

A Summary of the Five Major Offerings

The Second Part of the Feasts and Offerings

Jesus is the Word of God (**Luke 24:25-27**). Christ is the focus of Scripture (**Acts 8:35**).

The Reformer William Tyndale lost his life for translating the Latin Scriptures into the English language of the common man. Tyndale's intimate knowledge of the Scriptures led him to say about the offerings of Israel:

"While there is a starlight of Christ in all the ceremonies, there is in some so truly the light of the broad day that I believe God revealed to Moses the secrets of Christ and the very manner of His death beforehand." William Tyndale

Simeon worshipped daily at the temple and longed for Christ to come (Luke 2:25-26). Simeon represents the transitional period between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant

"The Jews look upon a veiled Savior, whom they had never seen unveiled. We, under the New Covenant, look upon an unveiled Savior; and, going back to the Old, we can see far better than the Jews could, the features and form of Jesus under that veil"
Robert Cheyenne.

Witsius (De Mysteria Tab.) said, "God took only six days for creation, but spent forty days with Moses in directing him to make the tabernacle --- because the work of grace is more glorious than the work of creation." The offerings of Israel portray amazing grace.

We use the word "offering" to speak of gifts given, but its root refers to sacrifice. The Jews were very accustomed to offerings (sacrifices). There were morning and evening sacrifices, first fruits and harvest offerings, yearly offerings and free-will (spontaneous offerings). Sacrifice was as **essential** to the Jew.

"Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (Ex. 20:19)

Israel had a keen sense of their sinfulness before Jehovah God. So when a worshipper approached the Tabernacle (and later the Temple) he came with a sense of his personal sin and needed *expiation* (removal of his sins). How? (Leviticus 1:4) --- "He shall put his hand on the head of the offering." It is more forcible in the Hebrew --- "He shall **lean** his hand" (See Psalm 88:7). The laying on of hands denotes transfer of an object from one person to another (power, gift affection or obligation) in a transfer of sin.

When the Temple was destroyed by Babylon and the Jews were taken into captivity, they were no longer permitted to take their offerings to their Temple. The Psalmist, in remarking upon this captivity speaks of the offerings as "signposts" --- pointing to something that is coming ahead (Psalm 74:9). This indicates to us that all of the offerings were very near and dear to the hearts of the Old Testament Jews because they pointed to something incredible that was ahead --- a Messiah. As we begin our study, I hope that you will see Christ in all the offerings of Israel and will enjoy Him like His people of old.

The priest is one who makes the sacrifices, performs the rituals and acts as mediator between man and God. This means that he is responsible for offering the divinely appointed sacrifices to God, for executing

the different procedures and ceremonies relating to the worship of God, and for being a representative between God and man.

When Adam and Eve were banished from the garden because of sin, God offered a sacrificial lamb in order to clothe their 'nakedness' (Genesis 3:21). Adam and Eve had already attempted to clothe themselves (Genesis 3:7) but God clothed them with a covering obtained by 'death.' The sacrificial system in Leviticus was born in Genesis. Cain did not follow God's design for the shedding of blood (Genesis 4:1-5). From the very beginning God only received into fellowship those who came to him on the basis of shed blood (Hebrews 9:22). When a sinner approached God, an innocent one had to die.

"The Levitical dispensation is the acorn of Eden grown to a full oak" Andrew Bonar.

Therefore Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and Moses offered sacrifices on personal altars. As heads of their families, they were priests on behalf of their families. They acted as intermediaries between their families and God (see Gen. 8:20; 13:18; 31:54 and Job 1:5). But when Israel became slaves in Egypt, they were prohibited from offering their sacrifices. During this time the people began to congregate for worship.

When God delivered the people of Israel out of Egypt, He called them all to be "a kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:6) so that the whole nation, upon their deliverance from Egypt, was to consist of nothing but priests. However, because Israel was very conscious of their personal sin they said to Moses *"Speak thou with us and we will hear: but let not God speak with us lest we die"* (Exodus 20:19). Moses became the first priest of the nation of Israel. But Moses' duties were too great, so his brother Aaron, and Aaron's four sons, were ordained as priests (Exodus 28). But when it came time to carry the Tabernacle, they needed help.

The tribe of Levites carried the tent and utensils. Aaronites were the true priests.

I. A true priest before God must be both sinless and divine.

Both demands were satisfied in an perfect way in that High Priest alone, Jesus Christ (Heb. 5:5-10), but the priesthood of the Old Testament could only prefigure He who was to come. Sinlessness was symbolically pictured through the ashes and a sacrificial atonement, and the divine nature was symbolically pictured through the clothing and the consecration (Exodus 29). Christ is our High Priest.

II. A true priest before God must be an advocate for sinful people.

Their duties fell under three main headings: service, teaching, and intercession. The first duty of the priest was to minister in the tabernacle, but when Israel became a settled nation it would be service in the temple. Secondly, priests were responsible for teaching the people the law of God, and thirdly, when God's will was sought for the nation, it was the priests who gave guidance. Christ is our High Priest and we are now a "nation of priests" ourselves in a world that is in need of intercession.

(1) Christ as Priest is appointed and chosen by God (Hebrews 5:5).

(2) He is consecrated with an oath (Hebrews 7:20-22).

(3) He is sinless (Hebrews 7:26).

(4) His priesthood is unchangeable (Hebrews 7:23-24).

(5) His offering is perfect and final (Hebrews 9:25-28).

(6) He intercedes continually (Hebrews 7:24-25).

(7) He is the only mediator (I Timothy 2:5).

III. A true priest before God always pleads for others on the basis of shed blood.

In the Old Testament, the sinner could only go as far as the brazen altar. Though he would find expiation for his sin through the offering (Leviticus 17:11) he could not move into the Holy Place. Entrance into the Holy Place was reserved for priests alone. Further, only the High Priest could enter into the Holy of Holies, and then only once a year, on the day of Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement).

The offerings of the Jews consisted of these main offerings:

The Burnt Offering.

The Meat (Grain) Offering

The Drink Offering;

The Peace Offering

The Sin Offering.

The Trespass Offering

(See Appendix on the Offerings of Israel)

On other occasions freewill offerings were given. Fellowship with God, peace from God, blessings from God were all dependent upon the shed blood of an innocent substitute. The blood of Jesus Christ is the blood of the sacrificial "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

"One drop of Christ's blood is worth more than heaven and earth" **Martin Luther.**

"Who delivered up Jesus to die? Not Judas, for money; not Pilate, for fear; not the Jews, for envy; but the Father, for love!" **Octavius Winslow.**

*"Was it for crimes that I had done, He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! Grace unknown! And love beyond degree!"* **Isaac Watts.**

"Christ's blood is heaven's key" Thomas **Brooks.**

"As it was in the old dispensation so is it in the new—there could be no Divine Covenant, even though it was of Grace, without the shedding of blood. Inasmuch as the new Covenant was not the type, but the substance, a more precious sacrifice was needed and nobler blood than any which is found in the veins of bulls or of goats. Jesus, the Son of God must die, or the Covenant would be unsealed, the testament without force. No Covenant blessing comes to us apart from the death of our great Sacrifice, for "without shedding of blood is no remission," and remission is one of the earliest of the gifts of Divine Grace. If we cannot even begin the heavenly life by receiving forgiveness of sins without coming into connection with the blood, we may be sure that no further blessing can come to us apart from it.

It seems to be absolutely necessary that when God comes into communication with guilty man it must be through an atonement and that atonement must be made by blood, or by the sacrifice of a life. I shall not dwell upon the blood shedding of the old Covenant, for they are only intended to be types of the one great blood-shedding in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. The death of a chosen victim was the emblem of the death of Christ. The sprinkling of the people with blood was the type of the application of the blood of Christ to the conscience of Believers and every single item of the ceremony, if looked into, would furnish points for edification. But of these we cannot, now, speak particularly, as the Apostle said on a like occasion." (**Charles Haddon Spurgeon**, *The Blood of the Covenant*, in his message from Hebrews 9:20).