duty” is verbal action of “priesting” the gospel. Paul was functioning at a symbolic altar—offering as a priest God’s gift of the gospel to the Gentiles.

Those who accepted heaven’s gift by obedient faith, Paul then symbolically placed on the same altar and “presented” them to God as an “acceptable” (sweet savor) sacrifice. So, Paul sees the preacher of the gospel as a kind of two-way priest—first “priesting” God’s gift to men, and then, secondly, as a priest

“presenting” in sacrificial fashion those converts to God as his “firstfruit offering.” This passage is filled with terminology fresh off the pages of Leviticus.

### **Sacrifices of Christian Worship**

In summary, a Christian’s worship begins with his “presentation” (first stage of all Levitical sacrifices) to God on the symbolic altar as a “burnt offering.” He is a “living, holy, and acceptable” gift to God. Having given himself, he is now qualified to offer the New Testament counterpart to the Old Testament grain offerings. Thus, he gives of the financial resources God has providentially given him. He shares his money with the needy and to promote the progress of the Kingdom of Christ. He does good deeds at every opportunity for all these spiritual sacrifices “are well pleasing to God.” And, he improves himself in the evangelistic activity of presenting the Gospel to the lost in hope that he can present those converts to God as firstfruits of his soul-winning zeal.

All the topography relative to the Hebrew grain offering is amply fulfilled—first by Christ, then by His people.

## THE PEACE OFFERING

In this sixth lesson, we will study Leviticus chapter 3 where we have the presentation of the peace offering. It was the third great sacrifice that belonged to the sweet savor category. It was one of the worship sacrifices and it was to be offered by the worshiper himself who was in good standing with God. We will look at its distinctive ritual because there will be some significant changes if offers. Then, the disposition of the sacrificial body is quite different from all other animal sacrifices in Leviticus.

It will be important to see this peace offering, also called the fellowship offering, as a festive banquet that intensifies the fellowship and the enjoyment of fellowship between a man and his God. It is the most joyful of all of the sacrifices of the Law of Moses because it involves the festive celebration of peaceful relationships between a man and his God, between a man and his family, and certainly with a man himself.

### ***Shelem or Shelamin***

The name of the sacrifice of the peace offering is called in Hebrew *shelem* which has its derivation for the word *shalom*, which is the Hebrew term for peace. It was and is used as a greeting among Hebrew people today, but here it is presented in the plural form, *shelamin* in the Hebrew language, and, therefore, that indicates that it is peace of a multi-directional nature. It creates good relationships, as readily mentioned, between God and man, between man and man, and with the man himself. It is also called the sacrifice of completion by the Hebrew people. *Shalem* has the meaning of "making up that which is lacking," supplying that which is wanting, and, therefore, it tends to complete the sacrificial repertoire that will be involve when a Hebrew strays from God and loses his fellowship with God because of his sins or trespasses.

### **The Road To Restoration**

Then, If he wants to come back to God, if he repents and wants to be restored to good fellowship with God, the first thing that he needs to do is offer the sin offering or the trespass offering to make atonement. It would not be proper for him to presume to offer the peace offering when he is in a state of alienation or



broken fellowship with God. Actually, it would be called an abomination by the Hebrews to offer a peace offering when he was not in good covenant standing before God. And, therefore, the first sacrifice demanded when a man is alienated from God is not the peace offering. It is certainly not the burnt offering. It is the sin offering because it is atonement that leads to fellowship and it is fellowship that leads to the festive celebration between the individual and God. And, therefore, as always characteristic, peace has to be restored, or peaceful relationships have to be restored, before a man can participate in this festive banquet.

It is quite clear according to Hebrew instruction in the Law of Moses that no person outside of covenant relationship with God could offer this sacrifice because “their pollution is in them.” So says the Law of Moses.

A Hebrew could not even accept an animal from a person that was uncovenanted and then use that animal as a sacrifice of the peace offering. The participants at this offering had to be in fellowship with God. And, therefore, the main object of this sacrifice seems to be that it was the final stage of the restoration process. This festive, sacrificial meal was designed to express and intensify the gratitude for restoration. There would, naturally, be thanksgiving for renewed fellowship that can now be enjoyed.

Until atonement was made, it would not have been proper in any way for the Jew to participate in the peace offering. Leviticus 7:18 through 21 tells us that a person that has been cut off from God would not have the privilege of participating in this sacrifice. In Psalm 116:17, David said: “I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving [that is the peace offering in the Hebrew], and will call upon the name of the Lord.” Now what is the purpose of the call. Quite evidently, “God, I want to intensify the sense of fellowship and of union and of friendship between me and You.”

### **Three Kinds Of Peace Offerings**

The peace offering was divided into three different kinds of peace offering sacrifices. The first one was called a thank offering. In the Hebrew language of Leviticus 22:29, the term is *horah* and it seems to have an equivalent interpretation. That

word *horah* seems to mean “hooray.” It seems to mean “Hallelulah, thank you, Lord.” It is called the sacrifice of thanksgiving because God has restored the peace. He has accepted atonement and has judged as proper the individual that has offered the sacrifice. Atonement has been accepted. And, therefore, the individual is now back into fellowship with God. Now this is the highest level of the peace offering; the *horah*.

Leviticus 7:15 said that the body of this *horah* animal which will be consumed in the festive celebration has to be eaten on the first day of the sacrifice. It was a joyful banquet, a sacrificial meal. Any portion that was left over after the first day had to be burned outside the camp, not upon the altar of burnt offerings. It could not be eaten on the second day. This is not for consecration of self unto God—that was the burden of the burnt offering. This sacrifice is rather to intensify fellowship.

### **Only An Animal Without Blemish**

Failure to comply with the ordinances regulating the peace offering would profane the name of God, as Leviticus 22:26-31 would indicate to us. Of course, the animal had to be without any blemish of any kind. The fowl generally were excluded from the sacrifice simply because there was not enough flesh on the birds to make arrangements for a festive banquet.

### **The *Neder*—The Vow Offering**

The second type of peace offering was a lower grade sacrifice. It was called in Hebrew the *neder*. In Leviticus 22:21, this was a sacrifice that accompanied the making of a vow and of an oath. It had the concept of standing before God enjoying the fellowship restored through new commitments to God. The man could renew his vow to God or perhaps to his family and do so in peace with both. Since this was a lower grade or level of sacrifice, any portion of the animal that was left over from the first day could then be consumed on the second day according to Leviticus 19:5 and 6.

But they could not eat on the third day because they would have defiled the sacrifice and the worshiper himself. Too, it would have profaned the name of God (Leviticus 19:7). The flesh begins to see corruption on the third day. There may be

some considerations of that fact in the resurrection of Lazarus. In John 11:39, Jesus is told that now the body of Lazarus begins to have the odor of decaying flesh after four days in the tomb. That is the reason that Jesus was raised early in the morning of the third day, so that His flesh might not see corruption. So there may be some kind of symbolic tie-in between this peace offering and the fact that the flesh could not be consumed on the third day because then it begins to see corruption.

### **The *Nidebah* Or The Free Will Offering**

The third and the final type of peace offering was the free will offering. It was called in the Hebrew tongue *nidebah*. It seems to have been a sacrifice that was offered spontaneously; it too could be eaten on the second day.

### **The Ritual Of The Peace Offering**

As we begin the study of the ceremony governing the peace offering, let us notice the rituals. The early stages of this sacrifice conformed to the pattern of the burnt offering: presentation, the laying on of hands, the killing of the animal, and the sprinkling of the blood. But from that moment forward there will be distinction and separation in the rituals of the sacrifice. Let us go back through the stages of this ceremony because there are some changes even in the intent of each of the stages.

### **Presentation For A Special Purpose**

The first stage is that of presentation. In the burnt offering the purpose of the presentation was for the Hebrew to give himself in consecration to God. But in this sacrifice, the presentation stage has its distinctive meaning. It expresses the desire to enjoy friendly relations with God and to participate in a banquet devoted to festive celebration with God. It has the purpose of intensifying the fellowship. Therefore, in the stage of presentation, the reason the Hebrew has come to the altar with his substitute animal is different from the reason that led him there to offer the burnt offering. Here he is seeking deeper fellowship. He wants to intensify that sense of spiritual union that exists between himself and God. So, though the first stage is the same as in the burnt offering, the purpose is different.

### **Laying One Hand On The Animal's Head**

In the second stage of the peace offering sacrifice, the worshiper lays his hand upon the head of his victim. He symbolically “leaned or relied” upon his sacrificial victim. The Hebrew word for laying on the hand is *samak* and it literally means to depend totally upon this animal to fulfill his stand-in roll. There is the element of atonement in this sacrifice, but as was characteristic of the burnt offering, atonement receives marginal consideration. The reason for marginal atonement derives from the fact that the central purpose of the peace offering is the intensification and the renewal of the fellowship between the worshiper and God. So having laid his hand upon the sacrifice, the worshiper has symbolically transferred his unspecified sins to the account of his substitute sacrifice

### **The Killing Of The Sacrifice**

Stage three of the ceremonial of the peace offering is the killing of the victim. Basically the purposes are the same as explained in the burnt offering. Having laid his hand on the head of his victim, the worshiper has symbolically transferred his sin to his victim. The sins committed are now specified. In the sin and trespass offerings, the Hebrew will have to declare the specific wrong and then make atonement for it, but, in this sacrifice, there are sins that are present, but they are unspecified. The worshiper must slay his own sacrifice, and thus agree with heaven's judgment against his sin. He so agrees that he must personally carry out the penalty of the law against his iniquity. For the worshiper, such a requirement must have been highly educational. How could he witness the death throes of his animal without feeling the severe penalty of God's Law against sin.

### **Sprinkling The Blood**

The priest will apply the blood on the altar. He will sprinkle it. The Hebrew word *zaraq* literally means “to splash or to splatter.” The blood is applied to the base of the altar of burnt offerings in marginal atonement for the sins that have been committed. As is characteristic of all animal sacrifices, the worshiper must rely on the priest to accomplish those functions essential for his forgiveness.

## **The Stage of Change**

And now we go to stage five of the ceremonial of the peace offering. This is the first stage of the sacrifice that differs from that of the burn offering. In this sacrifice, there will be the removal of all of the fat that was a part of the animal's body. Scrupulous dedication is demanded in the removal of all the fat. Leviticus 3:9 and 10 insists upon removal of the animal's "fat, the entire fat tail cut off close to the backbone, all the fat that covers the inner parts or is connected to them."

## **The Bread of God**

The fat of the peace offering is called "the bread of God" or "the food of God." Such terminology clearly indicates that not only is the worshiper involved in the festive banquet, that that God himself will receive His "food" from this sacrifice. God shares in the banquet. In Leviticus 3:11, 16 and 21:6, 8 and 17, the fat is referred to either as the bread of God or the food of God. Therefore, this is seen as a banquet between God and the worshiper. It is a beautiful manifestation of the mutual fellowship that has now been restored and is being enjoyed both by God and the worshiper. Of course the Father delights when His wandering citizens of the kingdom of Israel return in repentance to restoration. The worshiper's part of the banquet will be celebrated in the final stage of the ritual. God's part is seen in this stage when the fat is "incensed" on the altar of burnt offerings to Him.

## **The Fat Is The Richest Part**

Leviticus 3:17 says: "This shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations in all your dwellings: you shall eat neither fat nor blood." It is a perpetual ordinance prohibiting the children of Israel from eating any fat because the fat belongs to God as His "bread." The blood will be presented upon the altar to make atonement. We have been noticing a lot of symbols in the study of the burnt offering, grain offering, and now the peace offering. There was the incense that symbolized prayer, oil symbolizing consecration, salt symbolizing covenant, yeast and honey symbolizing corruption and fermentation. Likewise, fat has symbolic meanings. In the Scriptures, fat always stood for the richest and the best part of the animal.

God always demanded that the best part be given unto Him; the firstfruits were always be better fruits. In Genesis 45:18, Pharaoh told the children of Israel that they would eat of the fatness of the land. Interpreting the symbol, the fat would then indicate the abundance of the land. In Deuteronomy 32:15, God is giving warning unto the children of Israel. He does not want them to go into the land of Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey, and there find all they need to sustain them and then forget the God that made them. "You grew fat, you grew thick, you are obese! Then he forsook God who made him." And so fat stands for that which is the richest and the best.

In Psalm 36:8, the statement is made that there will be the feast of abundance. The Hebrews says, "of the fat" that is enjoyed in the house of God. In other words, the simple statement is that Israel could enjoy the fatness of God's house. In Isaiah 25:6, there is a beautiful prophecy about the coming kingdom of the Messiah and he tells us that in those days, the Lord of heaven will prepare a feast of rich food. That word "rich" is "fat" in Hebrew. That banquet is for all people of all the nations on earth. This prophecy indicates the universal intent of God to bring everybody into the kingdom of Christ and to share with them the feast of heavenly blessings. When the text speaks of "a feast of rich food," the prophet is using physical figures to represent spiritual realities.

Even the Apostle Paul will use that same concept in Romans 11:17 when he mentions the fact that salvation is come from the Jews and that the Gentiles "... and you, being a wild olive tree were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree." The "olive tree" is the Jewish nation in Paul's analogy. Jesus had told the woman at the well that salvation comes through the Jews, from whom the Messiah was born. In fact, Jesus descended from God's original Jewish stock in Abraham. The salvation Jesus brought through His Jewish roots brought blessings to both Jews and Gentiles. And so that fat stands as a symbol of all of the riches and the best, having been removed from the sacrifice, it was placed on the altar and then incensed and fumed to God as a "sweet savor." No other individual had the privilege of participating in any portion of the fat of the sacrifice. There is a tragic story related in I Samuel 2:15:ff. Eli was the great priest over the nation of Israel. He was a good high priest, but a very poor father. His sons were guilty of committing some of the mosr

grievous sins on the doorsteps of the Tabernacle. And Eli knew of their sin “but he reproveth them not.” Therefore, God removed the priesthood from him and his family. It is in that context that we learn one of the grievous sins of Eli’s sons.

### **The Sin Of Taking God’s Part Of The Sacrifice**

The sin is this: after the fact was removed from the peace offerings, it was the practice of the high priest to send his servants to get some of the meat that was the privilege of the high priest to receive for his own food. But these sons wanted their portion of the meat before the fat was removed. In other words, they wanted God’s part. That was an abomination in the sight of God and it was a grievous sin. Any time man is negligent in giving God His rightful tribute, honor, worship, or devotion, he is robbing God of that which creation gives Him the right to expect. See Malachi 3:8.

### **The Distribution Of The Parts**

In stage six the animal is divided into the portions that will be used by the participants in this sacrifice. The first part of the animal to be removed is the breast. interestingly enough, it is called the “wave breast.”

In Leviticus 7:31, and again in 34 to 36, explanation is given of the removal of this wave breast; it is given to the high priest. The reason it was so called is because the worshiper holds the shoulder of the animal in his hands, the officiating priest would place his hands on the sacrificial breast, and the two would wave it toward the altar and then would bring it back. The waving seems to have been done two or three times. This was done to signify to both the worshiper and the priest that the breast really belonged to the altar—literally, to God. Having acknowledged that God was the donor of the “food” for the priest, he would take him breast home to consume it.

From such action it was understood that God was making provision for His priests. In Deuteronomy 18:2, we read that the Levites received no inheritance of land in the country of Israel. They shall live on the offerings made to the Lord by fire, for this is their inheritance. The Lord is their inheritance as He promised them. Paul used this example in I Corinthians 9:13, to establish

his right of support from those who served the Lord. He said, “Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar?”

### **The Heave Thigh**

After the wave breast, they remove the right thigh of the sacrificial animal. It is called “the heave thigh.” The worshiper again holds the thigh and the priest puts his hands on top and they together lift it up toward heaven and bring it back down, left it to heaven and bring it back down. After the third time, it is given to the officiating priest, who takes it home as his share in the offering. It was lifted to heaven in indication that the animal belongs to God. This indicates that it is God who offers this gift to the priest out of God’s providence. It is clear that such “waving” of the breast and the “heaving” of the thigh signals to all participants that God is the ultimate provider for those who serve Him according to His Law.

### **The Festive Banquet—Hosted By God**

In the final stage, the rest of the body of the peace offering animal is given by God to the worshiper. The body will be consumed in festive celebration by the worshiper himself and by his immediate family—his wife, children, servants, any widow that happens to be in his house, any orphans that are there, any Levite that is within the gate. Deuteronomy 12:18 and 16:11 indicate to us that it was a family affair.

When an individual so sins as to lose his fellowship with God, it creates alienation, not only between him and God, but also within the family. Now that he has repented and has come home, the whole family can enjoy the fellowship. Deuteronomy 12:7 insists that his sacrifice be eaten in the presence of the Lord. The man and his family shall eat it in the courtyard of the Tabernacle. And they shall rejoice as they feast. The courtyard indicated that the banquet was to be enjoyed in the house of God. In Deuteronomy 12:17, God says, “You may not eat within your gates.” The Hebrew would say, “not within your gates.” for that would imply that the worshiper was the host and God would be the guest. Rather, this is a feast that God will host in His house and the Hebrew participants are all God’s guests.



## **Salient Lessons From The Peace Offering**

There are some salient lessons that we want to learn from the peace offering. The first lesson is that peace has many directions to it—peace with God, with the family, with the commonwealth of Israel, and certainly peace within the man himself. Another lesson is drawn from the very location where the banquet is held—the courtyard of the Tabernacle. It was “before God,” that is, in His presence. When one is invited to the banquet table of the King, then he is seen as being in good standing with the King. He and the King have a mutually rewarding, peaceful relationship. Again, it is a fellowship that is enjoyed by the entire family as they collectively feast before God.

Deuteronomy 12:18 says, “... you shall rejoice before the Lord your God in all to which you put your hands.” In Psalm 23:5, David said, “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.” So God is the host and the worshiper is the guest. God wants this sacrifice to be enjoyed in His house. That is where fellowship is granted. That is where a meaningful relationship between God and man is to be enjoyed.

### **Christ Is The Fulfillment—Next Lesson**

Now, quite evidently, prophetically, the peace offering indicates to us many things about Jesus Christ Himself and we will be looking into that in the next lesson.

## **THE PEACE OFFERING—AN APPLICATION**

The purpose of lesson seven is to give the conclusion, explanation, and application of the peace offering sacrifice. This lesson will give special attention to the many ways in which Christ brings fulfillment to the Old Testament prototype sacrifice. There are many spiritual realities that are easily associated with the fulfillment of the sacrifice in Christ. Then, at the end of this lesson, we will present a kind of an overview of the message that Jesus gave in John, chapter 6, about the “true bread of life” that came down from heaven.

Let us point to the passages of scripture that prophetically indicate that the coming Messiah will be the source of peace to the entire human family. The first passage of scripture is Isaiah 9:6 and 7. The prophet said, “For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

### **Messiah—The Source Of Peace**

Quite evidently, Christ was going to inaugurate a reign of peace that would endure throughout the ages. The second passage of scripture that speaks of Christ as the source of peace comes out of Isaiah 53:5. This is the beginning of that series of statements about the Lamb of God that would be led to the slaughter. The writer tells us prophetically that God was going to lay upon Him the iniquity of us all and the chastisement—that means the punishment, the hurt, the pain, the death by which you and I have peace with God—was laid on Him.

### **King And Priest—Both At Peace**

The third passage of scripture is found in Zechariah 6:12-13: “Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the Lord. Yes, He shall build the temple of the Lord. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a

priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” The coming Messiah was frequently called in prophecy “the Branch.” In Isaiah 4:2, He is called “the Branch of the Lord” which indicates his divine nature. In Isaiah 11:1, he was called “the stem of Jesse,” the father of David. That indicates His human nature.

In the Zechariah passage, this one who is called “the Branch” will build the temple, the future Kingdom of Christ. And, He will reign as King while He serves as Priest on His throne. He occupies two positions: the position of King on the throne and the position of a Priest that is ministering from that same throne. But there will be “harmony,” or peace, between the two positions of King and Priest.

Now, quite evidently, the king is the one who established the law and it is he who will insist upon the punishment of the law breaker. And therefore the righteousness and the justice with which he rules is underscored by the fact of his kingship.

But then on the other hand, from the same throne he functions also as a priest. And the priest is the one that is always intervening on behalf of those that are guilty of violating the laws of the king and he, as the priest, will insist upon mercy, forgiveness, and grace. And though these two offices of priest and king seem to be opposites one of another, yet Christ will be able to bring those two offices together in perfect peace.

In Zechariah 9:9-10, we read: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, ... He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.” These are just a few of the passages in the Old Testament that indicate to us that Christ was to be the source of universal peace.

### **The Physical Foreshadows The Spiritual**

Remember that in the peace offering the culminating final stage of the sacrifice was the banquet hosted by God in the courtyard of the tabernacle. This indicated the restoration of peaceful relationships between Himself and the inauguration of perfect

fellowship between Himself and His people. And, therefore, it is quite clear that this is a kind of physical example of some of the New Testament realities found in the teachings of Jesus. The Old Testament peace offering was the shadow and the Messiah was the reality foreshadowed by it.

### **The Banquet For The Prodigal Son**

In Luke, chapter 15, there is one of the most touching examples of this banquet where God celebrates the restoration of His wandering, sinning child in the story of the prodigal son. The son had departed from home and had lost his fellowship with the father. He wasted his inheritance; he was a lost man. Such was the judgment of the father: "... for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found." But the prodigal came to himself and became aware of the misery of his life with the pigs—trying to feed himself with their food. He admitted to himself how totally foolish was his plight. He promised himself that he would arise and go to his father. He would confess his sin against him and against heaven's laws.

The father saw him from a distance, ran to him, smothered him with kisses and then called the servants to place a ring on his finger (restoration to family privilege), and to put a robe on his back (to cover the nakedness of his spiritual condition). And, then to put shoes on his feet—these are house shoes, for slaves did not wear shoes. Then, the father said, "And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry." This parable illustrates the pleasure the Father has in the restoration of fellowship with His children. In this context, Jesus said three times that there is rejoicing among the angels in heaven over one sinner that repents. Such concepts explain why the Hebrew peace offering was celebrated with God's spiritual participation in the courtyard of the Tabernacle, which is God's house!

### **The Great Supper**

The next passage suggestive of a festive banquet hosted by God for all who come to His "house" (the church) is found in Matthew 22:1 through 14. This is the parable of the marriage feast for the son of the king. He sent out his servants to invite everyone to come, but they ignored the invitation. He told them in verse 4 that "... my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all

things are ready. Come to the wedding.” So God is preparing a spiritual feast for those that are invited to His banquet table of spiritual food. God wants the “wedding hall” to be filled with guests (verse 10),

A parable of very similar nature is found in Luke 14:15 through 24. It is the parable of the Great Supper that was provided by the king. He invited a number of people. And, they all with one consent began to make excuse. The feast has been prepared in the kingdom of Christ. The spiritual banquet has been prepared for the enjoyment of all who are in covenant relationship with God. Again, the King’s desire is to have his banquet hall filled with guests (verse 23). Anyone who slights the invitation of the Lord will be denied access to the feast God provides (verse 24).

### **The Lord’s Table In His Kingdom**

There is another passage of scripture that deserves attention, from Luke 22:24 through 30. Jesus had instituted the Lord’s Supper and on the way from the upper room to the garden of Gethsemane the apostles begin to discuss the question of who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. Obviously, they are seeking positions of prominence. Jesus overheard their conversation and He tells them in verses 26-27 that among the gentiles their kings rule over them and those that do good to them are called benefactors. “But not so among you.” The kingdom of Heaven is not built on positions of importance. Jesus asks: “For who is greater, he who sits at the table or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves. But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. And I bestow upon you a kingdom, Just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom.” This is not the Lord’s Supper! It is the banquet of every spiritual blessing that is presented under the figure of a fellowship banquet with God.

### **This Table Is A Spiritual Feast**

Jesus informs the apostles that He allows them to sit at the table as the honored guests. And Jesus will be the one that will serve and supply the needs of their souls. This is a beautiful expression of the festive banquet that God prepared for the people somewhat in likeness to the peace offering that was

found in the Old Testament story of Leviticus, chapter 3. In Luke 12:37, there is an amazing passage of scripture that Jesus gives to us. He says, "Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them." Of course, we are to understand that in all these messages Jesus gave, He is describing with physical figures the spiritual blessings He provides for kingdom people. Once again, none of these figures relate to the Lord's Table instituted by Christ in the context of the Passover Feast.

### **Just A Few Of The Many**

So these are just some of the passages of scripture out of the gospel that indicate that Christ is the fulfillment of that banquet typology or that shadow system of the peace offering. Hebrews 13:10 presents another amazing passage of scripture in this same vein. The writer said, "We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat." That verse tells us that we do have an altar, the cross, and that we Christians have the exclusive right to "eat" of its spiritual blessings.

Those who are still tied to the now abrogated Hebrew system have no right to participate in the spiritual "food" that derives from the sacrifice of Christ. Those who remain with the Levitical shadow after the reality has come are denied access to God's banquet table in Christ. That old system has been removed. Its sacrifices are no longer accepted by God. Their law has been "nailed to the cross" (Colossians 2:14) and has been taken out of the way. Remember Colossians 2:16-17 where Paul insists that Jewish food and drink restrictions, their festivals, and their new moons and sabbath days were "a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ."

The writer to the Hebrews tells us that those people who remain in Judaism and thus reject Jesus Christ have no right to eat at our altar. Our Christian altar, quite evidently, is Calvary. And only Christians have the privilege of participating in all of the benefits that come from Calvary—spiritual benefits that are described under the figure of a banquet of God-provided foods of spiritual good. In Revelation 19:9, John said: "Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!" The Lamb, quite evidently, is Jesus. And the bride of Jesus is the church (Revelation

21:9). "... I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." And the wedding supper is that festive banquet that God has prepared in His house for His people.

### **The Body Of The Peace Offering Sacrifice**

Let us remember that the body of the sacrificial peace offering was the food that was provided in the courtyard of the Tabernacle given by God to the worshiper and to his family to create the atmosphere of festive celebration. The same body that was offered in festive celebration was the body that had shed its blood in atonement for the worshiper. Atonement restores fellowship. Fellowship restores the celebration of that relationship with God. Those that are not part of the family of God have no privilege of participating at this banquet of spiritual food. In I John 1:6, John said, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness," that is while we practice sin, "we lie and do not practice the truth." That says there is no fellowship; there is no festive banquet. In verse 7, John said, "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." That means that we have a right to the cleansing of our sins. That is one of the special foods that is prepared on that banquet table by Jesus Christ.

### **The Bread Of God**

Now the body of the peace offering sacrifice is called "the bread of God" or "as food, an offering made by fire to the Lord" (Leviticus 3:5, 11). Such language assures us that this is not only a banquet that is enjoyed by the worshiper but is also enjoyed by the Father Himself. This bread of God is actually the fat of the peace offering. It ascends to the Father from the altar as an incense, as a sweet savor. It smells good to the Father and it is a kind of a "food" that He enjoys. Just as the father and the prodigal son enjoyed that feast of mutual fellowship one with another, so is the peace offering of Leviticus. But that is just a shadow of the real peaceful celebration that Christ brings to the Father and his children in New Testament realities.

Revelation 3:20 is that famous passage of scripture where Jesus said: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine

with him, and he with Me.” That means that the Christians enjoy the mutually rewarding privilege of sharing in the spiritual benefits that come from the cross of Calvary—rewarding to Christians and to God. So these are some of the specific passages of scripture in the New Testament that suggest the peace offering typology fulfilled by Christ.

### **“I Give You Peace”**

Let us notice the list of verses that confirm Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of those Old Testament prophecies that spoke about Jesus as the source of our peace. In John 14:27, Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled,, neither let it be afraid.” In John 16:33, He had said, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Jesus wants His disciples to know that in Him they have peace. In the world they will have tribulation. That means there will be physical disturbances of all kinds out in the world, but in Christ Jesus spiritually and eternally there is peace because He is the One that brings it.

### **Standing Peace In Christ**

In Romans 5:1 through 3, the apostle Paul tells us that we have been justified for the atoning blood of Jesus Christ has removed our sin. And since we are justified, then “we have peace with God.” It is through our faith in Christ Jesus that we have access into this peace “in which we now stand.” There are two perfect tense verbs that are contained in these verses. A perfect tense verb in the Greek defines past completed action with present continuing results. And so, when Paul says we have access into peace, such peace is a continuing privilege for God’s people. And then he said that we “stand in this peace”—another perfect tense verb—indicating that peace had its beginning when we entered into relationship with Christ and that peace continues as long as we are in Him.

### **He Came And Preached Peace**

In Ephesians 2:11-17, Paul assures us that we have Christ as our peace. He is our peace who made peace. He reconciles Jew



and Gentile together in one body, the church, by destroying the hostility between them. This was done by eliminating the Law of Moses that had created a barrier between those two ethnic groups. And, initially of course, Christ brought about peace between God and the Jew—who is no longer a Jew, but now is a Christian. And since they are both Christians, He made peace between Jew and Gentile. He came and “preached peace” to those that were afar off the Gentiles. He came to “preach peace” to those that were nigh, the Jews, and He reconciled them both in one body through the cross “so making peace.”

### **Peace In One Body**

There is one final passage of scripture that deserves our attention: Colossians 3:15, “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.” Paul insists that Christ is the only source of all peace among ethnic groups and between them and God. Only those in Christ Jesus have such dual relations of peace, both vertically with God, and horizontally with fellow Christians of all nationalities.

### **The Bread That Came From Heaven**

Now, I would like for us to go to a passage of scripture in John. Chapter six, and notice the amazing parallel between the language that Jesus used when He talked about the “bread from heaven.” Remember the language of Leviticus 3 and 21, where the body of the peace offering was called “the bread of God”?

It is clear that Jesus is building on the typology of Leviticus. John 6 and Leviticus 3 and 21 stand as substance versus the shadow. Jesus, in this context, had just completed the multiplication of the loaves and the fishes and fed more than 5,000 people. And they took up twelve baskets full of food showing that there was no one that left His banquet table still hungry. When the Jews saw that he was able to multiply the loaves and the fishes, they came to take Him by force and make Him their king (verse 15). Jesus knew their intent. They wanted This kind of a king that could bring them physical food for the physical body. But Jesus’ mission was not physical in nature. He had indicated that His mission was to give spiritual food that brings peace to the soul.

## **Jesus' Mission Was Spiritual**

Therefore, when Jesus saw their purpose was to force Him to be their king who could provide only the physical benefits of the physical body, He withdrew into the mountains and spent the night in prayer. That was the night the apostles got in the boat and started back across the Sea of Galilee toward the city of Tiberias close to Capernaum. Jesus came walking on the sea. He calmed the storm. The next morning when those people on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee saw that Jesus was no longer there, they got in some boats and crossed the sea looking for Jesus.

When they found Him (John 6:25) on the other side of the lake, they cried out: "Rabbi, when did You come here?" *Rabbi* means "O great teacher" in the Hebrew tongue. It is quite evident to Jesus and to anyone that would read this passage of scripture that they are not interested in His teaching. They were interested only in His loaves and fishes. Jesus knows that, and so He tells them in verse 26: "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the [miraculous] signs ..." The miracle should have convinced them that Jesus was a Prophet sent from God with a message from God. They should have been more interested in the message than the miracle of loaves and fishes.

## **Work The Works Of God**

Jesus knew they were not interested in the message. And He so accused them: "Most assuredly, I say to you, you Seek Me, not because you saw the [miraculous] signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled." They are now hungry again and have returned for another feeding! They were working feverishly to make Him their king. Jesus challenges them: "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you" (John 6:27) Jesus is that food! They asked Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" (John 6:28). His answer is simple but imperative: "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent" (John 6:29). In other words, you have to believe on Me, not simply believe in My miracles. It is only through faith in Christ that any man can have the true "bread of life." So they asked, "What sign will you perform then, that we may see it and

believe You?” (John 6:30). Was not the sign of the loaves and the fishes yesterday adequate to convince them that Jesus had a message from God? “What will you do?” they asked.

### **Moses And The Manna**

They began to compare Jesus with Moses. They claim that Moses fed the people of Israel with manna when they were in the desert. They seem to be challenging Jesus: “Are you able to do better than Moses? Can you provide for us on a daily basis loaves and fishes?” They even quoted the Scriptures: As it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat’ ” (John 6:31). Jesus says there is a world of difference between the physical manna that was given in the desert and the “bread from heaven” that Jesus came to provide. The “bread” of which Jesus speaks is fellowship with God; a banquet which God provides through Jesus.

“Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven” (John 6:32). Manna was “shadow” bread; Christ is the “true” or reality bread! That only comes from heaven itself. Jesus is the true bread and only God can give it.

### **The Language is Symbolic**

To insist on the reality of his symbolic language, Jesus says: “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me shall never hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst” (John 6:35). Again, it is through “belief” in Jesus that one may eat of the “bread of life.” The Jews are still insisting on the physical bread: “Lord, give us this bread always.” They are still on the physical bread level. Jesus wants them to understand that He is the one who can satisfy all the craving, the yearning, the hunger of the soul of a man. And that is the purpose of His mission; to bring the food of redemption that produces fellowship with God. Peace is the end product of salvation and only Jesus can give it.

In verse 38 and 39, Jesus said: “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of my Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.”

## **Is Not This The Carpenter's Son?**

The Jews begin to complain because Jesus said: "I am the bread which came down from heaven" (John 6:41). They protest: "is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?" In verse 48 and 49, Jesus reproved them saying: "I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead."

Perhaps many of them died with their stomachs full of manna. But Jesus is not talking about that kind of food. He is talking about a "bread" that if a man eats, he will live forever. "This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world" (John 6:50-51). You know He is not talking about physical food. "The bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." Now Jesus gave that flesh and He shed that blood on the cross of Calvary. Thus Jesus insists that any man who enjoys eternal life must assimilate by faith His sacrificial death on their behalf.

### **This Bread Does Not Relate To The Lord's Supper**

John, chapter 6, does not tie into the Lord's Supper. It is the Passover that builds the typology of the Lord's Supper; see Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-26; and especially Luke 22:14-23.

In John 6, Jesus is talking about the cross of Calvary where He gave His flesh in sacrifice; where He shed His blood. He did neither in the Upper Room when He instituted the Last Supper to Memorialize His crucifixion on Calvary. He did not shed His blood in the Upper Room. He did not give his flesh in the Upper Room. He gave His flesh on the cross of Calvary, and, therefore, Jesus said, "unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you" (John 6:53). He insists that they accept His sacrifice as the source of their fellowship with God. They must accept Calvary. They and we have to agree with God's judgment against our sin as it was borne by Christ on the cross.

## **Peace Obtained And Maintained By Christ**

But it is not only the cross of Calvary that gives peace and fellowship with God, but it is also that cross of Calvary that maintains it. One must “eat the flesh and drink the blood” of Jesus to receive spiritual life. And he must “keep eating His flesh and keep drinking His blood” to continue in that life. The verb tenses of verses 53-59 insist on the continued assimilation of the grace of Calvary to get and maintain spiritual union with the Father. It is essential that the Jews understand the figures Jesus is employing. His sacrificial death is the only true reality, not shadow, atonement for sin.

Therefore, he added: “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him” (John 6: 53-56).

## **Real Food And Real Drink**

The Hebrew peace offering was symbolic of the festive meal that Jesus would bring to the human family. As the Jews ate their peace offering sacrifice in a physical banquet in the courtyard of the tabernacle, so Jesus presents his sacrificial body and blood as the spiritual counterpart of the Hebrew peace offering. The Jews were more interested in the “bread” of loaves and fishes, than in the reality of the “bread of life.” They want the earth while Jesus is offering them heaven!

## **How Can He Give Up His Flesh?**

After this typology-fulfilling language of Jesus, the Jews really had a problem. “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?” (John 6:60). They ask, “How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?” And they pretend not to understand and they leave. But they well understood that they are not going to get any more loaves and fishes. Before they departed, Jesus said, “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe” (John 6:63-64).

## **The Message Is Spiritually Understood**

“The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). In other words, the message that I have given has spiritual application. The flesh doesn’t profit. Physical manna does not profit. Loaves and fishes do not profit. Simple fleshly existence does not profit. It is the spirit, the spiritual message that Jesus discussed that gives all of the profit. When these people left, Jesus turned to the apostles and asked them the question, “Do you also want to away? But Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life’ ” (John 6:67-68). There is the message that we need to remember out of the peace offering: Christ is our peace. That peace was acquired for us through the flesh and blood of Jesus’ sacrifice. We must consume by faith that redemptive offering Jesus gave on the cross.

When we consider the redeemed souls that now have peaceful fellowship with God through Christ’s sacrifice, it is easy to see why this was a “sweet savor” sacrifice—both in its prophetic, Levitical shadow, and in its typology fulfillment in Christ.

## THE LEVITICAL SIN OFFERING

Lesson eight will present the study of the sin offering and the specific category to which it belongs. There will be a different ritual that governs this sacrifice. Certainly there will be placed in evidence the logical applications directly made to Jesus Christ. There are significant changes in the ceremonial and even in the nature of the sacrifice of the sin offering. And though there are certain qualities or proceedings that are similar to the burnt offering and the peace offering, there are, nevertheless, significant differences that set this sacrifice apart from all the rest.

Having studied, in the previous lesson, the three “sweet savor” categories of sacrifices—the burnt, the grain, and the peace offerings—we now enter into a study of the “most holy” series of sacrifices. These are the sin, trespass, and the Day of Atonement offerings. Though they are not “sweet savor,” they are not to be despised for they are “most holy.”

The passages of scripture that explain the sin offering are found in Leviticus 4:1 through 5:13. Leviticus 6:24 through 30 and Numbers 15:21 and 22 are the basic passages of scripture that explain the nature of the atonement sacrifice.

### The Hattath

The name of the sin offering in Hebrew is *hattath*. Generally, it is required when there has been a violation of one of the first five of the Ten Commandments of the Law of Moses. In other words, sin violates the nature and divine rights of God. It is not a fragrant odor sacrifice. It does not belong to the sweet savor category because this sacrifice speaks of sin. It speaks of disobedience of those laws that defend the nature and dignity of God. And, therefore, it is not to be considered a sweet savor sacrifice, though there are isolated elements in the sacrifice that will be called “sweet savor.”

### Broken Fellowship

This sacrifice assumes that the fellowship between God and the individual has been broken because of the sin committed, and that person is no longer in covenant relationship with God or even with the nation of Israel. It is a sacrifice of atonement that

must be made before the restoration to fellowship with God can be obtained. Now we need to understand that in both the Old and New Testaments, sin is sin whether it is committed willingly—deliberately or willingly—or unwittingly in ignorance of the law. Whether it, the sin, involves voluntary disobedience of known law or involuntary wrong, atonement must be made before covenant relations can be restored.

### **Ignorance Of The Law Is No Excuse**

Even if the sin is not a flagrant disregard for God's nature, it is still a sin that requires atonement. Ignorance is no excuse for sin. Hebrews 5:2 tells us that the priests under the Law of Moses had to "deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray." There are two different categories of people. The individual that was ignorant was one who did not know the Law and yet violated it; he was still guilty. Those that were going astray knew they were going against the Law but violated that Law anyway.

### **All Sin Is A Chosen Course**

So, whether in Old or New Testament teaching on the subject, sin is always seen on the part of a man as a chosen course. If committed in ignorance of the Law or whether of willful disobedience of known law, man is held accountable for his actions.

An individual could not claim ignorance of the Law and then pretend exemption from the penalties and demands of the Law. One could conceivably refuse to study the Law of God, and then assume that he is not accountable because of his ignorance. But that would be a voluntary decision to remain untaught. So, in the final analysis, such a course would result in his refusal to be governed by God's revealed will in His Law.

Therefore, even ignorance of the Law is a chosen course. This is where the man who is agnostic makes his fallacious assumptions. He assumes that if he doesn't know about God, then he can escape any judgment by God. He simply chooses to remain untaught about God and his moral and religious government. His choice is still his choice, but it is evil in the sight of God.



## **Human Sin Is Not God's Fault**

One thing is evident; that sin is not a result of some kind of a built-in tendency on the part of man, constructed into him at creation. It is a chosen course. Otherwise, how would you explain the innocence of Jesus? He was innocent by choice just as surely as we are guilty by choice. Sin is not simply a defect in human nature, a programmed defect given in creation. There is no necessary built-in ingredient at creation that made us inevitably sinful. That would make God responsible for our wrong-doing.

## **Sin Is Not An Inheritance**

Too, it is evident that sin is not some kind of an evil inheritance that we receive from Adam. Each individual is innocent until he personally violates the Law of God. True, sin can be learned from others, but even then it is the result of one's personal decision. Paul said: "Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits" (I Corinthians 15:33). Peter discusses the "aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers" (I Peter 1:18). Such statements warn us to be cautious in the selection of our friends. The Bible knows nothing of inherited guilt. For confirmation, read Ezekiel 18:1-32. Particularly poignant are the words of verse 30: "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, says the Lord God." This truth is underscored in all Old and New Testament scriptures that deal with the subject.

## **High-Handed Sins**

Under the Law of Moses there were certain sins that were called high-handed sins. A high-handed sin is belligerent rejection of God's government. The high-handed sinner appears to double up his fist and shake it in the face of God; lift it up toward heaven and say: "I don't care what your law says; I'm going to do what I want to do." Under the Law of Moses there was no sacrifice or atonement for that kind of a sin. Deuteronomy 11:3-9; 17:6-7; and Leviticus 24:14 describe sins committed with a haughty spirit. Such a person was to be taken out of the gates of the city and stoned to death, thus losing fellowship with Israel and, most certainly, his fellowship with God. Even if the person were a close kin, or one's closest

friend, Leviticus 24 says that the people must show no piety, no mercy. In that way, God instructed them to remove sin from the nation of Israel. Sin contaminates those that are around. In Hebrews 10:28, the write said anyone who rejected the Law of Moses or, according to the Greek, considered it as nothing, died without mercy at the mouth of two or three witnesses.

But, if sins were committed in ignorance, not with rashness, perhaps because of stupidity, maybe because of weakness or waywardness, those sins could be covered by the sacrifice of atonement. Therefore, there was a difference between the sin of a high-handed attitude and those committed in ignorance.

### **Sin Offering—A New Sacrifice**

The sin offering and the trespass offering are new legislation for Israel. All other sacrifices that we have studied—the burnt offering, the grain offering, and the peace offering—existed before the Law of Moses, but there was one sin sacrifice, no trespass offering that was offered back during the patriarchal dispensation before the Law of Moses was given. There is no record of atonement sacrifices in the book of Genesis. Only mention is made of sacrifices by Job made just in case his sons had sinned (Job 1:5), but even in that case, the sacrifice was a burn offering.

There was no constituted order of priests back then who were expected to offer sacrifices. The patriarchs themselves functioned as priest for their extended families, as in the case of Job. There was no Tabernacle, no altar where that kind of sacrifice could be offered, though we do read of Abel, Noah, Abraham, and others building their altars and offering sacrifices. The absence of sin or trespass offerings during the pre-Mosaic age should not surprise us any more than the observation that Christians do not offer such sacrifices today.

### **Jesus Is The Only Sin Offering**

Of course, it is quite evident that animal sacrifices, even under the Law of Moses, did not remove the sin. Hebrews 10:4 and again in verse 10 tells us that it was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin. And yet those sin and trespass offerings of the Law were for atonement purposes. After the

sacrifices of the sin and trespass offerings were made, it is recorded that the individual was actually forgiven. Leviticus 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13, 16, 18 clearly state: "it shall be forgiven him." Evidently, he was not forgiven by animal blood, but he could not be forgiven without it. This may appear to be a contradiction, but only apparently so. Hebrews 9:22 affirms that according to the law, "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."

The Hebrew could not be forgiven without the sprinkling of the blood of his sacrificial substitute. It was his obedience to Divine command to offer the atoning sacrifice. Through that sacrifice was established the redemptive connection with the blood of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. God was able to forgive the Hebrew, not in virtue of animal blood, but rather in view of the future sacrifice at Calvary.

Romans 3:25 affirms that God "set forth as a propitiation by His blood ["satisfaction" says the Greek], through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed [committed beforehand]." The "beforehand" relates to the sins committed under the Law. Hebrews 9:15 affirms the same thing: "And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant."

### **Graded Responsibility**

There are different levels of accountability. It is evident that the religious and political position of the sinner created a greater or lesser sense of guilt. It made an enormous difference, not only in the consequences of those sins, but also in the kind of animal that was offered in the place that the blood was applied and in the disposition of the body of the animal. There were four different levels of responsibility.

### **The High Priest—Level One**

When an individual that is in a high place of authority in the nation of Israel commits a sin, then that has ramification that filter down to the entire nation. The High Priest is the number one individual in responsibility, because he is God's represent-

tative to Israel and Israel's representative to God. Therefore, he occupies a position of extreme importance and his sin could have repercussions that could involve the entire nation. He could commit a sin in such a way as to bring guilt on the entire nation. The sin of Aaron as the high priest, who led the children of Israel to build a golden calf, is one such example. It was a case of the high priest leading the nation into idolatry. He was the teacher of Israel and he could also cause the nation to stray from God in morals and in doctrine. Therefore, his sin carried more grievous consequences. He had been anointed before God as His special representative; he is called "the anointed priest" (Leviticus 4:3).

### **The Whole Congregation**

The second level of responsibility is the "whole Israelite community" (Leviticus 4:13). The high priest could lead the whole congregation into sin, but he would be the one most held accountable by God. In this second level the sin by the whole congregation could be committed against the protest of the high priest. The congregation could fall into idolatry. It would be possible for the whole nation to apostatize from God.

### **The Civil Ruler**

The third level of responsibility is the civil leader (Leviticus 4:22). That could be a ruler, a judge, one of the princes of Israel, and in later years, even the king. These civil leaders carried strong influences upon the nation and their sins were more significant.

### **A Common Member Of The Community**

The fourth level of responsibility was for the common Jew, what is called the commoner, the ordinary member of the Jewish community. And, therefore, the position or the rank of the person aggravated the sin committed and intensified the guilt and increased the obligation for atonement.

### **"And Begin At My Sanctuary"**

Those four levels of responsibility begin with the high priest. In Ezekiel, chapter 9, is presented clear evidence that God holds the

high priest responsible for the sins of the people. In that context God sends a man with a writer's kit, or writer's ink horn. God commands him to go throughout the city of Jerusalem and place a mark on the forehead of every individual in the city that moaned over the sins of the people in the city. He then sent out the avengers with their sword under the instructions to destroy and to slay every individual that did not have the mark on his forehead. Such unconcern over sin implies that those individuals who did not mourn over the sin must have agreed with the sin. They could have been involved in the commission of the sin.

The avengers were commanded to slay without pity: "... and begin at My sanctuary," says God. For that is where sin was most grievous in the sight of God. James warns, "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment" (James 3:1). Paul encourages Timothy to "Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you" (I Timothy 4:16). God's ministers are required to live more righteously and circumspectly for their teachings influence others either positively or negatively. See Matthew 15:14.

#### **Four Sacrificial Animals**

The four levels of responsibility dictated the kind of animal that would be used in the sacrifice. We notice that the first level is the high priest. His sacrifice had to be a bull. This was the most expensive and most highly appraised animal sacrificed in Israel. The implication is automatic. The more grievous the sin the greater the guilt; such demands more rigid atonement processes.

For the whole congregation also the bull was the animal that was required. The civil ruler's sacrifice had to be a male goat. For the common man, the sacrifice had to be a female goat.

#### **Provisions For The Poor Man**

In case the common man did not have a female goat he could provide a ewe lamb. Leviticus 5:7 tells us: "If he is not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring to the Lord, for his trespass which he has committed, two turtledoves or two young pigeons." Verse 11 adds: "But if he is not able to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then he who sinned shall bring

for his offering one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a sin offering.” Evidently, he was an extremely poor individual. A tenth of an ephah was about three quarts of ground flour.

Hebrews 9:22 affirms that without the shedding of blood, according to law of Moses, there was no remission sin. Of course, there is no blood in the tenth of a ephah of flour. But it was accepted in lieu of, or in the place of, the regular sin offering where blood would be offered. The fact is that God would accept this poor man’s sacrifice and then the priest would proceed to offer the blood-shedding sacrifice that would make atonement for his sin (Leviticus 5:13), and he would be forgiven. God made arrangements for the poor man. No man will be excluded from salvation simply because he did not have enough money to provide the animal that ordinarily would be required. No poor man is going to be excluded from redemption because of his poverty. Since the last alternate sacrifice of the poor man was a tenth of an ephah of fine flour, caution is taken in Leviticus 5 to distinguish it from the regular firstfruits sacrifices. “It is a sin offering” was stated three times.

### **The Sprinkling Of The Blood**

The sprinkling of the blood is different for the levels; at least for some of them. For the high priest, the blood was to be sprinkled on the horns of the altar of incense in the Holy Place. That ritualistic distinction will reappear later in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:24). When the blood is taken into the Holy Place, the body will be burned outside the camp. If it is not taken into the Holy Place, then other disposition will made of the body. But for the High priest the blood had to be sprinkled on the horns of the altar of sweet incense. That is the altar of prayer.

### **Horns Of The Altar Of Incense**

Those horns were the elevated part of the altar—the most Godward pointing part of the altar of sweet incense. The Jews were to be impressed with the fact of the centrality of atonement in the sin offering. The place of the sprinkling brings atonement to the forefront and imposes a greater sense of guilt atoned for there. Thus, the blood is brought closer and closer to the very residence of God. He symbolically resides behind that curtain of

separation between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place in the Hebrew Tabernacle. They called the Most Holy Place the *Shikenah*, the place of divine presence.

### **For The High Priest And The Congregation**

Both for the High Priest and the whole congregation the blood was sprinkled on the horns of the altar of sweet incense. Atonement was central to both levels. It is evident that when the sin of the High Priest brings guilt on the whole nation, or when the whole nation sins, atonement must assume a much more significant position in their theology and in their thinking.

### **For The Civil Ruler And The Common Man**

For the ruler, the blood was sprinkled on the horns of the altar of burnt offerings out in the courtyard of the tabernacle. And, of course, the horns of even that altar are pointing toward heaven, the real residence of God. The horns of both the altar of incense and of burnt offerings arose from each of the four corners of the altars. Once again, even for the civil ruler atonement is central in this sacrifice. It was not sprinkled as the blood of the burnt offering and of the peace offering at the base of the altar of burnt offerings. It was sprinkled on the horns of the altar. And the same is true for the commoner—on the horns of the altar of burnt offerings in the courtyard.

### **The Distribution Of The Body**

The laws regulating the distribution of the sacrificial body also demonstrate the gravity of sin for the High Priest and for the whole community. The levels of responsibility are built into the arrangements laid down for the disposal of the bodies of the sacrificial animals.

The writer of Hebrews will also built strong typology from the Levitical laws—typology which relates to Christ (Hebrews 13:11). Since the atoning blood of the two bulls sacrificed for the High Priest and the community was taken into the Holy Place, typology demanded that the bodies be burned outside the camp. Now in fulfillment of that typology or of that symbolism, the Hebrew writer adds: “Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate” (Hebrews

13:12). He was crucified outside the city of Jerusalem; a sign of rejection by the people who clamored for His crucifixion. The body of the bull for both the priest and the whole congregation was burned outside the camp. It was not placed upon the altar of burnt offerings and fumed or incensed unto God as a sweet savor. The fires of this sacrifice did not ascend unto God. The fires that consumed those bulls were the fires of *seraph*, the fires of divine vengeance upon the sin that been committed by such a great number of people in the nation of Israel. And therefore that sin sacrifice had to be burned outside the camp.

### **The Ruler's And The Community's Sacrifices**

For the civil ruler, the sacrificial body was not burned outside the camp. The blood was not taken into the Holy Place. The same is true for the common man. neither was the body placed upon the altar to be incensed unto God. The officiating priest was the one that received the body as his privileged portion out of the sacrifices offered to God. Leviticus 7:7 says the same law applies both to the sin and the trespass offering. It belongs to the priest that makes atonement with them. And so the priest will get this sacrificial body.

### **Eaten In The Courtyard Of The Tabernacle**

He doesn't need to remove the wave breast or the elevated thigh because he gets the whole animal. Now, Leviticus 6:29 tells us that all of the male priest of the Levitical family had the privilege of partaking of the resulting sacrificial banquet that was hosted by God. Though the sacrifice was not sweet savor, it was nevertheless most holy. It belongs to the officiating priest. And it was to be eaten in the Holy Place, or "in a holy place" as the Hebrew text says. That was in the courtyard of the tent of meeting—the Tabernacle, Leviticus 6:26 informs us.

The purpose of eating this sacrifice in the courtyard of the Tabernacle is basically the same as in the festive banquet of the peace offering. Only this time, there is a difference in the participants at the banquet. It is there where God is seen as the host of the sacrificial feast. God is once again conducting a festive banquet in celebration of the priest and and of his participation in the restoration of the ruler and commoner back into fellowship with Himself.



## **Heaven's Celebration Of Jesus' Sacrifice**

Maybe you can imagine the celebration that broke out in heaven when Jesus, the Great High Priest, had accomplished the redemptive process necessary for salvation to the human family of ages past, present, and future. When Jesus returned to heaven it is evident from the study of Revelation that all heaven broke out into festive celebration. Revelation 5:9-10: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God."

Evidently, God wants us to establish its typology, in shadow system, the glories of the future Messiah and His triumphant return to heaven after His atoning sacrifice had reconciled the family of men to God.

### **Stages Of The Ritual**

Let us again look at the stages of the sacrifice. There is the stage of presentation. It is evident that the purpose is different in this stage of presentation from the presentation stage of the burnt offering and of the peace offering. Here, the community of the individual is seeking atonement. The second stage is the laying on of hands, symbolically transferring the guilt incurred by the sin. The third stage introduces the first deviation in the ritual. There must be the confession of the specific sin that had been committed. Leviticus 4:4 tells us this sacrifice shall be offered at the door of the tent of meeting. Then the specific sin must be confessed. In the case of the whole congregation, the sins will be confessed by the elders of the various tribes.

Then, there will be the laying on of the hand. Again, in the event the whole congregation had committed a sin, the elders of each of the tribes would come and lay their hands on the sacrifice as representatives of the tribes. They, they would confess the specific sin that caused the apostasy of the nation from their fellowship with God. They, they would slay the sacrifice for basically the same purpose as God had intended in the other sacrifices—to concur with God's judgment against the sin. The blood would be sprinkled, then, by the priest in the way already explained, on the horns of the altar of incense or the altar of

burnt offerings according to the four levels of responsibility. And, then, the burning of the fat that would be presented as a fragrant odor unto God. His sweet savor portion of this sacrifice.

Though this sacrifice belongs to the “most holy” category and does not belong to the fragrant odor class, the fat is nevertheless a “pleasing aroma” to God. The reason being that the sinners have obviously repented. This has been publicly confessed. The atoning sacrifice has been offered and accepted. Forgiveness has been granted. Now the fat goes up before God as the only sweet savor portion of the sacrifice. He is pleased that fellowship has been restored between Himself and the sinner.

### **Disposition Of The Body**

The bodies of the sacrificial bulls for the high priest and the whole community are burned outside the camp. The bodies of the ruler’s sacrifice and that of the commoner’s are consumed by the priestly clan in the courtyard of the Tabernacle in a festive celebration. That completes the stages of the ceremonial of the sin offering.

### **The Sin Offering—Christ In Prophecy**

All of the Hebrew sacrifices contain evident predictions of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. There are several major passages of scripture in the New Testament that confirm the fact that Jesus is the one that fulfills all the sacrificial typology of the Old Testament. In II Corinthians 5:21, Paul said, “For He [God] made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” It was the sinless innocence of Christ that qualified Him to be our flawless sin sacrifice.

In Matthew 20:28, the apostles had been discussing again who was the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus, of course, indicated in that context that the greatest is he who became the servant: “just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” That word, “many,” stands for multitudes. In Matthew 26:28, in the institution of the Lord’s Supper, Jesus said, “For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” In I Peter 1:18-19, the apostle said: “knowing that you were not

redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot.” In I Peter 2:24, we are told by the apostle that Jesus: “who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.”

### **Jesus Bore The Penalty**

In Romans 8:1-2, the apostle said, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.” He goes on to explain that the Law, once violated, could not suspend its penalty of death. But God was able to transfer—not suspend—the penalty of our sin to Jesus on the basis of our obedient faith. So the apostle affirms that God did condemn our “sin in the flesh” in Jesus. That is the reason there “is now no condemnation” for us in verse one. It is simply because there was “condemnation of our sin in Jesus” in verse three. God had “sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering.

So it was in the sin offering of Christ that God condemned our sin. God treated Him as though He had committed those sins. Isaiah 53:5 had said: “The chastisement for our peace was upon Him.” He bore the consequences of all of our wrongs. Hebrews 9:14 assures us that Jesus was a lamb without blemish to cover the sins of the world.

The sacrifice of Christ covered all the sins of all men of all ages, not just the Jewish age or Christian age. Matthew 1:21 explains why he was named Jesus. It is because “He will save His people from their sins.” And His people include the redeemed of all ages. In John 1:29, in introducing Jesus to His disciples, John the Baptist said: “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” It seems that the forerunner of Jesus rolled the innumerable sins of the whole world into one great package—called “the sin.” Then, he affirms that it is Jesus, as the God-provided substitute, that would bear that sin.

## THE TRESPASS OFFERING

In this lesson we will present the trespass offering, more frequently called the guilt offering. This study will come from Leviticus 5:14-19; 6:1-7; 7:1-7, and Numbers 5:8-9. This study will explain the trespass offering, its peculiar ritual, and the obligations of strict justice it demands. The whole sacrifice was built around the concept of strict moral justice. It was the eye for an eye kind of justice that was demanded under the Law. And the, of course, we will look at Christ as the fulfillment of the guilt offering.

The trespass offering generally was commanded when an individual violated one of the last five of the Ten Commandments—these commands were of a social nature. The sin offering was required in those that violated the first five—those commands that related to God’s personal nature. Trespasses violate God’s government, as particularly related to commandments six to ten.

### **The *Asham***

The name of the trespass offering was called *asham*; literally it means a guilt or a debt because all wrong doing creates moral responsibility and indebtedness. Those who trespass cannot be right before God until the wrong has been made fully right in the eyes of the individual that has been trespassed against.

Now, this offering assumes that the wrong that was done to a neighbor broke the fellowship with God and, of course, with the people of Israel. Leviticus 6:2 says: “If a person sins and commits a trespass against the LORD by lying to his neighbor about what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or about a pledge, or about a robbery” implying that all wrongs against the neighbor are also wrongs against God.

This is true because the trespass is a violation of His government. Such actions result in the individual’s loss of fellowship with God. He is a spiritually lost man. That means he cannot participate in any of the sacrifices or the worship activities that take place at the Tabernacle. He is not a participant at worship; his worship is not longer acceptable unto God. He is in a state of alienation.

## **Restoration To Fellowship**

Restoration to fellowship on the part of that individual is required before he can be readmitted to religious functions and communion with God. This sacrifice also belongs to the category of the “most holy sacrifices.” There is nothing sweet savor about this sacrifice as was characteristic of the burnt and peace offerings. The trespass offering belongs to the same category as the sin offering; that is, most holy in nature.

### **Only For Individuals**

Right relationships between Hebrew and Hebrew must exist before an individual can be restored to right relationship with God. The trespass offering was offered only by individuals. There was no such thing as a collective trespass. It was not likely that every Hebrew would get up on morning and steal from every other Hebrew. And, so trespass offerings always involved the individual. There were no graded levels of responsibility in the trespass offering. Whether civil ruler, priest, king, or common man, the demands of justice are equal. This is also emphasized in the fact that there was only one animal that was allowed for the man who commits a trespass—a male sheep was always required. There was no provision for alternate animals for the poor man. Every trespass demanded the ram and only the ram. Such invariable demands seem to imply that poverty is no excuse for stealing or any other kind of social abuse.

### **Invasion Of Another Man’s Rights**

Trespasses always imply the violation or invasion of the rights and the properties of another person. As we mentioned, it was not possible for the whole nation to simultaneously commit a trespass. There were national sin offerings. The great Day of Atonement was offered annually on behalf of the entire nation—with individual participation. But the trespass offering was never offered congregationally or by the nation as a whole.

### **Respect For The Rights Of Others**

Under the Law, the rights and properties of other people had to be respected. And, since God is one of those persons, then this

Law demands that everyone respects His rights, too. It was normally considered that if an individual has trespassed or wronged God, he must offer the sin offering. But here is a trespass offering that is offered when an individual has wronged God. His firstfruit offerings, his claim on the tithe of everything must be respected for, after all, he is a person.

### **Robbing From God**

Maybe, for example, a man might eat some of the holy things that would belong to God or drink some of the drink offerings that had been given to him (Leviticus 22:14-15). In Joshua 7:1, there is an example of the sin of Achan. He took a wedge of gold from the city of Ai—gold which God had already claimed for himself. That was a case of stealing from God. In II Chronicles 28:22-23, the act of idolatry is a trespass against God; it deprives God of the worship He has a right to expect from His people.

In Malachi 3:8, God asks a very sobering question of the children of Israel. “Will a man rob God?” Quite evidently, the answer is “yes,” because that is exactly what Israel was doing in the days of Malachi. How could they rob God? By failing to give the full tenth that was required of the firstfruits and of the animals. Or, maybe offering in sacrifice to God animals that were defective or wounded or about to die anyway. God, in that context of Malachi, said: “Offer in then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably” (Malachi 1:8)? Acceptable sacrifices to God are those that respect His nature. And, they are given from hearts that are in tune with the dignity of His person.

### **Some Examples Of Trespasses Against Man**

Leviticus 6:1ff explains that trespasses always involve the violation of the rights of another person. So there are presented a few examples of some of the ways in which an individual might violate his neighbor’s rights. Number one is deceiving a neighbor about something entrusted to him. In other words, the neighbor has asked a man to take care of some of his possessions or maybe loaned him some possessions. And, the man then abusively used his neighbor’s property. Maybe his livestock was entrusted to a neighbor and the neighbor sold one of the

cows or perhaps even ate the animal. Now that is abusing a neighbor's property. Another trespass might be to unlawfully use possessions knowing that it belonged to someone else. Again, if something has been sold to someone and in the transaction the object sold was falsely represented, thus taking advantage of the other's lack of knowledge—that was a trespass. It might be a matter of a bargain or sale whereby another's money or goods are abusively taken.

### **Stealing From A Neighbor**

Another example of trespassing against your neighbor would be involved in stealing property. Any deed by which another individual's possessions are taken without payment or without his consent is wrong. It is a trespass against your neighbor. Deuteronomy 27:17 said that removing your neighbor's landmarks would be a trespass against your neighbor. In other words, the property line is marked by sign posts. The moving of the posts in such a way to gain part of the neighbor's property is a subversive form of stealing.

Unpaid debt is another example of trespassing against your neighbor. In other words, when one owes his neighbor money and he has promised to pay him by a certain date, failure to meet that date is wrong. If the man doesn't have the money, generally, the last person he wants to see is his neighbor, but the first person he ought to see is his neighbor. From the moment the money is due, if it is not paid, then he is holding his neighbor's money without his consent.

### **Oppressing The Neighbor**

An individual that would cheat his neighbor or oppress his neighbor by withholding wages from a man who had labored all day would be committing a transgression. Sometimes it was necessary for a man to use his wages earned that day to buy the food that his family would eat that night. Again, failing short of an agreement that had been made was a trespass. These are just some of the ways in which it would be possible, according to Leviticus 19:13ff, to take advantage of one's neighbor. Taking advantage of his extreme condition of need would be abusing him. It was wrong to force him to sell something cheaper than its actual worth.

## **Lost And Found**

If an individual were to find lost property and then were to take possession of it and use it and abuse it, lie about it, swear falsely about it—that is an abuse of your neighbor. it is a trespass. The owner is deprived abusively of his possession. The finder knew that it was not his. There is a general rule that if one finds something and he doesn't know whose it is, he can be sure it is not his.

But under the Law of Moses a man had no right to claim it and to use it as if it were his own. Deuteronomy 22:1-2 demanded that lost property must not be ignored. If one sees his neighbor's cattle straying, he is required to pen it and hold it until the neighbor comes to seek after it and then it must be restored. In the meantime the finder must treat that animal as he would one of his own.

## **Restitution And Satisfaction**

The central theme of the trespass offering was strict justice. Restitution and satisfaction were demanded as a part of the ritual that preceded the atonement exercise of the trespass offering. Restitution demanded that the property first be restored. Numbers 5:7 says that he must make full restitution of the loss. If the owner is dead and a man had stolen from him and now wants to repent of the wrong that he did in the stealing, then he must make restitution to God through the priest. He obviously cannot make restitution to the dead man. So Numbers 5:8 says that he must make restitution to God before the writing has been made right. Then, after restitution, satisfaction must be given.

Satisfaction comes about by adding one fifth to the value of the animal taken, the property destroyed, or abused. That would be twenty percent, a double tithe, that would be added to the price of restoration. So restitution demands that the animal or the property be restored and then twenty percent be added to that as a kind of an addendum, an additional amount of money. Leviticus 5:15 tells us that the repayment and the twenty percent stood as a fine that was attached to the restitution. The double tithe had to be given according to the shekel of the sanctuary. That means the payment was to be given from full weight shekels like those used in the annual tax of the Hebrew people.



## **Personal Loss Was Not Ignored**

The twenty percent was considered as recompense to the one damaged for the loss. The owner had been deprived of his possession and the employment and use of it. The guilty must recognize no profit from wrong doing. And, then, he must appease the owner for the loss that was done to him and to satisfy the demands of justice in the eyes of the individual that had been offended. Whether the sin was committed wittingly or unwittingly does not change the ordinance. It is difficult to believe that a man could steal his neighbor's property, sell it abusively, lie about it when the neighbor asked him if he had seen his property, and then swear falsely to the fact: "No, I haven't seen it." It would be difficult for us to believe that he could do that without intent. Quite evidently, this was a malicious, voluntary sin that was committed. Deceiving one's neighbor was wrong, and so restitution and satisfaction had to be made.

## **Not Yet Right With God**

When the restitution and satisfaction had been fully made, the guilty man is now right with his neighbor, but he is not yet right with God. Restitution restores the relationship on the social level, but only atonement can restore the relationship on a religious level. He must offer the sacrifice of the trespass offering. Only then, according to Leviticus 6:7, "he shall be forgiven."

## **The Eye For An Eye And Tooth For Tooth**

The trespass offering is based on the law of equal justice. It is the basis of the law that is called the "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"—rigid, strict justice. In Exodus 21:23-25, if there is a serious injury, the Law demands that the Hebrews take "life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." Leviticus 24:17-22 adds fracture for fracture (that is, a broken bone), animal for animal, and what he did to others, must be done to him.

Deuteronomy 25:1-3 seems to establish punishment for the individual that has trespassed against his neighbor where no

monetary value or property loss can be assessed. Possibly the case deals with slander, abusive language, or pettiness in dealing with one's neighbor. In such cases the individual must go to court before the judge or the priest. And they will hand down the decision. The decision may demand some physical punishment. It is not of a monetary nature because there is nothing to be restored.

### **Forty Stripes Was The Limit**

The individual might receive the imposition of corporal punishment in the form of lashes (stripes) with a whip. The limit of the stripes that could be given was forty, they had to be administered in the presence of the judge. They were not to exceed forty stripes. The Jews generally stopped at thirty-nine lest they exceed the limit that was imposed. Maybe less could be given, but not more. And they reason they were not to exceed the forty stripes was lest "your brother be humiliated in your sight." The purpose is not to make him appear vile. The purpose was for correction, not for vengeance. And, if an individual were to keep beating the individual that did him wrong beyond the forty stripes, then he evidently was set on personal vengeance.

### **An Unrighteous Witness**

Deuteronomy 19:15-19 insists that every man prove his claim against his neighbor. It states that: "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established. If a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing, then both men in the controversy shall stand before the Lord, before the priests, and the judges who serve in those days. And the Judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother, then you shall do to him as he sought to have done to his brother, so you shall put away the evil from among you."

Deuteronomy 17:8-13 addresses litigations which some times arise that are too difficult for brothers to settle. Some lawsuit or some assault is involved here. They cannot settle the matter, and so they will go to the judge or the priest and they will inquire and then they will vindicate the righteous and condemn the

wicked. Then they will hand down the decision that must be followed. The party involved must act according to the decision that they give. Do not turn to the right hand or to the left hand. He must meet the tenor and the spirit of the law.

This context says that the man who shows contempt for the judge or for the priest is acting foolishly and presumptuously. He must respect the office they represent. They are ministering there to God and their decision represent God's decision. The penalty is God's decision and if anyone rejected God's decision, then that man must be stoned to death! In that way Israel purged itself of such presumptuous sin as rebellion against God's judgments. God's laws cannot be ignored with impunity. All God's judgments are righteous and must be acted upon by all men who see His favor.

### **The Ceremony of the Trespass Offering**

Let us look at the stages of the ceremony of the trespass offering. This is the only sacrifice where the first stage is not that of presentation. The demands of justice must be met before the presentation of the animal for atonement is to be made. For a man cannot be right before God when he is wrong before his neighbor.

#### **The First Stage—Restitution And Satisfaction**

The first stage demanded justice because justice precedes the acceptance of atonement. As long as justice has not been vindicated, there can be no atonement. And so, the individual has to make restitution in full, according to Numbers 5:7. And then, satisfaction must be made by adding the twenty percent fine—the additional amount as fine to give satisfaction to the person that was abused by the trespass. As in the sin offering, the second stage must involve the confession of the specific trespass committed. It seems that the confession must be publicly made. It is interesting to note that there is no laying on of the hands on the head of the victim in the sacrifice. The reason probably is attributed to the fact that the restitution and satisfaction had taken care of the major issues that were involved in the wrong done. Too, the open and public confession is an acknowledgement of the fact of the sin that had violated the neighbor's rights. It stood as evidence that he wanted to make all things right.

Then, in stage three, there was the slaying of the sacrifice and that was done, of course, as in the sin offering and all of the other blood-shedding sacrifices. As before, there is the manifest conviction on the part of the individual that he is in agreement with God's penal judgments against his trespass. In other words, he had to carry out the sacrificial slaying so that he could manifest in that way his agreement with heaven's judgment against his wrong.

### **Again—Marginal Atonement**

Then, in stage four, the priest will sprinkle the blood on the sides of the altar of burnt offerings. Interestingly enough, in the sin offering to atone for actions against God, the blood had to be sprinkled on the horns of the altar of burnt offerings or on the horns of the altar of sweet incense in the Holy Place. But, in this sacrifice, the blood is sprinkled around the base of the altar on the lower half of the altar, indicating that atonement is secondary.

We will notice that restitution and satisfaction have taken care of the major issues of offended justice. The open and the public confession of the trespass indicates that the individual is trying to right the wrong and, therefore, he has agreed with God's judgment in the slaying of his sacrifice. And, therefore, the sprinkling of the blood will bring about what is called marginal atonement.

### **Fuming "Sweet Savor" Fat To The Lord**

Then, in stage five, the fat will be removed from the sacrifice, placed upon the altar of the burnt offerings, and then it will be incensed or fumed unto God. And, once again, as in the fat of the sin offering, this will go up before God as his "sweet savor" portion of the sacrifice. It is evident that atonement has been made, forgiveness has been given, fellowship has been restored, and God expresses His pleasure by accepting the fat as sweet savor. It smells good to God when His people have done wrong, then right the wrong and return in repentance seeking fellowship with God. God grants it. They are forgiven. Only after atonement has been accepted does the fat become sweet savor. Then, the last stage of the sacrifice will involve the disposition of the body. As in the sin offering, so also is the trespass offering. Leviticus 7:7 says that the law of the sin

offering and the law of the trespass offering are the same. There is one law for both of them. The priest who is officiating at the altar receives the sacrificial body as a gift from God. And, of course, it is to be eaten in the courtyard of the Tabernacle (Leviticus 7:6). Once again, God is seen celebrating and hosting a festive banquet for His priests. They have been participant in the processes of restoration of a man that had strayed from God and is now restored to fellowship. All the priests of the Levitical tribe could participate in the feast.

### **Major Lessons From The Trespass Offering**

Now there are some major lessons that we need to learn from the trespass offering. Perhaps the most important lesson to be learned is that a man can trespass against God. He can rob God by depriving Him of the worship, the service, and the offerings of his life and substance that God rightfully demands.

In the sin offering, it is faith that a man expresses toward God's willingness to forgive his sin when the proper sacrifice is made. But in the trespass offering it seems to be that repentance is the major issue for the offender. He must bring forth the fruits that are worthy of repentance to borrow the language of Matthew 3:8. Of course, faith is demanded in the trespass offering as well as the sin offering. But the trespass offering demands more than simple faith. It demands repentance. Another lesson we learn from the trespass offering is that with the sacrifice or without the sacrifice, a man is not right with God until he has made things right with his neighbor. One cannot be right with his neighbor with the neighbor's money still in his pocket.

It does not matter what station an individual occupies, what office he holds, or what economic level he occupies; that does not in any way attenuate his guilt. God's justice and righteousness are to be defended in the trespass offering. Now, the priest or the judge will hand down God's decision; a man must bow himself to that decision or else he dies.

### **Jesus And His Demands Of Justice**

A beautiful lesson to be learned from the trespass offering is found in Matthew 5:23-24. Jesus said, "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has

something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” Evidently, you have trespassed against your brother. Taking care of the demands of justice must precede acceptable atonement sacrifices before God.

The Jesus adds: “Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown in prison. Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny” (Matthew 5:25-26). Jesus is building the moral demands from the passages demanding strict justice in the Law of Moses.

Jesus insists that it is best to give in to the initial demands of the offended neighbor as he evaluates the damage. For if the matter goes to the judge, or priest, then their decision could be more rigid. And, whatever the judge’s decision, it must be accepted or face the penalty of death. If the offender does not have the resources to pay, then he will become an indentured servant, perhaps with his entire family, to the one he offended until the debt is fully paid.

### **Jesus—Our Trespass Offering**

Now, quite evidently, Jesus is the one that has covered all of our trespasses. Isaiah 53:10: “... You make His soul an offering for sin.” says the Hebrew. In verse 11, God will see His sacrifice and therewith be “satisfied.” In the word “satisfied” is contained the Biblical doctrine of propitiation; the doctrine of satisfaction. There are many passages of scripture that indicate to us that God’s Law demands satisfaction: Romans 3:21; Hebrews 2:17; I John 2:2; 4:10. And, of course, Jesus is the satisfaction. He more than pays the guilt. In II Corinthians 5:19, we read that God was in Christ on the cross, “reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them.” Jesus bore the guilt; He covered the debt and accepted the penalty in His sacrifice on the cross of Calvary.

## **NADAB AND ABIHU**

Lesson ten will present the tragic events surrounding the death of Nadab and Abihu, the oldest two sons of Aaron, the High Priest. They committed several grievous sins that more than justified God's severe judgment against them that day. The event is recorded in Leviticus 10:1-20, and mention is made of it again in Leviticus 16 and again in Numbers 3:4-5. It involves considerable historical background that needs to be studied in order to understand the total context. Let us look at the background just for a moment.

### **A Very Special Day**

The circumstances relating to the events of that day make it a very special day. Leviticus 10 is not an ordinary day in Hebrew history. Chronologically it ties in with Exodus 40:34-38. There had been extensive preparations of the materials that went into the building of the Tabernacle.

On that day all of the materials had been accumulated, the Tabernacle had been erected, and had been inspected by Moses. He had received detailed instructions on the pattern of the Tabernacle when he was on the mountain receiving the Law. And God had warned him that everything must be built according to the pattern given. When the Tabernacle was finished, inspected, and approved by Moses as fitting the pattern, it was ready for inauguration into use.

Suddenly, there came a cloud from heaven that descended upon the Tabernacle and the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle, said Exodus 40:34. That indicated that God had taken up His symbolic residence in the presence of Israel. That was the specific moment in Leviticus 10 that ties in to the events of this particular day. It was inauguration day. It was the day that Moses would inaugurate the use of the Tabernacle as the place where atonement and worship sacrifices were to be conducted.

### **Inauguration Of Aaronic And Levitical Priesthood**

The priests, Aaronic and Levitical, had just been ordained and they were ready to begin their functions. The sacrifices had been explained and the whole series of offerings had been prepared.

They were ready for the celebrations of that day. The whole nation was present for the inauguration of the Tabernacle, the priests, and the sacrifices.

### **Garments For Glory, Beauty, And Holiness**

Aaron and his sons were dressed in the garments that had been specifically prepared for them. According to Exodus 28:2-3, their “holy garments for glory and for beauty” had been prepared by men and women especially endowed by God with the skills to make their special clothing for the consecration ceremonies.

They were to function as representatives of heaven to earth. So their garments reflected their sacred roles. Moses was ready to finish the ceremonies of consecration of Aaron and his sons into their priestly office.

### **The Oils Of Consecration**

To officially install Aaron and his sons into their priestly office required considerable ceremonials. The first part of the ceremony, described in Leviticus, chapters 8 and 9, found Moses pouring the oils of consecration on the head of Aaron and on his sons. The anointing oils were also placed on their right ear lobes, then on the thumbs of their right hands, and finally on the big toes of their right feet. The purpose of such apparent extensive use of the oils of consecration was to sanctify their head, ears, hands, and feet. The head represented their thinking toward God, their ears to hear the revelations of God, the hands to serve before God, and their feet to walk in God’s holy presence.

### **The Ram Of The Sin Offering**

Then Moses prepared the ram of the sin offering for Aaron and his sons. He took the blood of the ram and did with the blood exactly as he had done with oil. He placed it on the ear, the thumb, and the big toe of the right foot. The purpose was not to consecrate, but to purify. Their entire bodies were cleansed of sin so as to qualify for service before Jehovah. Hebrews 7:27 affirms that the priests first had to offer atonement sacrifices for themselves and then for the people.



## **All Israel Is Assembled**

As mentioned, the whole congregation of Israel was assembled outside the courtyard of the Tabernacle. Aaron and his sons began offering the complete repertoire; the total series of Levitical sacrifices. They take the burnt offering and lay it on the altar in the courtyard of the Tabernacle. They offered the sacrifice of the peace offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering. They remove the fat from those animals and place them in appropriate fashion on the altar.

## **God Takes Up His Residence In The Tabernacle**

God had symbolically taken up residence in the Tabernacle, more specifically in the Holy of Holies. The external signs of His presence were the pillar of fire by night and the column of smoke by day, both ascending into heaven. Those signs were always visible to all the tribes of Israel. Then, immediately, tying in with the context of Exodus 40:36ff, fires came from the presence of God and consumed the sacrifices and the fat that were on the altar of burnt offerings. This event is described in Leviticus 9:24: "When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces." That was the very moment that Nadab and Abihu began their ill-fated actions.

When God took up His residence in the Tabernacle, that was an evident sign that He accepted its structure as faithfully adhering to the pattern He had given Moses. And when God Himself lit the fires on the altar, it was an evident sign that He had accepted the Aaronic priesthood and the sacrifices they offered. All the people fell face down in evident reverence and praise for God's presence with them.

## **The Unfolding Of The Story**

Now that was the specific moment in which Nadab and Abihu took their censers, placed fire in them, added the incense, and then offered it "before Jehovah." And, just as the fires had come out from the presence of the Lord and had consumed the sacrifice of the burnt offering and the fat upon the altar, now fire comes from before Jehovah and consumes the two sons of Aaron. And they died before the Lord. The fires did not

consume their clothing, for a little bit later their kinsmen came into the Tabernacle and carried them outside the camp, the text says, “by their tunics” (Leviticus 10:5).

### **Their Sins Were Not Trivial**

The sins of Nadab and Abihu may appear to us to have been trivial; maybe a mistake in judgment. And the actions of God may appear to have been harsh, arbitrary, and even excessively heavy. Could not He have used a little bit of tolerance, shown a little more mercy on this day? But the sins of Nadab and Abihu were much more grievous than they appear on the surface. Their sins were many; therefore God had to intervene. Remember, this was the day the Tabernacle, the priests, and their sacrifices were all inaugurated. No abuse of the orders regulating those three aspects of Hebrew worship and atonement could be tolerated. No change of ceremonials could be allowed. No one could justify personalized and totally unauthorized revisions in God’s ordinances. If God had allowed such arbitrary innovations on that most significant day, then it would have been difficult for Him to govern the proceedings of the people from that generation forward.

### **Ceremonial Presumption Is Grievous**

While the whole congregation is bowed in reverence before God, Nadab and Abihu, it appears, glibly, without any caution whatsoever, rushed into the Holy of Holies. They rushed in where angels fear to tread. There was a precedent in Exodus 19:24 that should have taught proper respect for God. In that context, God was ready to appear on Mount Sinai to give the Law to Moses. He instructed Moses to put boundaries around the mountain and to charge the people that they not come up to the mountain. The purpose was so that lest the people “break through to gaze at the LORD, and many of them perish. Also let the priests, who come near the Lord, consecrate themselves, lest the Lord break out against them” (Exodus 19:21-22).

God’s appearance on the mountain was not an occasion for curiosity nor for gawking at the presence of Jehovah. Exodus 19 even insists that if an animal were to touch that mountain he was to be stoned to death. The all Holy God was coming down into the presence of the children of Israel, a sinful nation. God

instructed Moses, “You go down and tell the people not to come up.” And Moses replied, “We have already done this.” And God says, “Go and do it again.” He did not want any sinful man to walk brazenly into His presence for the purposes of curiosity or for any giddy reason. It appears such “forced” presence before God by Nadab and Abihu well defines the reasons God “broke out against them.”

### **Strange Fire**

Let us look at some of the sins Nadab and Abihu committed. Not only were they unauthorized in their actions, they also engaged in ceremonials “contrary to God’s command” by offering “strange fire before the Lord,” and that in a place where they should not have been. “Strange fire” simply means fire that was not authorized. That word “strange” comes from the Hebrew word *zar*, which is consistently used in their language to indicate anything that was unauthorized.

### **Authorized Fires**

Normally, the fires that were to be placed in the censers for the offering of incense—a symbol of prayer— were to be taken from the altar of burnt offerings in the courtyard. Remember, those were the fires that Jehovah had lit. And those were the fires that were to be used and only those fires. Nadab and Abihu had obviously gotten fire from some other source. In Leviticus 16:12, it is clear that on the Day of Atonement Aaron was to take the fires from the altar of burnt offerings for the purpose of burning incense to God.

In Numbers 16:46, during the uprising or the rebellion of Korah and his company, God opened the earth and swallowed them alive and they went down to death because they had dared to rise up against Aaron, God’s appointed priest. There were a number of people that began to die around the Tabernacle. God instructed Moses on that occasion to separate himself from Korah “lest you die.” Moses commanded Aaron to take fires from the altar of burnt offerings with which to burn incense before Jehovah so that his wrath may be abated.

Exodus 30:9 insists that the altar of incense and the fires God demanded be respected. “You shall not offer strange incense on

it.” Exodus 30:33 is quite clear, “Whoever compounds any like it [incense], or whoever puts any of it on an outsider, shall be cut off from his people.” No strange incense, no strange priest, and no strange fires were to be allowed by God. None of those had any part of God’s patterns contained in the Law of Moses. In Numbers 16:40, no one except a descendent of Aaron should come to offer the incense before Jehovah. And “no one” means no unauthorized person. Now God had lit those fires and it was those fires that he intended as the source of the coals used for burning incense. Remember, from Leviticus 6:10-13, those were the fires that were never to go out.

### **Before Jehovah**

Nadab and Abihu were wrong to offer incense with fires that God had not authorized. But that was just the beginning of their sins. They offered the incense in the wrong place. It was said they “offered profane fire before the LORD” (Leviticus 10:1). “Before the Lord” is terminology that had already been used in the historical context of that day. Leviticus 9:24 used the same language to define the origin of the fires that consumed the sacrifices on the altar. Such language seems to imply that the words “before the Lord” refer to His residence in the Holy of Holies.

Nadab and Abihu must have walked into the Holy of Holies, into the immediate, symbolic presence of God. Numbers 3:4 indicates that they had gone into the Holy of Holies and that they died there “before the Lord.” Leviticus 16:1-2 is very clear in its description of what Moses meant when he used the term “before the Lord.” The warnings given in chapter 16 seem to be based on the tragedy surrounding the case of Nadab and Abihu.

“The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered profane fire before the LORD, and died; and the LORD said to Moses: ‘Tell Aaron your brother not to come at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die’ ” (Leviticus 16:1-2). His two sons had died for having done that very thing.

Wrong fire, wrong place, wrong priests—everything surrounding their actions was wrong! According to the arrangement of the furnishings of the Tabernacle, the normal place for offering incense was in the Holy Place. The only exception was

on the Day of Atonement. But the events of Leviticus 10 were not on the Day of Atonement. There was a veil of separation between the outer court and the Holy Place and another veil of separation between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. And those veils were there to keep unauthorized personnel from drawing near to God—those veils were not to be ignored! The veils were not to be penetrated by anyone that had not been chosen and strictly informed by God about the services they were to render.

### **The Veils Represented The Sin Problem**

Both from Leviticus and from the book of Hebrews, it is clear that those veils of separation represented the sin problem. Until sin had been removed at the cross of Calvary those veils stood to interdict the entrance of sinful man into the presence of the sinless God. When Christ had paid the penalty for sin in His death, the veil of separation between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place in the Hebrew temple was rent in two by Christ. The rending of the veil at Jesus' death signaled that He had fully solved the sin problem.

But the sin problem had not been solved in the days of Nadab and Abihu, and their actions seemed to completely ignore why God had designed those veils in the structure of the Tabernacle. There were two cherubim woven into the fabric of each curtain of the Tabernacle. They were the heavenly avengers of God, those who were the appointed guardians of God's holiness. Cherubim were also placed at the east of Eden to prohibit Adam and Eve to re-enter the Garden of Eden after their fall, to partake of the Tree of Life and thus live forever in their rebellion to God (Genesis 3:24).

### **“Contrary To His Command”**

The Hebrew simply states that the two priests had offered incense “which God commanded them not.” Quite evidently, God had given specific instruction about the rituals to be carried out on that day. And there were instructions relating to the burning of incense by them. Nadab and Abihu ignored the instructions of God. They made up their own patterns and they began to do as they wanted. Therefore, God intervened and punished their rash, presumptuous actions with their death.

## **It Is A Sin To Act Without Command**

In religious matters, particularly those which relate to the worship of God, it is as abusive in the sight of God to act without command as it is to act against command. The most evident thing Nadab and Abihu could have concluded was that if God had wanted them to offer incense, He would have commanded that it be done. It is not easy to determine just where the prohibition of the Hebrew text of Leviticus 16:1 should be placed. The says: "which He had not commanded them."

The absence of command may have related to the offering of incense in the first place. It may have related to the unauthorized first that were not commanded. Or, it may have related to the two priests themselves who were not assigned to the functions of the incense, if such had been commanded on that day. There was an entire series of unauthorized activity by the two.

So, quite evidently, God had given commands and they had ignored them. Then, God had not given other commands and they made up their own programs. And both of those actions are presumptuous sins that cannot be ignored on the part of God. Hebrews 9:1 affirms that "even the first covenant had ordinances [regulations] of divine service and the earthly sanctuary." The word for "regulation" in the Greek suggests that God's Word carried the force of law, an ordinance relating to legal and judicial decisions. Such terminology simply affirms that it is God who established the norms and rituals of worship under the Old Testament system. From this episode in Leviticus 10 it is clear that He does not well countenance His servants trifling with His ordinances.

## **The High Priest Alone**

On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest alone entered into the Holy of Holies. In Leviticus 16:2, Moses instructed Aaron: "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die." The sins of Nadab and Abihu cause God to warn Aaron. He must not think that he can jump up and run into the Holy of Holies any time he chooses. If he were to enter, other than the specified time, he would die as, in fact, Nadab and Abihu did.

Leviticus 16:17 demanded: “There shall be no man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Holy Place, until he comes out,.” God was to appear in the cloud on the mercy seat. That was the place that the Hebrews referred to as the “*Shikénah* Glory,” the place of the glory of Divine presence. And so the warning, quite obviously, grew out of the death of Nadab and Abihu. And Aaron was not to enter the Most Holy Place “whenever he chooses” (Leviticus 16:2-).

These restrictions are built into the strong redemptive typology that will later be understood in the book of Hebrews and amply explained. The functions of the High Priest alone on the Day of Atonement described in Leviticus 16 were quite symbolic of the fact that Jesus Christ Himself will later accomplish the redemptive process alone. Jesus did not have a twin or a brother like Nadab or Abihu to assist Him in the redemption accomplishment. He accomplished it by Himself. Tragically, Nadab and Abihu had gone into the Holy of Holies as a committee. But Jesus did not have a committee to help Him when He accomplished the fulfillment of the typology that was inaugurated for the Day of Atonement. Not only was Jesus seen in the sacrifices of that day, but also in the ceremonial activity conducted by Aaron on that day.

### **Were Nadab And Abihu Drunk?**

There is another possible sin of Nadab and Abihu. They might have been drunk. In Leviticus 10:9, after they had been burned, Aaron is told by God “Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die.” There is strong indication seems to explain why those two sons died. God did not want Aaron to commit the same sin that Nadab and Abihu had. Why would God interrupt the ceremonies of the day of inauguration just to give the warnings about drinking wine—unless it had some relationship with sins of Nadab and Abihu? There must have been some connection.

### **The Holy And The Common**

Then there is another fact that needs to be brought into the picture. In Leviticus 10:10, God said to Aaron: “that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean

[profane] and clean.” The “holy” belonged to God; the “profane” could be used for common purposes. When the Hebrews brought their *nasik* (the drink offerings of their firstfruits), it was never intended for priestly consumption. The Hebrew word *nasik* simply means that which is poured out at the altar of burnt offerings to God. It was always a sin for anyone to consume any of the firstfruits that belonged to God. That was studied under the discussions relative to the trespass offering. God told Aaron in verse 10 that he must distinguish between the holy and the common—a fact that obviously Nadab and Abihu did not do. But Nadab and Abihu seemed to have drunk the drink offering on that day. And they made no distinction between wines that belonged to God and the common wine that could have been consumed elsewhere.

### **Shadows And Realities Are The Issue**

It is clear that Nadab and Abihu were the wrong people doing the wrong thing, in the wrong place, on the wrong day, with the wrong conditions of inebriation, for the wrong purpose—and all that against the right commands that the Lord had given. Their sins were not trivial. They violently perverted Biblical typology. All that which was being inaugurated that day belonged to the shadows of future realities that would be accomplished in and by Jesus Christ. Any change in that which foreshadowed the coming of Christ in His sacrifice would naturally impose changes in that which was the reality. There could be allowed no change in the blueprint without changing the future structure. The Holy Spirit was revealing all those rituals; He wanted the blueprint to be respected for it foreshadowed everything that was to be accomplished by Christ in fulfillment of all typology.

### **God Did Explain His Actions**

Certainly, God wanted everyone to understand why He intervened in such a dramatic, definitive way against the two priests. In Leviticus 10:3, God imperatively insisted: “By those who come near to Me I must be regarded as holy.” In other words, those who serve God as priests must treat Him with the respect He deserves. After all, He is God! He seems to be saying: “I am the Holy God and I will be treated with utmost reverence by those who come near to serve Me.” Man does not have a right to change the patterns that God has inaugurated.



Then, God said one other thing: “And before all people I must be glorified.” He demands that His Holy Person be glorified by His worshipers. This statement and the one just above are presented in the imperative mood in the Hebrew language.

Remember that all of the people were assembled before the Tabernacle that day. And, if God had allowed the two priests, His representatives, to trample His Laws in such a public way with impunity, it would have been impossible for Him ever to govern His people’s worship in later generations.

### **Aaron Must Not Mourn**

Aaron was not allowed to mourn the death of his sons. God told him: “Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come upon all the people” (Leviticus 10:6). Letting the hair go loose, and rending the clothing is an extreme sign of mourning for the dead or for disaster of any kind. The reason for that prohibition is that Aaron must show absolutely no disagreement with what God did that day. God’s representatives must stand in perfect and total agreement with the actions of God. And, Aaron must not take off his turban and cast it down in disgust over God’s punishment of his two sons. No temper tantrums will be allowed on Aaron’s part.

### **One More Ritual Infraction**

There is one more ritual violation that took place that day. In Leviticus 10:16, Moses began looking for the body of the sin offering. The blood of that sacrifice had not been taken into the Holy Place for atonement. Its body, therefore, was to be eaten by the priests in the courtyard of the Tabernacle as a festive celebration hosted by God. But the sacrificial body of the animal could not be found. It had been taken out of the camp and burned in violation of the ritual demands governing the sacrifice. That was against the instructions that God had given.

Therefore, Moses was angry and perhaps afraid. He came to Aaron and said: “Why have you not eaten the sin offering in a holy place ... See! Its blood was not brought inside the holy place; indeed you should have eaten it in a holy place, as I commanded” (Leviticus 10:17-18).

## Then Aaron Explained His Actions

Aaron explained with these words: “Look, this day they have offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD, and such things have befallen me! If I had eaten the sin offering today, would it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD” (Leviticus 10:19)? Aaron feels personally responsible for the sins of his sons and he felt that God has punished him for his oversight. He should have been more attentive to the actions of his sons that day. He asks the question in verse 19, “If I had eaten the sin offering today, would it have been accepted in the sight of the Lord?” He seems to feel that God had so recently poured out His anger against Aaron’s house, and it might have been presumptuous for Aaron to assume that God would so readily host a celebration meal in Aaron’s honor in the Tabernacle. Aaron seems to be saying, “Maybe tomorrow, yes. Maybe new week: yes.”

Remember that the eating of the sacrificial body in the courtyard of the Tabernacle was a festive celebration between God and His priests, a banquet that He hosted at His house, at His Tabernacle. “Today, if I had done this, would God have been pleased?” And, when Moses heard Aaron’s explanation “he was content” (verse 20). The reason for Aaron’s actions were totally different from those of Nadab and Abihu. Nadab and Abihu had thrown caution to the wind. It is easy to understand why Aaron would have been excessively cautious now. It just seemed to Aaron that had he presumed to ignore the events surrounding the death of his sons, to expect God now to celebrate in festive fashion the work of Aaron, would have been out of place that day.

The sins of Nadab and Abihu were many and they were serious perversions of God’s ordinations. God was more than justified in intervening in such a sober and serious manner. There are many important lessons to be learned from that tragic episode.

## **GREAT DAY OF ATONEMENT—PART ONE**

This lesson will present the introduction to the ceremonies and sacrifices of the great Day of Atonement. This will be the last sacrifice to be studied in this course. The final part of the study of the Day of Atonement will be covered in the next lesson. Leviticus 16:1-34 contains most of the instructions and explains most of the purposes related to its ceremonies. Mention is made of the Day of Atonement in Numbers 29:5-11 and again in Numbers 31:50. This lesson will study the Day of Atonement as to its purpose, the unique ceremonials that are characteristic of it, the animals that are required on the Day of Atonement, together with the extensive obligations of Aaron, the anointed high priest. And then we will look at the full implications of all of the ceremonials of the day as a prophecy of the total sacrificial ministry of Jesus Christ.

### ***Yom Kippur***

The name Day of Atonement in Hebrew is *You Kippur*. It literally means “the day of covering.” *Kafar* in Hebrew means “to cover.” In Genesis 6:14, the same word is used in God’s command to Noah to “cover” the ark with pitch, that is, tar. So, on the Day of Atonement there were several aspects of Hebrew worship and redemption that were to be “covered” or atoned for. It was not simply a covering of sin. The covering was much broader in scope. But that will be understood better as we proceed through the ceremonial.

### **Rich In Symbolism**

The rich symbolism of that day was nothing more than a beautiful, prophetic anticipation of the work of Jesus Christ. That day was the greatest, most significant day on the Hebrew calendar of celebrations. On that day, the sin offering received its most complete development and its most signal meaning. Basically, it was national in thrust. And yet each individual Hebrew was expected to enter into the spirit, the mood, the attitudes of the day. He was expected to personalize its ceremonies—indeed, to make personal application of everything that happened—as though everything that was done applied to himself alone. He was to approach the day as if all the ceremonials were being conducted exclusively for him.

## **Symbolic Expiation**

The Day of Atonement contained the highest expressions of symbolic expiation, atonement, and reconciliation between God and His covenant people. All of the prerequisites of sacrifices that day and of the functions of the High Priest were necessary in order to establish and to maintain fellowship and covenant union between God and the nation of Israel. Now the object of the Day of Atonement, the purpose of it, and even the necessity of it needs to be explained.

### **Why Have The Day Of Atonement?**

There are several reasons that explain the Day of Atonement. First, it presented atonement for sin as God accounts sin, not as man records his wrong doings. Out of man's ignorance there were many laws that he violated without being conscious either of the law or his violations of it. Man has never been dependable in determining what is right and what is wrong. He is not at all consistent in the monitoring of his actions. Often the sinner was not even conscious of his sin. Leviticus 4:2, 13, 22, 27; and 5:15 mention sins committed unconsciously, or "unwittingly" as another version says—in other words, sins committed in ignorance. So it was possible that man could ignore many of his sins, but God did not and could not ignore them. Those sins still had to be covered by sacrificial blood.

### **Israel's Sacrifices Were Ineffective**

The Day of Atonement was needed to convince Israel that their sacrificial system was not really dealing with the sin problem at all. There were factors built into the system that fully demonstrated its shadow nature. And there were built-in evidences that the ceremonies of the day simply pointed to the one great sacrifice in the future that would actually make full atonement for sin—the sacrifice of Christ. There will be ample explanation of that as we continue into the commentary on Leviticus, Chapter 16.

### **A Shadow Prophecy**

Another reason was that God wanted to establish, through a system of sacrificial prophecy, the finished work of Jesus Christ. Everything involved in that day pointed directly and

exclusively to the sacrifice of Christ on the cross of Calvary. The day was also prophetic of the continuing work of Jesus Christ as the great High Priest that constantly applies the benefits of His sacrificial blood on behalf of sinful mankind. God wanted to build a shadow prophecy of the reality of Messianic redemption so that future generations could learn to depend exclusively on the coming Messiah. The Hebrews could not have understood back then that their “shadow sacrifices” which they offered could only give “shadow atonement.” Such understanding can be appreciated only after the “reality sacrifice” had taken place in Christ. It is evident that only the “reality sacrifice” of Christ can and does grant “reality forgiveness.”

### **Universal Atonement**

On that day, atonement must be given universal attention. It was not only for the sins and trespasses of the priests and the whole nation, but also for everything related to the Tabernacle. Aaron, his household, the whole congregation must all be involved in the Days of Atonement. Even the Most Holy Place, the very symbolic residence of God, had to be cleansed of any impurity or contamination because of the sins of the people. The burnt offering altar in the courtyard of the Tabernacle had to be cleansed and purified because many sins had been symbolically covered there. Even God, the all Holy God, had His presence among a nation that was sinful. Therefore, he must clear Himself of any thinking on the part of Israel that He might be contaminated by simple association with sinful men. God’s fellowship with Israel must not be construed so as to make Him a partner with them in their sin. God’s residence must be purged of contamination. All that had to be clarified to establish His innocence and holiness.

### **Failure Of One Sacrifice For One Sin**

God wanted to prove to the Hebrew people that any system of sacrifices based on one sacrifice for one sin could never meet the needs of the people and could certainly never meet the needs of God. The utter insufficiency of the daily sacrifice to cover the daily sins of the people stood proven. They just were not adequate to handle the sin problem. Such a problem was further aggravated by the fact that the people did not always have the full knowledge of the Law. They were certainly not even keeping all of the laws they did know.

The fact that man has always had a poor memory of his wrongdoing intensified the need for the Day of Atonement. Even if a man had the best of intentions when he became aware of his wrongdoing and planned to offer the required sacrifice, he could soon forget his intent. The result would be that the sin would remain uncovered. Maybe he even promised himself, "I will take care of that next week or next month," but before long he forgot. It would be easy for them to fail in sacrificial requirements because of ignorance, neglect, forgetfulness, or indifference. But, those sins had to be accounted and atoned for somewhere. So, they needed a Day of Atonement on which all of the sins of all the people could be accounted for and covered.

### **Not Enough Animals In All Israel**

It is quite evident that there just simply were not enough animals in the nation of Israel to take care of all of the sins and trespasses of all the people. Looking back into the book of Leviticus and contemplating their situation, if we were under that kind of a system today, it is evident that some men could wipe out a herd of animals or a flock of goats or sheep in a month or two.

### **God's Holiness Vindicated**

On this Day of Atonement, the holiness of God had to be vindicated. He had to defend the righteousness of His dealings with an unrighteous people. God did not have external signs of His presence and fellowship with Israel. That fact could create an impression that He was an accomplice and a partner with them in their sin. Such was the obvious implication the Jews drew about Jesus in His association with sinners (Luke 15:1-2; Matthew 11:19). Potentially, every sin had to be covered before God and the worshiper could have proper fellowship. And, so the Day of Atonement was needed.

God has His residence, according to the statement of Leviticus, chapter 16, among sinful men. On the Atonement Day, Aaron must take some of the blood of the priest's bull and "sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times. Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with the blood as

he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat So he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness.” (Leviticus 16:14-16). Then he will take the blood of both the bull and the goat and apply it to the altar of burnt offerings out in the courtyard of the Tabernacle. He shall “... put it on the horns of the altar all around. Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it, and consecrate it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel” (Leviticus 16:18-19). Such ceremonies are imposed so that God can be cleared of any contamination by association. And this is totally stressed on the Day of Atonement.

### **Everything Points To Calvary**

The Day of Atonement stresses the total dependence of God’s people upon the finished work of Calvary—yet in the future as to time, but very visible in the ceremonies that were being unfolded that day. All the sacrifices will, quite evidently, foreshadow Christ. And so does the High Priest in all his functions on the Day of Atonement; his work foreshadows the work of Jesus Christ as the “reality” High Priest.

### **Israel’s Opportunity For Repentance**

God wanted to convince Israel of its sinfulness. The Day of Atonement impressed upon them that fact. It will give to the people of Israel an opportunity to mourn over their sins. They are given a period of time especially dedicated to reflection about their sins and to give them an opportunity for genuine repentance. Such repentance was to be shown through fasting, mourning, and external manifestations of sorrow for their wrong doing. It offered each individual an occasion for personal, spiritual renewal.

### **Confidence Of Forgiveness**

*Yom Kippur* gave them the conviction that God had removed their sins and they could enjoy the sense of forgiveness with confidence. God wanted to publicize before Israel His promise: “I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat” (Leviticus 16:2). It was from the mercy seat that God granted Israel forgiveness of

their sins. God wanted the people to know that He would exercise mercy and grace to them.

### **The God-ward Thrust Of The Day**

The total God-ward thrust of this Day of Atonement is clearly established in the minds of the people. After all, He was the one whose Law had been offended. He was the one that must be appeased for the violations against His commandments that had brought guilt upon the people. Now God appeared on the cover lid of the ark of the covenant and there He accepted sacrificial atonement for the people.

It will become evident as we proceed in this study, that on the Day of Atonement, God is interested in sending an accumulation of a year's sins of the children of Israel to the cross of Calvary. That will be understood as we get into the study of the ceremony in our next lesson. God wanted to symbolize the sin-bearing mission of Jesus Christ. Whether they understood it or not, it is still evident that God was building typology. He was preparing a beautiful shadow system that later generations would be able to identify once the sacrifice of Calvary had been accomplished.

### **No "Rolling Forward" Of Sins**

We need to understand that Israel's sins were forgiven on that day. They were forgiven but not covered. Many teachers of the book of Leviticus and even of the book of Hebrews seem to have the concept that those sins were "rolled forward" for a year. The thinking seems to be that in the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement, Israel's sins would have been moved forward for another year until the next Day of Atonement. And, then, the blood of the next animal would roll them forward one more year. The process of moving their sins forward a year at a time would have continued until Christ was sacrificed on Calvary.

### **Forgiveness Was Immediate**

Deeper study of such thinking exposes the fallacy of the "rolling forward" concept. There is absolutely no Biblical evidence to support the idea. If such was true, it would imply that the blood of bulls and goats did have some power to forgive sin, even if it was temporary. Hebrews 10:1 clearly says the law was only a



shadow of future realities. “For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.” Besides that, Hebrews 10:4 assures us that the blood of animals could not remove sin, not even a little bit, not even for a moment. Too, Hebrews 9:14 assures us that those sacrifices could only cleanse ceremonial defilements of the flesh, outward ceremonial impurities, only. They could not touch the conscience or the soul of the individual. They did not really remove the spiritual, the moral, guilt. They only removed the external impurities that would disqualify them for participation in the ceremonies of the Tabernacle.

Then, again, Hebrews 10:3 says that those sacrifices brought a remembrance of sin, not a removal of sin. On that day, God forgave Israel. But that meant that he personally accepted responsibility of covering those sins through the sacrifice that Christ would offer later on the cross of Calvary. Hebrews 10:1 says they were just simply shadows of good things to come. The good things to come, quite evidently, relates to the reality sacrifice of Christ. That sacrifice was even then on the horizon of God’s plans. It is clear that shadow sacrifices could give only shadow forgiveness. They can cleanse only external impurities. It took the reality sacrifice of Christ to cleanse the conscience of sin, according to Hebrews 9:14. And so those sacrifices did not remove those sins for another year.

### **Symbolic Transference Of Sin**

In their sacrifices the Hebrews only symbolically transferred their sins to their victims anyway. When this study is completed in the next lesson, these concepts will be better understood. And yet we notice an interesting passage in Hebrew 9:22: “And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission.” The statement “almost all things” insists that blood was the principle cleansing element under the law, but not the only element used. In verse 19, the writer had explained that some things were cleansed by blood, some by fire, some by water, and some by scarlet wool and hyssop. But when it came to remission of sins, according to the Law of Moses, there was absolutely no forgiveness without blood! Often it assumed that the writer is discussing in verse 21 the

essentials of the sacrifice of Christ. Though it is true that there can be no forgiveness of sin apart from the blood of Christ, the Hebrew writer is not discussing the sacrifice of Jesus. “According to the Law” of Moses, there was no forgiveness without the blood of those animal sacrifices!

### **Not Without That Blood Yet Not By That Blood**

Hebrews 9:22 is not talking about the sacrifice of Christ. “According to the law” those Hebrews could not be forgiven until that blood of their substitute sacrifice was shed. Yet they were not forgiven by animal blood. They could not be forgiven without that blood, yet they were not forgiven by that blood! This concept needs to be understood. There is a way in which we might be able to explain this. In the New Testament, Jesus promised in Mark 16:16, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved.” Again, in Acts 2:38, the apostle Peter told the Jews on the Day of Pentecost to “repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” In Acts 22:16 Saul of Tarsus is told: “Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins.” I Peter 3:21 says that “... which now saves us—baptism.”

### **The Redemptive Connection**

All the above scriptures insist that baptism is the moment when sins are forgiven. Yet surely no one believes that it is a river, or a basin, or a baptistry of water that forgives our sin. However, it is at the baptistry that sins are forgiven. It is there that sinners come into contact with the cleansing blood of Christ. It is not water that saves us. It is His blood that saves us. The believer is not cleansed by the baptistry, but cannot be cleansed without it! The baptistry recreates the redemptive connection that makes forgiveness possible.

Now, much in the same way, the Hebrew manifested his faith and obedient acceptance of God’s arrangements for atonement, and thus offered his sacrifice and was forgiven. It was through the blood of his sacrificial substitute that the redemptive connection with Calvary was made. He came into spiritual contact with the future sacrifice of Christ, whose blood actually removed the sin. So when God forgave those Hebrew people, He did so in view of the cross. It was as though He wrote a promissory note. “I will pay

this later.” He seemed to be saying. It was as though He was creating a debt against His own righteousness, an IOU against His own justice. And He simply “charged” the debt against Calvary.

### **Christ Covered Hebrew Sacrifices**

Hebrews 9:15 says that because Christ shed His blood, “He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” In other words, when Christ died He covered those promissory notes. God was forgiving people back under the Law of Moses when they offered their sacrifices. But He forgave them in view of Calvary and He wrote a note of indebtedness against Calvary. And then Christ died to cover those debts and, therefore, He redeemed their sins.

In the original Greek, this verse says that Jesus “died to redeem sins.” Why would anyone want to redeem sins? We read about the redemption of the soul in Ephesians 1:7. We read about the redemption of the body in Romans 8:23. But, here we read about the “redemption of sins.” Quite evidently, those sins were already forgiven, but they were not yet covered. Christ died to cover those debts that God took upon Himself in view of the cross of Calvary. Romans 3:25 tells us that in the cross, God “to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed.” Animal blood was not adequate punishment for human sin. God’s justice demanded the sacrificial blood of the man—Jesus. Jesus’ blood also demonstrates God’s righteousness in forgiving “at the present time” (Romans 3:26), insists the Roman passage.

### **God’s Foreknowledge At Work**

Quite evidently, the omniscience, the foreknowledge of God was involved in His forgiveness of sins before and after the cross. In Old Testament times, God was able to forgive sins in view of the future cross of Calvary. But in New Testament times, God’s foreknowledge of our sins—sins not yet committed—were covered by Christ on the cross. God gathered up the sins of all future generations and allowed Christ to bear them, suffering the penalty for them on the cross of Calvary. So, whether in the Old or New Testament times, it is evident that

God's foreknowledge was functional. I Peter 1:19-20 states that "Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." Already in the plan and purpose of God was the fact that the sacrifice of Christ was coming. Now, quite evidently, there was as much grace and mercy available from God to the people under the Old Testament as there is in New Testament times. And all of it, in either the Old or New Testament times, has the same basis: the cross of Calvary. Because the cross has always been in the mind and in the purpose of God, so the cleansing power of Calvary has always been available to God. Revelation 13:8 assures us that Jesus was the lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. So the simple fact is that God can act on the cross anytime that He chooses. In His foreknowledge, He knew what it would be. He can forgive any person in any age on the basis of the cross. Of course that person must manifest his faith and be willing to comply through obedience to the conditions God may demand.

### **Salient Facts About *Yom Kippur***

There are a number of salient facts that come to our attention in the study of the Day of Atonement. The Hebrews knew their sins were covered and they rejoiced in the full sense of their forgiveness. We read in Leviticus 1:4, that if a man would offer his sacrifice, that it would be accepted for him to make atonement for his soul. Leviticus 4:20, 31, 35; 5:6 assure the Hebrew that he was forgiven then and there. God did not become forgiving at the death of Christ. It was that death that Justified His forgiveness beforehand.

Even before the Law of Moses we read about people who were accounted righteous before God, even individuals that were sinners. In Romans 4, Paul used Abraham, an ungodly man, to show that God has always offered forgiveness to men on the basis of their faith and not on their performance. Abraham was quite skilled at telling lies. Read the history of Abraham and find that he was not always righteous in performance. But Genesis 15:6 says Abraham believed God and his faith was imputed or credited to him for righteousness. Look at the record of Abraham. He was a righteous man in the eyes of the Lord, not by performance, but by an obedient faith.

## **The Tenth Day Of The Seventh Month**

The time of the year of the Day of Atonement was very significant. It was on the tenth day of the seventh month (Leviticus 16:29). These two numbers, ten and seven, in Hebrew numeral have symbolic implications. Ten stands for the completion of, or the totality of, the work of God. There were ten pre-flood patriarchs. There were ten righteous men that could have saved the city of Sodom. There were the ten plagues of Egypt. There were the Ten Commandments that were given in the Law of Moses. Ten indicates the totality of God's word.

seven also symbolizes the completed work of God. And so put these two together and you have God's activity of completely bringing about atonement. So, the tenth day of the seventh month is symbolic of the time that God would accomplish redemption. Even the Sabbath Day symbolically implied the future redemption of the people of God and the eternal rest that they will have with Him.

### **Preparations For Priests And People**

There were elaborate, imposing preparations for the day required of the people and of the priests. The people were expected to spend the day in solemn convocation. They assembled at the Tent of Meeting (Leviticus 16:29-34). In Leviticus 23:32 the day is called a "sabbath of solemn rest," a *Sabbath sabbathon*. In other words, it was a "high Sabbath," a most holy day for the Hebrews. No work was allowed. They must spend the day denying themselves, afflicting themselves, and mourning their sins. Generally the idea of fasting was required of the Hebrew people on that day. Anyone who did not enter into the spirit of that day would be cut off from the people (Leviticus 23:29-30).

Aaron had to make special preparations for the day. That will be discussed in the next lesson. All of the other priests will take their place with the rest of the people outside the Tabernacle courtyard on that day. They will stand on common ground with the nation of sinners on this day. Atonement will be made for them by Aaron and Aaron alone. Each individual Hebrew was expected to identify with the spirit, the mood, the attitudes of the day of Atonement or else he would be cut off from the people.

## **THE GREAT DAY OF ATONEMENT—PART TWO**

This is the final lesson in this series of studies on the sacrificial system of the Law of Moses. This closing lesson will present the conclusion of the sacrifices and the functions of the Day of Atonement taken exclusively from Leviticus 16:1-34. Aaron had to prepare himself. We mentioned in our last lesson the people had to prepare themselves for the day—as did Aaron. His preparation involved several arrangements he had to make.

### **Garments For Glory, Beauty, And Holiness**

For all 364 days prior to the Day of Atonement, Aaron wore the glorious garments that had been especially prepared for him. They were called “holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty” (Exodus 28:2). Other versions say they were for “dignity, for honor, and for holiness.” They were multi-colored garments—the colors representing his function as heaven’s representative to the nation of Israel.

On the Day of Atonement, Aaron must go into the Tabernacle and remove the garments and leave them there. He will then take a bath. Actually, it was more a “baptism” as he prepares himself. That ceremonial bath seems to imply that he is being immersed into another role. Then, he must clothe himself with the simple white, linen garments of the ordinary servant priest to carry on the functions of the day. He is then ready to receive the sacrificial animals to be offered that day.

### **The Five Animals To Be Offered**

There are five animals that were selected for the Day of Atonement. First of all, there was the bull of the sin offering that was for the priestly family; for Aaron and all the Levitical tribe. There was a ram, a male sheep, for a burnt offering for all of the priests. Then, there were two goats; each of them representing one-half of the sin sacrifice for the people. The first goat would be designated as Jehovah’s. The second goat would be designated as Azazel’s. These two goats stood as one sacrifice. Leviticus 16:5 explains: “And he shall take from the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats as a sin offering, and one ram as a burnt offering.” There was to be another ram for a burnt offering for the people.

At the end of this lesson we will conclude the study of all of the sacrifices of the law, giving special attention to the sacrifices and ritual of the Day of Atonement. Then we will want to explain the application of all of those sacrifices to the priestly sacrifices of Jesus Christ. Jesus is foreshadowed by all the Levitical sacrifices, including those of the Day of Atonement. And, of course, Aaron foreshadowed Jesus' work as the High Priest.

### **Review From Lesson Eleven**

By way of review, let us remember the time—the tenth day of the seventh month—a high Sabbath. Aaron had the total functions of the sacrifices for that day. Leviticus 16:17 says that there will be no man in the Tent of Meeting when Aaron goes in until he comes out. All the people have gathered in solemn assembly. The High Priest has prepared himself by bathing and changing his garments. He is now ready to begin the ceremonies of the day. The five animals had been penned for a week and had been examined daily by Aaron to be sure they were without flaw.

### **Stage One Of The Extensive Ceremonials**

Now for an overview of the ceremonial that will take place on the Day of Atonement. The rituals for the day are quite extensive. Stage one of the ceremonial involves Aaron's preparations for the day. The removal of his ordinary High Priestly robes, the bathing, and the reclothing of himself with the humble white, linen garments of the ordinary servant priest constitute the first stage, and was done in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle.

### **Stage Two—Reception Of The Animals**

This stage involves the reception of the animals that have already been mentioned—pre-selected for this day and examined for a week to be sure that they are without defect. On this day, there was a final examination by Aaron to be sure that the animals are without any kind of flaw. The physical perfection of the animals symbolized the spiritual perfection of Christ Jesus. And, therefore, they were shadows of the sacrifice of Christ which will be offered on the cross of Calvary.

### **Stage Three—Presentations**

Stage three will involve the presentation of all the animals to God. From that moment forward they belong to Him. Their purpose is to accomplish global atonement. Each animal will serve the specific purpose and accomplish the function for which it was selected by Divine arrangement.

### **Stage Four—Casting Lots**

Aaron then casts lots over the heads of the two goats. He will take some kind of a stone, one in each hand, and on one of them is written in Hebrew: "For Jehovah." On the other is written: "For Azazel." He doesn't know which of the stones is in which hand, and he holds those over the heads of the goats. And he will open his hand and find the one that is for Jehovah. In Hebrew tradition, Aaron tied a scarlet ribbon around the neck of that goat because that goat will die. That one belongs to Jehovah. Then, the other one, quite obviously, will be the goat for Azazel. Tradition says he tied a scarlet ribbon around the horn of that animal because that is the one that will become the scapegoat.

### **Stage Five—First Entrance Into The Holy Of Holies**

Then, Aaron killed the bull of the sin offering for the priests. He was required, at this point, to take some incense and some coals of fire from the altar of burnt offerings, as God had given specific instructions. With those embers from the altar placed in the censer, he was to take two handfuls of incense "beaten small." Incense is a symbol of prayer. "Beaten small" simply means that it was finely ground into powder for quick burning. Aaron was to take the incense into the Most Holy Place and offer it there—"lest he die" (Leviticus 16:13). He has either pulled the veil of separation to one side or perhaps has lifted it up to make it possible for him to enter into the Most Holy Place. And, as soon as he crosses the threshold, he will cast those two handfuls of incense upon the censer of coals or perhaps on the altar of incense that seems to have been moved into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement/ This created an immediate cloud of smoke that covered the mercy seat. In the symbolism of incense, it seems that Aaron thus offered a prayer for his survival—that "he die not." He seems to be saying: "Know that I am entering



the presence of the All Holy God, and I am an unholy man. I acknowledge that I have no right to be here. I have come into Divine presence, because God so requires of my office.” It was an attitude of humility because of his sins. Perhaps this aspect of the ritual is built around the abusive entrance into the Most Holy Place by Nadab and Abihu as recorded in Leviticus, chapter ten.

### **Stage Six—Sprinkling The Blood Of The Bull**

In this same stage of the ceremony, Aaron applied the blood of the bull on the ark of the covenant, the mercy seat, seven times—on the east side of the ark, says the Hebrew. The Tabernacle faced the east and the east side of the ark was toward the rising of the sun—symbolic of God’s presence. Then he sprinkled the blood seven times before the mercy seat. Seven, remember, is the symbol for completion and for the work of God. Then, he will retreat back into the Holy Place with the blood of the bull and he will sprinkle the blood seven times before the curtain of separation between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. The blood that is left over will be set down and left temporarily in the Holy Place.

### **Stage Seven—Slaying The Goat For Jehovah**

Then he must exit the Tabernacle and proceed with the slaying of the sacrificial goat that had the scarlet ribbon around its throat. That is the one for Jehovah. Then he must take the blood of that goat and return to the Holy of Holies. He must do with that sacrificial blood exactly as he had done with the blood of the bull—sprinkle it on the mercy seat, then seven times before the mercy seat, and retreat into the Holy Place to sprinkle it seven times before the veil of the Tabernacle.

Now the question naturally arises, why the sprinkling of the blood in the Most Holy Place and in the Holy Place? Quite evidently, these are the symbolic quarters or residence of God in the presence of an unholy nation. Leviticus 16:16 says that he must cleanse the Most Holy Place and the Holy Place “because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions, for all their sins” that they have committed. He will do the same thing for the Tent of Meeting. That means for the whole courtyard of the Tabernacle “which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness.” So God must clear

Himself of any implication of guilt simply by the fact that He is associating in the presence of sinful man. “ And he [Aaron] shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD, and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around. The he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it, and consecrate it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel” (Leviticus 16:18-19).

### **Stage Eight—Azazel Ceremonial**

The following is an overview of the last phase of the ceremony on the Day of Atonement. In stage eight, Aaron was required to lay both of his hands on the head of the goat for Azazel. You may have noticed when he offered bull and the first goat for Jehovah, there was no laying on of the hands. Quite evidently, that was in view of the fact that both hands would be laid upon the head of the goat for Azazel. One hand was laid there in representation of the priest and the other hand in representation of the people. Leviticus 16:21 tells us that when he lays his hands on the head of the goat, “Aaron shall ... confess over it [over the goat] all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat.” Such action involved the symbolic transfer of sin.

Aaron could not possibly know all the sins of Israel, so how could he confess them all? Some have suggested that he must have simply listed all the commandments of the Law and summarily acknowledged that Israel had violated each one of them. Yet, God surely knows all the Laws He had given Israel, and also all their violations of those laws.

### **Stage Nine—The Removal Of Azazel’s Goat**

Aaron will then send the goat for Azazel into the desert. That goat is often called “the scapegoat.” A scapegoat, even in our modern usage, refers to any person who carries the guilt for the actions of others. Azazel’s goat was the sin-bearing animal. He was sent into the desert and there was released “in a solitary place.” In later years, the Hebrews, perhaps as much out of superstition as fear, would later find that goat with the scarlet ribbon around his horn and push him over a cliff. They wanted to be sure the goat did not wander back into camp with an

accumulation of a year of Israel's sins and trespasses still on his head. There seemed to be some fear that such would have in some way contaminated the camp.

Aaron did not carry the goat out of the camp. The goat was sent out into the desert by the "hand of a suitable man." That man is probably not a priest, otherwise it would have been specified. He was incidental to the ceremonials of the day. To indicate the fact that those sins were symbolically placed on the head of the goat, the man who led him into the desert was considered ceremonially unclean. He "shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp" (Leviticus 16:26).

### **Stage Ten—Aaron Re clothed**

It is evident that Aaron was seen to be the only one conducting the totality of the ceremony. Aaron, then, reentered the Tent of Meeting, the Tabernacle. He must remove the white linen robes of the ordinary servant priest that had been used for the functions of the day. Those garments he was required to leave in the Holy Place. He then, once again, bathed himself by immersion. In effect, Aaron will disappear and then reappear.

This time Aaron again clothes himself with the glorious garments that were characteristic of his regular service throughout the rest of the year. Those were the multicolored garments, according to Exodus 28:2ff, for glory, for beauty, for holiness, and for honor. He thus represented God's minister, or God's representative to man, heaven's representative to earth.

### **Stage Eleven—Sacrificing The Burnt Offering**

Aaron then exited from the Holy Place, having re clothed himself in his own garments, and sacrifices the burnt offerings—the ram for the priest and the ram for the whole congregation. The ceremonial of these burnt offerings would probably follow, more or less, the format of the continual burnt offering as outlined in Leviticus 6:8-13. And, then, the blood will be sprinkled in the appropriate fashion. These burnt offerings were sweet aroma sacrifices of worship of the priests and of the nation. It would naturally be an expression of re-dedication of priests and nation to fidelity toward God.

## **Stage Twelve—Burning The Fat Of The Burnt Offering**

Aaron was required to remove the fat from the slain bull and goat. He does not have to remove the fat from the burnt offering rams; they will be burned entirely on the altar anyway. All the fat will be fumed unto God. He placed the fat on the altar together with the burnt offerings and sacrificed them to God.

## **Stage Thirteen—Disposal Of The Sin Offering Bodies**

Then Aaron will dispose of the bodies of the animals that had been offered for sin: the bull and the goat. They were to be carried outside of the gate of camp of Israel. The reason is clear: they were to be burned with the fires of *Saraph*. Those were the fires of divine wrath against Israel's sin. There is definite typology built into this action. It was a "shadow" of the suffering of Christ Jesus outside Jerusalem.

## **General Applications Of The Day Of Atonement**

Quite evidently there are a number of applications to be made from these elaborate ceremonies. We need to give some attention to some of the ceremonies and then offer some of their obvious explanations. The first thing we want to notice is Azazel. Azazel is a compound Hebrew word—two words put together. The first part of the word means "strong" or "strength." The latter part of the word means "removal" or "taking away." So when the two meanings are joined, the resulting meaning is the "strong removal of Israel's sins." Of course, that demands that God, at a later date, will actually and strongly remove all of these sins.

The second lesson that we learn out of this is that the sins were symbolically removed from the camp. Now, generally, the goat is called a scapegoat. He is the one that bore the sin. And, therefore, when this goat was led out into the desert, all of the people of Israel began to shout for joy and sing "Hallelujah unto the Lord," because they knew that their sins had been removed.

In the picture of the final judgment, presented in Matthew 25, the Lord will sit upon His throne and as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, so He will divide the innocent (the sheep)

from the guilty (the goats). So, quite evidently, this goat is symbolically carrying the guilt of Israel into the desert.

The third lesson to learn involves the explanation that these two goats are only one sacrifice. Therefore, they stand as a unit accomplishing two different sides of the same redemptive activity. The first goat for Jehovah is presented as the cause and the source of atonement. The second goat for Azazel is presented as the effect of atonement, granting forgiveness. It suggests that in Jesus Christ the first goat actually died. And, so we see Jesus dying as the sacrifice of the cross. But the second goat, as a part of that same sacrifice, was led into the wilderness. It foreshadows Jesus in His resurrection. He survived the sacrifice; He comes back from the grave. All through the ceremonials, Aaron portrayed Jesus as the Great High Priest. Jesus, as the High Priest, officiated at the sacrificial offering of Himself on the cross. Now, in the second goat, Jesus is seen as having been raised from the dead and, as further function of His High Priestly role, He removes the sin from His people. He is now alive, after His sacrifice, and is able to take away the sins of the people. Hebrews 9:26-27 will indicate that Jesus put away the sins of the people with the sacrifice of Himself. Thus, Jesus is seen as both those goats and the bull offered that day.

Another important lesson is drawn from Aaron's preparation and the role he carried that day. Aaron had undressed himself, unclothed himself of his garments—those “for glory, beauty and holiness”—before he began the ceremonies of the day. That action indicates that when Jesus came down from heaven, He had to divest Himself of all of the external qualities of His Divine glory, holiness, and beauty that go with His deity. When He bathed Himself (immersed Himself), He thus seemed to disappear as the Divine being and reappeared after that immersion as the humble, servant, ministering Priest of God. By putting on the garments that would ordinarily characterize the position of a humble servant priest, He symbolically clothed Himself with humanity. It was in that function as a human being that He carried out His role as the humble servant of God, obedient to all the commands that God had given Him.

Then, having accomplished all of this activity of atonement, Aaron returned into the Tabernacle. He reclothed himself with his royal robes of heavenly splendor. Thus, we see Jesus ascend

back to the right hand of the Father. Israel probably did not understand all of this. It is quite clear, God intended that the symbolism of that day—symbols designed and inaugurated by the Holy Spirit—would foreshadow the accomplished priestly and sacrificial ministry of Jesus Christ. Hebrews 9:8-9 tells us that the Holy Spirit had some symbolic implications in what was happening on the Day of Atonement.

Surely we have learned from this story that Israel's sins were not carried away by a goat, only symbolically so. But what happened to those sins that were symbolically placed on the head of the goat? Where were they once they have been carried out of the camp? As the Hebrew, "Where are your sins?" "Oh, they have been forgiven," "Yes, but where are they now?" "Well, they are out in the desert on the head of a goat." "Are they going to stay there on the head of the goat?" "Well, I really don't know. I am sure that God will take care of them some way."

Does the Israelite of Moses' day believe that Israel is saved by a goat? Every Hebrew will emphatically deny such an idea. None has ever believed that. But there must be some way in which God is taking care of their sins. At least this much they knew: their sins had been forgiven. Now, whether they understood it or not, they were forgiven because of their faith and obedience to God's arrangements for atonement. Too, only those who had personalized the ceremonials of that day could be forgiven. That made it possible for God to forgive them; they had entered into the spirit of the day and their sins had been forgiven—**though not yet covered**. It is clear that God assumed the responsibility for those sins. God seems to be saying, "I will take care of those at the cross of Calvary."

Another major lesson derives from the fact that one goat for each year of Israel's accumulated sin throughout the 1400 years of her history would create quite a flock of goats. But all this seems to tell us that God has accumulated some 1400 goats that He had sent out into the wilderness. They were not simply sent out into the desert. They were directed to the foot of the cross of Calvary. And, if you can imagine through the eye of faith in your mind when Jesus was hanging on the cross, He was crucified with 1400 goats standing around the cross with an accumulation of 1400 years of Israel's sins upon their heads. And, then God, one by one removed those sins and placed them on

Christ. There, God treated Christ as though He had committed all those sins. The accumulation of Israel's sins over 1400 years were removed from the heads of those 1400 goats and placed on Jesus. And He died there on the cross as a penalty for all of those sins and there, those sins were actually taken care of, not simply symbolically. That is the place where Jesus bore the guilt of the people. It was "in His body on the tree," as the apostle Peter says (I Peter 2:24), that the sins of the world were covered.

Three days later Jesus was raised from the dead, as already symbolized in the goat for Azazel, the one that made strong removal of sin. After forty days, Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father when He once again clothed Himself in His garments for glory, beauty, and holiness as God. So it is quite clear to us that in all of these ceremonials Jesus was being predicted and it is clear that we must understand that both the ceremonials relative to the sacrifices and the priests are to be understood as fulfilled in Jesus.

Now we are told in Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace have you been saved, through faith." It is quite evident to us that God graciously provided the sacrifice for the sins of the people. But God seems to be saying in substance: "I will accept this animal in substitution for you, because he really represents Jesus Christ. And so in the final analysis I will accept the sacrifice of Jesus on your behalf on condition that you accept it also." That means that all men must accept the sacrifice of Christ as fulfilling the payment for their sins.

It was our sin that killed Him. As, as we mentioned in some of the earlier lessons, we have to agree with God's judgment against our sins in the person of Jesus Christ and so agree that we accept the fact that He atoned for our sins. It was our sin that nailed Him to the cross. We would have to so agree to the point that we personally would be willing to drive the nails in His hands and drive the spear into His side, because in all practical reality, it was our sins that killed Him.

### **To Summarize All The Sacrifices**

Now, by way of summary, let us put together all the sacrifices we have studied in this series. We must view each one of them as a different aspect of the one and only sacrifice of Christ. They

must be brought together as a unit. Each of the sacrifices of the Law of Moses—the burnt offering, the grain offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, the trespass offering, the Day of Atonement offerings, even the drink offering—symbolized Jesus Christ.

Now, quite evidently, because of each individual's guilt he lost his life before God. He could not give his life for anyone. He had already given his life to sin. Only the sinless would be able to give his life for someone else. Therefore, when Jesus ascended the cross of Calvary, He had to be innocent. He had to be pure. But that required of Him that He spend His entire life in total consecration and devotion to God. In other words, He had to fulfill the topology, the symbolism of the continual burnt offering. Never one time in His life did He let the fires of His consecration, sanctification, and devotion to God terminate. So that made Him a sinless sacrifice. When He went to the cross, God was able to place man's sin, man's performance, on Him and treat Him as though it were His performance; punish Him as though He had committed those sins and trespasses. And, then God could take Christ's performance which was flawless and perfect and lay it upon men of obedient faith and treat them as though Christ's performance were theirs. That is the reason God is able to see the Christian today as sinless under the blood of Calvary.

Then, having offered atonement, man needed someone to present him to God as a first fruit of Jesus' sacrificial offering. And that Jesus did in the grain offering. And then man needed someone to restore the relationship of peace and the confidence that he once had so he could be at peace with God. Man can thus be restored to fellowship with God and enjoy the harmony of peace. Man and God can now share the festive banquet of all spiritual good in the kingdom of Jesus Christ because Jesus was man's peace offering. The banquet table, the marriage feast of the Lamb is now enjoyed in peace with God (Revelation 19:9). All those sacrificial typologies find perfect fulfillment in Jesus Christ. So also do the functions of the High Priest; Aaron foreshadows the High Priestly functions of Christ. All this in its fulfillment was necessary for man's initial and continued salvation from sin. He saved the faithful obedient and He keeps them saved! "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" (II Corinthians 9:15).



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