

## Doctrine of Sacrificial Offerings

1. Offerings to God in Old Testament times by which man hoped to atone for his sins and restore fellowship with God.
2. The Bible depicts man as a sinner abiding in death and destined for death. He abides in death because he is separated from fellowship with God and unable to restore that life-giving fellowship (Rom. 5:12; 8).
3. The sentence of death hangs over man because of his identity with Adam's fall (Rom. 5:14), his enmity toward God, and his constant sinning (Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Rom. 3:10).
4. Ultimately, this will result in physical death and eternal suffering in hell.
5. God, however, provided a method by which man's penalty can be paid and fellowship with God can be restored.
6. This method is the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9-10). This perfect offering was anticipated throughout the Old Testament by various sacrificial offerings.
7. These Old Testament sacrifices were effective only when offered in faith in the promised sacrifice (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 9:8-9; 10:8-9, 16-17).
8. God made the first sacrifice; it consisted of animals slain to cover man's sin.
9. This was followed by the offerings of Cain and Abel. Only Abel's offering was a true sacrifice made in faith because Abel recognized his unworthiness and the divine promise of a true and perfect redeemer (Gen. 4:3-5; Heb. 1:4).
10. After this first sacrifice provided by God, godly people offered similar blood sacrifices looking forward to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Heb. 11:17-19, 23).
11. The sacrifice of Christ is most clearly and fully anticipated in the Mosaic system of sacrificial offerings.
12. The following specific sacrificial offerings were provided for in the Mosaic Law:

- **Burnt Offering.** This kind of offering was described as "that which goes up (to God)." It was termed "whole" (Lev. 6:22) because the entire offering was to be burnt upon the altar.

It was termed "continual" (Ex. 29:38-42) to teach the nation of Israel that their sinfulness required a complete and continual atonement and consecration.

This sacrifice, offered every morning and evening, pointed to Christ's atoning death for sinners (2 Cor. 5:21) and His total consecration to God (Luke 2:49).

The burnt offering spoke of Christ's passive obedience and His submission to the penalty required by man's sinfulness. It also refers to His perfect obedience to God's law by which He did for us what we are unable to do for ourselves.

- **Cereal Offering (see Meal Offering)**
- **Guilt Offering (see Sin Offering)**
- **Heave Offering (see Peace Offering)**
- **Meal Offering.** This offering is translated meat offering in some versions, but since this offering was bloodless and meatless, it is more meaningfully rendered meal (NKJV) or cereal offering (RSV). Meal offerings were prepared and presented to God as a meal, symbolically presenting the best fruits of human living to God to be consumed or used as He desired (Heb. 10:5-10). A notable exception to this is that poor people could present meal offerings as sin offerings.

In the meal offering a person presented to God a vicarious consecration of the perfect life and total property of another (Christ). There is no ground in this offering for human boasting as though the offerer were received by God on the grounds of his own human effort.

Rather, the recognition of the person's unworthiness is emphasized by the fact that a whole burnt offering or a peace offering must always accompany meal offerings (Lev. 2:1; Num. 15:1-16). Both offerings were made to atone for man's sin.

- **Meat Offering (see Meal Offering)**
- **Peace Offering.** This sacrificial offering was also called a *heave offering* and a *wave offering*. This was a bloody offering presented to God. The priest (representing God's acceptance) ate part of the offering and the worshiper and his guests (non-officiating priests or Levites and the poor, (Deut. 12:18; 16:11), ate part.

Thus, God hosted the meal, communing with the worshiper and other participants. This sacrifice celebrated covering of sin, forgiveness by God, and the restoration of a right and meaningful relationship with God and with life itself (Judg. 20:26; 21:4).

There were three kinds of peace offerings:

- (1) thank offerings in response to an unsolicited special divine blessing;
- (2) votive (vowed) offerings in pursuit of making a request or pledge to God;  
and
- (3) Freewill offerings spontaneously presented in worship and praise.

- **Sin Offering.** This bloody offering, also known as a guilt offering, was presented for unintentional or intentional sins for which there was no possible restitution (Lev. 4:5-13; 6:24-30). If the offering was not accompanied by repentance, divine forgiveness was withheld (Num. 15:30).

The blood smeared on the horns of the altar of incense or burnt offering and poured out at the base of the altar-represented expiation or covering (forgiveness) of sin.

The size (value) and sex of the beast offered depended on the rank of the offerer. The higher his post the more responsibility he bore.

The penalty for all sin, death, was vicariously inflicted on the sacrificial animal. Guilt for the worshiper's sin was transferred symbolically to the animal through the laying on of the offerer's hands.

**Thank Offering (see Peace Offering).**

**Trespass Offering.** This was a bloody offering presented for unintentional or intentional sins of a lesser degree and for which the violator could make restitution (Lev. 5:15).

The sprinkling of the blood on the sides of the altar rather than on its horns gave further evidence that this offering addressed sins of a lesser degree.

Special provisions were made for the poor by allowing less valuable offerings to be substituted in this kind of sacrifice.

The amount of restitution (money paid) was determined by the officiating priest. Restitution declared that the debt incurred was paid.

Significantly, Christ was declared a trespass offering in (Isaiah 53:10).

He not only bore the sinner's penalty but also made restitution, restoring the sinner to right standing with God.

**Wave Offering (see Peace Offering).**