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THE ORIGIN AND ORIGINAL MEANING OF SACRIFICIAL  
BLOOD OFFERINGS AS REVEALED IN THE BIBLE  
AND MODERN SCRIPTURE

A Thesis  
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by  
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement and Justification of Thesis Problem

The practice of offering sacrifices to a deity appears to have had existence in every religious system known to man. One writer has suggested that public worship without sacrifice was "altogether unknown in the ancient world."<sup>1</sup>

Based on the thesis that the institution of sacrifice embodied certain concepts which are just as important in the proper worship of God today as they were anciently, this study endeavors to compile, through analytical research, materials which pertain to the origin and original meaning of sacrificial blood offerings as practiced by one race of people: the Israelites and their progenitors.

Although there is general agreement on the importance of sacrifice, there exists a great divergence of opinion as to its origin, meaning and moral significance.

Four elements which seem to be largely responsible for the existing difference of opinion are: (1) the lack of explicit explanation on the inception of sacrifice in the Old Testament; (2) the symbolic nature of sacrifice; (3) the complicated history of the Israelites in respect to other nations

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<sup>1</sup>Abba Hillel Silver, Where Judaism Differed (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957), p. 79.

around them who also practiced forms of sacrifice; (4) the subsequent exile of Israel at the hands of foreign powers, which seemed to necessitate a restructuring of their sacrificial system.

It is recognized that there is need for source materials in addition to the Old Testament if a relatively complete understanding of sacrifice is to be developed.

It will be clear from this that I do not propose to speak on the origin of sacrifice among men, or on the first meaning which it may have had. For such a discussion, our net would have to be cast much more widely than in the Old Testament. Suffice it to say that those who have conducted such an inquiry are not agreed as to its results.<sup>1</sup>

W. Robertson Smith has seen the necessity of admitting, "Everyone who reads the Old Testament with attention is struck with the fact that the origin and rationale of sacrifice are nowhere fully explained. . . ."2

Researchers have spent lifetimes and have written volumes in an effort to produce a clear concept as to when and why sacrifice was first established. Valuable as these contributions are, the dilemma remains. Stanley Thoburn in his dissertation for the Boston University School of Theology cites the problem as follows: "The exact nature of the origin of sacrifice will doubtless remain as a problem for scholarly

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<sup>1</sup>Harold H. Rowley, The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament (Reprinted from the "Bulletin of the John Rylands Library," Vol. 33, No. 1; September, 1950), p. 76.

<sup>2</sup>W. Robertson Smith, Religion of the Semites (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1907), p. 1.

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research, for the origins carry one back into prehistoric times."<sup>1</sup>

The lack of information which has been a limiting factor in past research efforts, becomes the point of justification for this study. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints possesses ancient scripture and historical information which is in addition to that found in the Holy Bible. That Church also possesses modern scripture which it declares has been revealed from God in this day in the same manner and for the same purpose as existed anciently. These additional scriptural sources will be the chief contributors to any new orientation which might exist in this thesis and which may not exist in any other work thus far produced on the same subject.

#### Description of Additional Basic Source Materials

It should be understood that these additional scriptural sources in no way attempt to supersede the biblical writings. By their very nature they hold a close relationship to the Old Testament, and as such are very productive in developing a more complete and unified understanding of what transpired anciently.

The additional scriptural sources will hereafter be referred to collectively as "modern scripture." They are: The Pearl of Great Price, which contains writings relative to the

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<sup>1</sup>Stanley C. Thoburn, "Old Testament Sacrifice in the Light of Ugaritic Literature" (microfilmed dissertation, Boston University, School of Theology, 1954), p. 60.



early Patriarchal and Mosaic periods; the Book of Mormon, which presents an account of one branch of the Israelitish nation coming out of its dispersion period, and the Doctrine and Covenants, which stands as a compilation of modern-day revelations.

In addition to these basic scriptures, numerous sources containing exegetical and commentary materials will be used insofar as they pertain to the thesis problem.

### Delimitations

Because of the nature of the principal sources to be used, the study will be limited essentially to the animal sacrifice of the Israelites, and to the areas of origin and original meaning as far as the rite of sacrifice itself is concerned. Related information will be included whenever it seems necessary to clarify or give orientation to the work in general. The ritual detail, especially of the Mosaic sacrifices, will not be considered as a part of the study, except as it will contribute to the meaning of sacrifice itself.

### Method of Investigation

The research design began with a study of sacrifice from the Bible, coupled with an examination of certain rabbinical writings and biblical commentary materials. The modern scriptural sources were then studied in an effort to discover significant elements of contributions as to the origin

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and meaning of sacrificial blood offerings in ancient Israel.

### Existing Studies of Related Interest

Of many works in related areas, the following theses and dissertations are mentioned:

1. Magic and the Old Testament, by Hyrum P. Jones, which attempts to discover the influence of magic upon Old Testament writings and acts of worship.
2. An Investigation of the Contribution of Latter-day Revelation to an Understanding of the Atonement of Christ, by Eldon R. Taylor.
3. A Preliminary Study in the Primitive Outcroppings in the Old Testament, by Moroni West Smith, which shows evidence of practices such as animism, totemism, etc. among Hebrews.
4. A Study of Certain Typological References to the Atonement Found in Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers, by Herbert Curtis Wright.
5. An Analysis of the Theory and Practise of Worship in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, by John Franklin Heidenreich, in which he compares the pattern of worship in the Church today with that found in the Bible.
6. Old Testament Sacrifice in the Light of Ugaritic Literature, by Stanley C. Thoburn, in which comparison is made between Old Testament and Ugaritic Sacrifice.
7. The Meaning of the Old Testament Sacrificial System in the Hebrew Religion, by Thomas O. Hall, Jr.

### Definition of Sacrifice

The word sacrifice has a rather involved etymological origin and development. Hence, it is deemed advisable to make special explanation now.

The word sacrifice derives from Latin, which gives more than forty other words from the same root sac, which

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denotes the relation of certain physical objects or acts to invisible and intangible powers. Any object given to a god by repetition of prescribed words and with a prescribed ceremony was called sacer.<sup>1</sup>

The Latin term, sac, is only the root word. From here we find the word sacer, meaning "holy," being combined with facere, meaning "to make," thus producing the connotation, "to make holy," or "something made holy."<sup>2</sup>

Further explanation of this development is seen as follows:

This process of devoting things to the use of a god was described by the phrase rem divinam facere (to make a thing belong to a god) or by the single word sacrificare or its kindred consecrere, both of which were equivalent to our concept of hallowing or sanctifying or devoting.<sup>3</sup>

Being a word of strictly Latin origin, we see immediate complications when we think of the word "sacrifice" in a Greek or Hebrew idiom. Neither Greek nor Hebrew has a comparable word!

The original connotation of sacrifice was first any ceremonial act to or in the name of a god; later it might refer to the thing upon which the act was centered. Latin was the first language to coin a blanket term to describe all such offerings or acts. Neither Greek nor Hebrew had such a term; both denoted particular kinds of offerings or acts by special phrases.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Royden Keith Yerkes, Sacrifice in Greek and Roman Religions and Early Judaism (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), pp. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup>W. O. E. Oesterley, Sacrifices in Ancient Israel, Their Origin, Purposes and Development (New York: The Macmillan Company), p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Yerkes, 6.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 7.

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The Hebrew word zevach which connotes the action of slaying is usually translated "sacrifice" in English, but in the Hebrew it still refers to a specific type of offering, namely that which is eaten at a feast.

George Buchanan Gray sees the most etymologically correct Hebrew rendering of sacra as kodashim, which simply means "sacred" or "holy things." He continues his explanation by pointing out the fact that the Mishna uses the term in this way by designating one of its orders or major sections with kodashim. At one time, two of the Tractates, or minor sections of this order were designated respectively as the "Slaughter of the Sacra" for animals devoted to the altar, and the "Slaughter of the Profane" for animals intended for ordinary consumption.<sup>1</sup>

The Greek word, thusia, is the sacrificial term most usually translated "sacrifice" in English. Another Greek word, ta hiera, comes etymologically closer to the Latin, as is seen in the following:

Ancient Greeks gave to these rites the name ta hiera, "the sacred" (things or acts); Latin coined the word sacrificium which, in the plural form, sacrificia, served the same purpose.<sup>2</sup>

The root word, hieros, meaning "holy," has over one hundred fifty words stemming from it which apply "to gods,

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<sup>1</sup>George Buchanan Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1925), pp. 8-9.

<sup>2</sup>Yerkes, 17.

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to persons, to rites, to places, to times, to buildings, and to things concerned with them."<sup>1</sup>

Emphasis was placed anciently on what was "given" or devoted to a sacred purpose, whereas contemporary usage tends to emphasize that which is "given up" in order that something better might be acquired.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 90-91.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 2-5.

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## CHAPTER II

### BLOOD SACRIFICE--DIVINELY INSTITUTED OF GOD

Many opinions have been advanced on the origin of sacrifice. Contemporary views are varied, and often settle for leaving the subject in question. This fact is typified well in the following quotations:

The origin of sacrifices is wrapped in obscurity. Many widely differing theories have been propounded in explanation, but all are highly conjectural.<sup>1</sup>

We have to notice here, however, two questions which have been raised regarding sacrifice. These are first, the question as to how it originated; and second, the question as to the primitive idea connected with it, or expressed by it. There is much difference of opinion in regard to both these questions.<sup>2</sup>

There are two ways of looking at the Jewish festivals: the traditional way and the modern way. The traditional way says that the festivals were first instituted in the Law of Moses and are therefore uniquely and peculiarly Jewish. The modern way says that they go back to, or are borrowed from, more ancient pagan ceremonies, and that what is distinctively Jewish about them is the manner in which they have been transformed and reinterpreted. The traditional way also says that the festivals were ordained supernaturally by God, while the modern way insists that they are the creation of man.<sup>3</sup>

Many theories have been proposed to explain the origin of religion. Ardent devotees have sought this origin in some sort of direct call from a deity to primitive worshippers.

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<sup>1</sup>The Babylonian Talmud: Seder Kodashim (Translated by Rabbi H. Freedman, under editorship of Rabbi Dr. I. Epstein), (London: The Soncino Press, 1948), Vol. I, p. xxi.

<sup>2</sup>A. B. Davidson, The Theology of the Old Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923), p. 311.

<sup>3</sup>Theodor H. Gaster, Festivals of the Jewish Year (New York: William Sloan Associates Publishers, 1955), p. 21.

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. . . Non-devotees have naturally rejected this suggestion and have turned to animism or totemism . . . or some other primitive social practice. A favorite homiletic supposition is that man is possessed of what is called the religious instinct, and worships because he cannot help it. . . . The "religious instinct" seems to be a phrase coined to express the conclusion that we do not know how religion started.<sup>1</sup>

We are not told, however, of the actual institution of this rite in immediate connection with the fall; and the silence of inspired history regarding it till Cain and Abel had reached the season of manhood, and the mention of it then simply as a matter of fact in the narrative of their lives, has given rise to much disputation concerning the origin of sacrifice--whether it was of divine appointment, or of human invention. And if the latter, to what circumstances in man's condition, or to what views and feelings naturally arising in his mind, might it owe its existence.<sup>2</sup>

From the above quotes, two basic points of view can be observed: one, that sacrifice was of divine institution, conceived by God, revealed to man and practiced by man in obedience to the command of God; the other, that sacrifice has been developed by man to fill needs felt by man in respect to his god. The latter position is the one most commonly accepted today, but it represents a departure from the traditional point of view.<sup>3</sup>

An eminent English scholar finds three basic objections to the human development theory. He explains first of all that God has never left man to his own invention in the matter

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<sup>1</sup>Yerkes, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Patrick Fairbairn, The Typology of Scripture (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 38 George Street, 1870), Vol. I, p. 287.

<sup>3</sup>James Hastings (editor), Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), Vol. XI, p. 1.

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of divine worship. Secondly, since the first recorded incident of sacrifice (Cain and Abel) consisted of a slain victim it would seem inconceivable that this particular form of sacrifice would have been used without having had some special direction from above. Finally he maintains that there would be no legitimate reason for Abel's animal offering to be accepted and Cain's produce offering to be rejected unless there was violation of a divine command.<sup>1</sup> He then concludes his reasoning with these words:

On every account, therefore, the conclusion seems inevitable that the institution of sacrifice must have been essentially of divine origin; for though we cannot appeal to any record of its direct appointment by God, yet there are notices concerning sacrificial worship which cannot be satisfactorily explained on the supposition, in any form, of its mere human origin.<sup>2</sup>

The position is sometimes taken that the divine command must be extant in order to prove the existence of a divine origin.<sup>3</sup> This kind of reasoning is further expressed:

. . . if such a command, expressly and positively enjoining the sacrifice of animal life in worship, had actually been given, it is unaccountable that it should not have been recorded; since to drop it from the record, if so certainly given, and so essentially necessary, as is alleged on the other side, was like leaving out the foundation of the whole edifice of primitive worship. The only warrantable conclusion we can be entitled to draw from the silence of Scripture in such a case is that no command of the kind was really given.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn (1870 Edition), I, 293-296.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 297.

<sup>3</sup>Patrick Fairbairn, The Typology of Scripture (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, Reprint Classic, N.D.), Vol. I, p. 411.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 412.

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As will be seen later, the divine command of God was given and has been recorded! The reason for its non-existence in our Old Testament today is ironically enough the real question that will have to remain open to speculation. As for sacrifice itself, there is a recorded account of its divine institution.

### The Coat of Skins

The divine institution of sacrifice is sometimes associated with the coat of skins which God prepared for Adam and Eve after their fall. The simple account of the incident as stated in the Bible says that: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them."<sup>1</sup> Many historical references to this unusual incident have been compiled by Dr. Hugh Nibley. He holds the garment of skin to be of singular significance, which as quoted from John Chrysostome goes back "to the beginning of the world, to the times before which Adam required covering. Thus it was the symbol of repentance."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Nibley goes on to say:

Whatever its origin, the wearing of a garment of repentance, symbolic of life of man in his fallen state, was known to the most ancient Christians and practiced by certain ultra-conservative cults down to modern times.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gen. 3:21.

<sup>2</sup>Hugh Nibley, Lehi in the Desert and the World of the Jaredites (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft Publishing Company, 1952), p. 160.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

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After citing these various references, Dr. Nibley concludes:

Two significant conclusions come from all this: (1) that any historical reconstruction of what actually happened is out of the question; what has come down to us brings a mass of conflicting legends and reports, and (2) that these conflicting legends and reports nevertheless agree on certain main points, that they are very old, and were considered by the most learned Jews to present matters of great importance, the significance of which escaped later ages.<sup>1</sup>

Whenever the Hebrews wished to express the idea of atonement or expiation of guilt in connection with their sacrifices, the word they employed to describe this specific effect was kipper, which has the original meaning "to cover."<sup>2</sup>

This efficacy is connected with all four kinds of principal offerings: the objects of the covering are persons and sins; the covering takes place before God, and it stands in a specially close relation to the sprinkling<sup>3</sup> of the blood and the burning of the sacrificial flesh.

It is interesting to note further in this same article that Paterson refers to an earlier writer, Zimmern, who compares this Hebrew idea of covering to the old Babylonian sacrificial term kippuru, which means "to wash away, atone."<sup>4</sup>

Again we read:

To the Hebrew mind, the atonement is a covering, and for this reason the garments worn by Adam and Eve after the Fall form a curious type. The word "atonement," which occurs more than seventy times in the Old Testament, is

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>W. P. Paterson, "Sacrifice," A Dictionary of the Bible, ed. James Hastings, Vol. IV (1902), p. 339.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

constructed on the well-known root, "kaphar," which means "to cover." The atonement was viewed by the Hebrews as a protective covering which shielded the repentant sinner from the punishment otherwise incurred by his sins.<sup>1</sup>

The same author goes on to express his own view connecting this concept of covering with the coat of skin as follows:

The author believes that this is all typified by the garments of skin made by God and placed upon Adam and Eve after the Fall. The garments represent the atonement of Christ, which, in the Hebrew way of thinking is nothing more than a covering for sin, enabling the repentant to come into God's presence without fear and without shame. The garments . . . typified the spiritual covering for sin provided for the repentant in the atonement of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

A study of singular interest on this subject of the coat of skins is that of Patrick Fairbairn in his classical work, The Typology of Scripture. He has made the following observations:

There is a recorded fact, however, which touches the very borders of the subject, and which, we may readily perceive, furnished a divine foundation on which a sacrificial worship, such as is mentioned in Scripture might be built. It is the fact noticed at the close of God's interview with our first parents after the Fall: "And unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skin, and clothed them." The painful sense of nakedness that oppressed them after their transgression, was the natural offspring of a consciousness of sin--an instinctive fear lest the unveiled body should give indication of the evil thoughts and dispositions which now lodged within. Hence, to get relief to this uneasy feeling, they made coverings for themselves of such things as seemed best adapted to the purpose out of that vegetable world which had been freely granted for their use. They girded themselves about with fig leaves. But they soon found that this covering proved of little avail to hide their shame, where most of all they needed to have it hidden; it left them miserably exposed to the just condemnation of their offended God.

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<sup>1</sup>Curtis Wright, "A Study of Certain Typological References to the Atonement Found in Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers" (unpublished Master's thesis, B. Y. U., 1955), pp. 97-98.

If a real and valid covering should be obtained, sufficient to relieve them of all uneasiness, God Himself must provide it. And so he actually did. As soon as the promise of mercy had been disclosed to the offenders, and the constitution of mingled goodness and severity brought in, He made coats to clothe them with, and these coats of skin. But clothing so obtained argued the sacrifice of life in the animal that furnished them; and thus, through the death of an inferior yet innocent living creature, was the needed relief brought to their disquieted and fearful bosoms. The outward and corporeal here manifested had respect to the inward and spiritual. The covering of their nakedness was a gracious token from the hand of God, that the sin which had alienated them from Him, and made them conscious of uneasiness was henceforth to be in His sight as if it were not; so that in covering their flesh, He at the same time covered their consciences.

. . . If viewed apart from this higher symbolic aim, the outward act will naturally appear small and unworthy of God; but to so view it were to dis sever it from the very reason of its performance. It was done purposely to denote the covering of guilt from the eyes of Heaven--an act which God alone COULD have done. But He did it as we have seen by a medium of death, by a sacrifice of life in those creatures which men were not yet permitted to kill for purposes of food, and in connection with a constitution of grace which laid open the prospect of recovered life and blessing to the fallen.<sup>1</sup>

Fairbairn goes on to suggest that the "act" of God in covering them with skins would have "naturally" been interpreted as a revelation from God.<sup>2</sup> This is how he justifies his position that sacrifice had a divine institution, but at the same time he accepts as fact that God at no time gave an explicit command.<sup>3</sup> He views it as being unreasonable to suppose that if a direct command were given that it would not have been recorded. Hence he assumes that none was given.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn (1870 Edition), I, 297-98.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 299.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., II, 11-12.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

This position seems to place an unusual responsibility upon Adam when one considers God's statement to Isaiah:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.<sup>1</sup>

To establish His institutions without explicit command would in a sense make God responsible for the process which has resulted in so many conflicting religious ideas.

The usual method of revelation was to make His will known by speaking directly to His prophets. "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets."<sup>2</sup>

From the Book of Mormon we learn that direct revelation from God to man started with Adam. Speaking of Adam and his posterity, it has said:

Therefore he sent angels to converse with them, who caused men to behold of his glory. And they began from that time forth to call upon his name; therefore God conversed with men, and made known unto them the plan of redemption, which had been prepared from the foundation of the world; and this he made known unto them according to their faith and repentance and their holy works.<sup>3</sup>

The foregoing discussion of ideas about the coat of skins is not intended to settle any question regarding it, but the collective thoughts of the several scholars do set the background for that which was very soon to follow: the

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<sup>1</sup>Isa. 55:8-9

<sup>2</sup>Amos 3:7

<sup>3</sup>Alma 12:29-30

explicit command of God to offer sacrifices unto Him.

The Divine Command to Adam

The Book of Moses in The Pearl of Great Price contains much more information about Adam and Eve after their expulsion from the Garden than does the Bible. It records a revelation wherein God commands Adam and Eve to offer the firstlings of their flocks unto the Lord. The exact account is as follows:

And Adam and Eve, his wife, called upon the name of the Lord, and they heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden, speaking unto them, and they saw him not; for they were shut out from his presence. And he gave unto them commandments, that they should worship the Lord their God and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord. And Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Moses 5:4-5

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## CHAPTER III

### "HUMAN DEVELOPMENT" THEORIES OF ORIGIN

The general pattern followed in ascribing sacrifice to human origin parallels the pattern of ascribing man's origin and development to human evolution. "The solution has been sought for chiefly in the general attributes of human nature and the practices of a remote and Semi-barbarous heathenism. . . ."1

Based on the theory that primitive man gradually developed into an intelligent being, the following explanation is given in direct respect to the development of sacrifice:

The first endeavors to understand cause and effect were by way of trial and error. Methods which, to primitive reason, seemed effective were continued and developed. When the invisible powers began to be regarded as possessing knowledge and choice, those acts by which men sought contact with them were considered as addressed to them. This marked the beginning of religious rites--of worship. At some time in the distant past, men began to perform acts of worship, as they began to speak articulately, to use fire and tools, to wear clothing, to write, to barter and to engage in all the activities which, taken together, make for what we call civilization.

Ancient Greeks gave to these rites the name ta hiera, "the sacred" (things or acts); Latin coined the word sacrificium, which in the plural form sacrificia, served the same purpose. Many early practices which antedated religious concepts, developed into sacrificia, or acts of worship.<sup>2</sup>

Among those who hold to this idea of evolutionary process, man

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<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn, (1870 Edition), I, 288.

<sup>2</sup>Yerkes, 17.

in his primitive state is often portrayed in the attitude of overcoming taboos, such as warding off demoniacal attacks through the use of blood,<sup>1</sup> getting rid of infection by transferring it to an animal and then killing the animal,<sup>2</sup> or by actually eating their totem animal-god as a means of assuring close relationship.<sup>3</sup>

The basic objections to the idea that sacrifice was ordained of God have been summed up as follows:

There is first, the view that sacrifice was ordained and suggested to men by God. There is the idea that it is part of a primitive revelation. To this theory there are two objections: (1) The Old Testament gives no countenance to it. The reference to sacrifice in the story of Cain and Abel seems to regard their offerings rather as spontaneous, the instinctive expression of their feeling of dependence on God and their thankfulness to Him. . . . And (2) the universal prevalence of sacrifice among the heathen nations seems to imply that sacrifice was in some way a natural expression of man's sense of his relation to God. The hypothesis of a primitive revelation, the remains of which lingered among all the peoples of the world, and which expressed itself through sacrifice is precarious. It certainly cannot be proved; and to explain sacrifice by it must leave the origin of that institution involved in the same precarious and hypothetical condition.<sup>4</sup>

#### Basic Theories

It is quite natural to expect a wide variation of opinion when the origin of sacrifice is sought in the theory of human evolution. Ideas have moved through various phases with emphasis shifting from one area to another. At the

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<sup>1</sup>Oesterley, 137.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 136.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 152-3.

<sup>4</sup>Davidson, 311-12.



outset, scholarly study attempted to explain sacrifice as an expression based on a single principle or purpose. This position was justified with the idea that man in his simple beginnings could not construct any complicated systems. As no general agreement could be reached as to what this single principle might have been, analyzation moved into its second phase in which it assumed that there was more than one original principle. A third phase has now synthesized the first two by suggesting that there were many principles, with one being basically predominant.<sup>1</sup>

The following conclusion by W. O. E. Oesterley suggests the line of reasoning which moved the emphasis of scholarly study rather quickly from phase one into phase two of its development.

All types of sacrifices were originally based on one or other of three fundamental ideas and purposes, whatever subsidiary elements may have entered in; those purposes were to offer gifts, to effect communion, and to liberate, or give life.<sup>2</sup>

This same writer maintains however, that the multiple purpose idea was usually preceeded by, or had its beginning in the gift theory.<sup>3</sup>

Brief consideration will now be given to each of the more prominent theories.

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<sup>1</sup>Thoburn, 4-5.

<sup>2</sup>Oesterley, 7.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 23.

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### Gift Theory

Edward B. Tyler is recognized as the first to apply the scientific method to the study of sacrifice. "He maintained that sacrifice was in its origin a gift offered to supernatural beings, either to secure their favour or to avert their wrath."<sup>1</sup> Tyler views the giving of a gift as the natural, child-like reaction of primitive man toward God.

The gift-theory, as standing on its own independent basis, properly takes the first place. That most child-like kind of offering, the giving of a gift with as yet no definite thought as to how the receiver can take and use it, may be the most primitive as it is the most rudimentary sacrifice.<sup>2</sup>

This point of view has been justified by assuming that primitive man would be most likely to judge his divinities in terms of himself and through such would think of obtaining divine favor, not with words, but by giving him presents.<sup>3</sup>

It is usually interpreted that the Hebrew term, minhah means a gift in any of its forms. This was the term used of Abel's sacrifice, and thus his sacrifice is usually thought of as "a gift expressing devotion to God, or seeking to induce Him to grant a boon. . . ."<sup>4</sup>

Adherents to this theory maintain that gift sacrifices

<sup>1</sup>Oesterley, 13.

<sup>2</sup>Edward B. Tyler, Primitive Culture: Researches Into the Development of Mythology, Religion, Art, and Culture (2 Volumes) (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1871), Vol. II, p. 341.

<sup>3</sup>Oesterley, 13.

<sup>4</sup>Rowley, The Meaning of Sacrifice . . ., 84.

could be used with different objectives existing in the mind of the offerer. Common among the notions were: (1) to assuage anger, (2) assure assistance in some enterprise, and (3) to show a sense of gratitude.<sup>1</sup>

Scriptural backing for the gift idea is often found in the injunction, "None shall appear before me empty-handed."<sup>2</sup>

One major objection to the gift theory is raised by George B. Gray:

When a man slays an animal, gives small portions to Yahweh, but together with his friends eats the larger part himself, the whole proceeding is obviously something more than, or rather other than the simple presentation of a gift to God.<sup>3</sup>

#### Communion Theory

W. Robertson Smith succeeded in turning a flood of support in his direction when he developed more fully the idea of communion as the fundamental essence of sacrificial worship.

A new era in the study of the whole subject was inaugurated by Robertson Smith; he maintained that the object of sacrifice was "to provide the material for an act of sacrificial communion with the god." . . . animal sacrifice, that is to say, in its primitive form, was, according to Robertson Smith, a sacramental ritual act, by means of which the worshippers became united to the god. The deity was imminent in what they partook of; by eating the victim, therefore, they received the god into themselves and thus became united with him. Robertson Smith's theory involved the further contention that sacrifice, in its origin, was connected with totemism.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Oesterley, 26.

<sup>2</sup>Ex. 23:15; 34:20.

<sup>3</sup>Gray, 3.

<sup>4</sup>Oesterley, 16.

Smith held that the gift idea came as a later development,<sup>1</sup> and his position stands today as the greatest rival of the gift theory.<sup>2</sup>

The meaning of the sacrificial meal as an act of communion is explained in the following statement:

The sacrificial meal was an appropriate expression of the antique ideal of religious life, not merely because it was a social act and an act in which the god and his worshippers were conceived as partaking together, but because, as has already been said, the very act of eating and drinking with a man was a symbol and a confirmation of fellowship and mutual social obligations. The one thing directly expressed in the sacrificial meal is that the god and his worshippers are commensals, but every other point in their mutual relations is included in what this involves. Those who sit at meat together are united for all social effects; those who do not eat together are aliens to one another, without fellowship in religion and without reciprocal social duties.<sup>3</sup>

Further explanation is given by Frank Jevons.

The sacrificial or sacramental meal, which from the beginning has been the center of all religion, has from the beginning also always been a moment in which the consciousness has been present to man of communion with the god of his prayers. Without that consciousness man had no motive to continue the practice of the rite.<sup>4</sup>

The sacrificial meal held strongly the idea of cementing the union between men with men and between God and men. If for some reason this relationship was broken, the meal had the power to restore it.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Smith, Religion of Semites, 245.

<sup>2</sup>Thoburn, 6-7.

<sup>3</sup>Smith, Religion of Semites, 245.

<sup>4</sup>Frank Byron Javons, An Introduction to the History of Religion (London: Methuen and Co., Lrd., 36 Essex St., W. C., 1911), 285.

<sup>5</sup>Davidson, 313-14.

### Life-Giving Theory

The basic idea of this theory is that life or nature is a cycle and as such, the source of life must be replenished if it is to continue the process of giving forth new life.

Sacrifice, as just suggested, has several diverse aspects, but from our present point of view it is man's effort to sustain the course of nature by providing the requisite replenishment of power. It has therefore affinity with Imitative Magic. The powers of heaven may all too easily flag and fail:

The sun himself grow dim with age,  
And nature sink in years;

therefore it is necessary to furnish sustenance in the way of renewed force to nature, just as we would give it to other things upon which we depend. We must do this even though we drain ourselves of our very life-blood in the endeavour.<sup>1</sup>

The essence of sacrifice of this nature is assumed to be in the giving of life, rather than in the taking of life.

In this cycle of primitive ideas and practices it is possible to detect the beginnings of a method of approach to magico-religious phenomena which, in due course found its ultimate expression in the sacrificial system. In the ritual shedding of blood, it is not the TAKING of life, but the GIVING of life which is really fundamental, for blood is not death, but life. The outpouring of the vital fluid in actuality, or by substitute, is the sacred act whereby life is given to promote and preserve life, and to establish thereby a bond of union with the supernatural order.<sup>2</sup>

Blood was held to be identical with life, and was believed to have had mysterious power whether it was within the body or without.<sup>3</sup> Drinking the blood would permit the person

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert H. Gowen, A History of Religion (Wisconsin: The Morehouse Publishing Company, 1934), p. 64.

<sup>2</sup>Oesterley, 37-38.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 36.

to absorb this vital power within himself,<sup>1</sup> and by such would be able to prolong his own life.<sup>2</sup>

E. O. James sums up the theory and lists various reasons for setting life free in the following words:

. . .the fundamental principle throughout is the same; the giving of life to promote or to preserve life, death being merely a means of liberating vitality. . . . In all the manifold variations of the ritual the underlying significance consists in the setting free of life for one or more of the following reasons: (a) to augment the power of the god or spirit approached to enable him to perform his beneficent functions on earth; (b) to meet the forces of death and destruction by a fresh outpouring of vital potency, and so to strengthen the worshipper against malign influences, and to "cover" or "wipe out" the transgression; (c) to establish or re-establish a bond of union or covenant with the benevolent powers in order to maintain a vital relationship between the worshipper and the object of worship, and so to gain free communication between the natural and the supernatural order.<sup>3</sup>

#### Expiation Theory

Scholars seem to cover the full gamut of opinion in expressing their views on sacrifice as a means of expiation of sin. Davidson finds no rationale or explanation in the Bible covering the concept of atonement,<sup>4</sup> while Pedersen claims that it became the most important aspect of biblical sacrifice.<sup>5</sup>

Prior to the work of Tyler, the typical view on

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 36.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>3</sup>Oesterley, 20.

<sup>4</sup>Davidson, 352-3.

<sup>5</sup>Johs Pedersen, Israel, Its Life and Culture, Volumes III-IV (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 364-65.

sacrifice was set forth by Ernst von Lasaulx, who held that sacrifice "arose as the effort of sinful man to effect a reconciliation with God; that is, that sacrifices are essentially expiatory or propitiatory in character."<sup>1</sup>

Oesterley has analyzed Lasaulx's theory as follows:

We may begin with a reference to Lasaulx's theory that sacrifices were originally all offered with the one purpose of effecting a reconciliation with the god; they were, that is to say, in the nature of an atonement, i.e., expiatory in character. It is not our present purpose to discuss or criticize the various theories held in any detail, but merely to record them. Clearly, however, Lasaulx was over-influenced in his ideas by beliefs of far later date occurring in the Old Testament writings of post-exilic times.<sup>2</sup>

This brings us to another significant point. Most scholars consider the expiatory theory as belonging almost exclusively to the post-exilic period. This view however, is based upon the documentary theory of Old Testament literature, which maintains that all priestly writings came after the exile.<sup>3</sup> Proponents of this view maintain that the concept of sin had not reached proportions great enough for man to think in terms of need for atonement until the exile period. Hence they reason:

Owing to the deeper sense of sin referred to, the sacrificial system assumed a somewhat different aspect, and some new ideas arose though developed from those of earlier times. The purposes of sacrifice of the older times were discarded; all the traditional types of sacrifice continued in use, but in addition, other forms were introduced.

<sup>1</sup>Thoburn, 4.

<sup>2</sup>Oesterley, 13.

<sup>3</sup>Fairbairn, (1870 Edition) I, 216.

The outstanding characteristic of post-exilic sacrifices was their purpose of atonement, and thus, reconciliation with God; this was, of course, the outcome of the developed sense of sin, of which we have spoken. To effect reconciliation with God and to establish normal relations with Him could be brought about only by national and individual sins being atoned for. Hence this insistent idea of atonement. It is, however, well to point out here in passing, that long before the Exile the feeling of the need of being reconciled to God again, after some offense against Him had been committed, often appears.<sup>1</sup>

### Magic Theory

Although not nearly as predominant as the others, brief mention is made here of a concept which holds that various forms of magic could be used to counteract Taboo. Unseen things or beings which were charged with some super-natural influence were classified as being Taboo.<sup>2</sup> These super-natural beings were thought of as having human wants and appetites which must be satisfied if their evil acts were not to fall upon their worshippers.<sup>3</sup> In this sense, magic is connected with the "original purpose of sacrifice, holding that sacrifice was a magical act whereby it was possible to compel, as it were, the spirit of God to grant the things sought for."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Oesterley, 219.

<sup>2</sup>Oesterley, 136.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 19.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 21.



## CHAPTER IV

### ORIGINAL MEANING OF SACRIFICIAL BLOOD OFFERINGS

Of ancient Israel the Lord inquired: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me?"<sup>1</sup> Certainly there must be a deep-seated purpose behind this rite if the vast expenditure of time and means consumed by it are to be justified.

Although the reason for offering sacrifices was not given to Adam at the time he was first commanded to offer them,<sup>2</sup> an explanation was forthcoming. The reason for the delay is not known, but the account does indicate that in the meantime "Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord."<sup>3</sup> It might be conjectured that had Adam not been obedient, the explanation of meaning would not have been given. If this time lapse is viewed in terms of testing Adam's obedience, support for it can certainly be found in the later declaration: "To obey is better than to sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."<sup>4</sup> One purpose for sacrifice may well have been to test man's obedience.

When the specific explanation for sacrificial worship did come, it was clear and direct. The account in Moses says:

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<sup>1</sup>Isa. 1:10-12

<sup>2</sup>Moses 5:5

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>I Sam. 15:22

And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me. And then the angel spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth. Wherefore thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore.<sup>1</sup>

This explanation places the act of animal sacrifice in a secondary position. It is in similitude of something much greater. This fact seems to suggest that the basic function of sacrifice was to direct the mind of man toward a more complete understanding of the ultimate sacrifice of Christ.

Understanding the meaning of sacrifice is an essential element in its fulfillment as indicated by Maimonides, a Jewish philosopher, in the following:

Their aim is the highest perfection of man--intellectual and moral. They are designed to infuse right knowledge, inculcate truths and train man to righteous life and action. They cannot, however, produce these effects unless the ideals and principles they enshrine are properly understood. The explanation of them thus becomes an important religious need and duty; and in regard to sacrifices in particular the appreciation of their significances and meaning, as far as their general character is concerned, constitutes an integral part of their fulfillment.<sup>2</sup>

Sacrifice is for the purpose of helping man<sup>3</sup> by serving as a "vehicle of the highest religious expression."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Moses 5:6-8

<sup>2</sup>Babylonian Talmud, pp. xxviii-xix.

<sup>3</sup>Max Kadushin, The Rabbinic Mind (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1952), pp. 315-16.

<sup>4</sup>Babylonian Talmud, p. xvii.

### In Similitude of Christ

Of specific significance is the fact that sacrifice was in similitude of the "Only Begotten of the Father."<sup>1</sup> By pointing the mind to Christ, sacrifice helped one to realize that "salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent."<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, "that there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent."<sup>3</sup>

Redemption through an infinite redeemer has been proclaimed by all of the prophets since the world began.

For behold, did not Moses prophesy unto them concerning the coming of the Messiah, and that God should redeem his people? Yea, and even all the prophets who have prophesied ever since the world began--have they not spoken more or less concerning these things?<sup>4</sup>

The day of redemption through the shedding of the blood of Christ has been the cause of much rejoicing, not because of the fact that it would require suffering on the part of the Savior, but because it was realized that it would be the means of effecting salvation upon the soul of man. Enoch spoke, saying:

When shall the day of the Lord come? When shall the blood of the Righteous be shed, that all they that mourn may be sanctified and have eternal life? And the Lord

—<sup>1</sup>Moses 5:7

<sup>2</sup>Mosiah 3:18

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Mosiah 13:33

said: It shall be in the meridian of time, in the days of wickedness and vengeance. And behold, Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man, even in the flesh; and his soul rejoiced, saying: The Righteous is lifted up, and the Lamb is slain from the foundation of the world; and through faith I am in the bosom of the Father, and behold, Zion is in me.<sup>1</sup>

The shedding of blood is an essential function in the redemption process. Paul has said, "Without shedding of blood is no remission."<sup>2</sup> This remission is not to be found in the blood of animals, for "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins,"<sup>3</sup> but only "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."<sup>4</sup>

As it was impossible for the blood of any animal to take away man's sins, so was it impossible for just any man's blood to atone for the sins of another. It must be accomplished by an infinite atonement.

For it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice; yea, not a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of any manner of fowl; for it shall not be a human sacrifice; but it must be an infinite and eternal sacrifice. Now there is not any man that can sacrifice his own blood which will atone for the sins of another. Now if a man murdereth, behold will our law, which is just, take the life of his brother? I say unto you, Nay. But the law requireth the life of him who hath murdered; therefore there can be nothing which is short of an infinite atonement which will suffice for the sins of the world.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Moses 7:45-47

<sup>2</sup>Heb. 9:22

<sup>3</sup>Heb. 10:4

<sup>4</sup>Heb. 10:10

<sup>5</sup>Alma 34:10-12

### Pre-Earth Preparations

Speaking of blood sacrifices, Fairbairn has said that "it was common . . . to all sacrifices of that description that there should be in them on the part of the offerer, a remembrance of sin, and on the part of God, a provision made for his reconciliation and pardon."<sup>1</sup> The scriptures both ancient and modern indicate that provision "on the part of God" was made even before the earth had been created. Peter speaks of it as follows:

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.<sup>2</sup>

To Titus, Paul speaks of eternal life, which was "promised before the world began."<sup>3</sup> Christ gives the same origin to the kingdom of God: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."<sup>4</sup>

The Book of Mormon speaks frequently of a foreordained redeemer. The following is typical:

Therefore he sent angels to converse with them, who caused men to behold of his glory. And they began from that time forth to call on his name; therefore God conversed with men, and made known unto them the plan of

<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn (Zondervan Reprint Edition), II, 278.

<sup>2</sup>I Peter 1:18-20

<sup>3</sup>Titus 1:2

<sup>4</sup>Matt. 25:34

redemption, which had been prepared from the foundation of the world; and this he made known unto them according to their faith and repentance and their holy works.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that Christ was foreordained to be the redeemer of the world made it possible for sacrifice to be instituted with Adam. The need for such a rite did not have to develop gradually in the mind of man.

### The Earth is the Lord's

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas and established it upon the floods.<sup>2</sup>

As creator of the earth, God would not be dependent upon man in any of his needs. "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills."<sup>3</sup> Man, however, is dependent upon God.

I say unto you, that if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning and is preserving you from day to day, by lending you breath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another--I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants.<sup>4</sup>

The Nephites attributed their prosperity to righteous observance of God's laws.<sup>5</sup> To Israel of old God promised "rain in due season" along with all the other blessings of the earth if they would "walk in my statutes and keep my commandments."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Alma 12:29-30

<sup>2</sup>Psalms 24:1-2

<sup>3</sup>Psalms 50:12

<sup>4</sup>Mosiah 2:21

<sup>5</sup>II Nephi 5:10-11

<sup>6</sup>Lev. 26:3-5

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In offering sacrifice man does not give up something as if that which he gives is his own possession. God is the giver. Man's duty is to use the gift as God has directed. It is obedience, not sacrifice, that obligates God to prosper man with the blessings of the earth.

### An Approach to Worship

In actual practice, sacrifice provided an approach for one who was drawing near to God in worship. Whether it was a condition of asking for help or an act of returning thanks for blessings already granted, sacrifice seemed to establish a basic rapport out of which communication ensued.

Many scriptural examples illustrate that sacrifice was an approach to God. On his way to the land of Canaan, Abraham built an altar, made an offering and prayed that the famine might be turned away.<sup>1</sup> Upon arriving in Canaan, Abraham again offered sacrifice and called upon the Lord because he was among idolatrous people;<sup>2</sup> then later as he moved to the mountain east of Bethel, he built another altar and called upon the name of the Lord.<sup>3</sup>

Sacrifices were offered when God appeared to Jacob and promised him the blessings of Abraham and Isaac,<sup>4</sup> when Jacob vowed a vow unto the Lord,<sup>5</sup> when Moses was fighting against Amalek,<sup>6</sup> when Moses read the book of the covenant to the

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<sup>1</sup>Abraham 2:17

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., verse 18

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., verse 20

<sup>4</sup>Gen. 35:9-15

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 28:13-22

<sup>6</sup>Ex. 18:15

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people,<sup>1</sup> and when Joshua wrote the law upon a stone.<sup>2</sup>

The Book of Mormon tells that Lehi, after traveling three days from Jerusalem, built an altar, offered an offering to the Lord, and gave thanks unto God.<sup>3</sup> Upon successfully obtaining the plates of brass<sup>4</sup> and later after being joined by the family of Ishmael, Lehi again offered burnt sacrifices and gave thanks unto the Lord.<sup>5</sup>

Whatever the specific need might have been, it seems that an offering to the Lord, supported by the faith and righteousness of the worshipper, established communication with God.

#### Foundation of Gospel Covenant

After explaining to Adam that sacrifice was in similitude of the Only Begotten of the Father, the angel of the Lord said:

And thus the gospel began to be preached, from the beginning, being declared by holy angels sent forth from the presence of God, and by his own voice, and by the Gift of the Holy Ghost. And thus all things confirmed unto Adam, by an holy ordinance, and the gospel preached, and a decree sent forth, that it should be in the world, until the end thereof; and thus it was. Amen.<sup>6</sup>

And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four

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<sup>1</sup>Ex. 24:4-8

<sup>2</sup>Josh. 8:30-31

<sup>3</sup>I Nephi 2:6-7

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 5:9

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 7:22

<sup>6</sup>Moses 5:58-59



quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem. And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other. . . .<sup>1</sup>

As a means of worship, sacrifice kept the mind of man directed to Christ in whose name man was always to call upon God. Through this proper means of communication the gospel was taught and covenants were established between God and man.

The prophet Joseph Smith has explained the establishment and perpetuation of the gospel with man as follows:

But that man was not able himself to erect a system, or plan with power sufficient to free him from a destruction which awaited him is evident from the fact that God, as before remarked, prepared a sacrifice in the gift of His own Son who should be sent in due time, to prepare a way, or open a door through which man might enter into the Lord's presence, whence he had been cast out for disobedience. From time to time these glad tidings were sounded in the ears of men in different ages of the world down to the time of Messiah's coming.<sup>2</sup>

. . . Our friends may say, perhaps, that there were never any ordinances except those of offering sacrifices before the coming of Christ, and that it could not be possible for the Gospel to have been administered while the law of sacrifices of blood was in force. But we will recollect that Abraham offered sacrifice, and notwithstanding this, had the gospel preached to him. That the offering of sacrifice was only to point the mind forward to Christ, we infer from these remarkable words of Jesus to the Jews:

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<sup>1</sup>Moses <sup>7</sup>2:62-63

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Smith, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938), p. 58.

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"Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John viii: 56). So, then because the ancients offered sacrifice it did not hinder their hearing the Gospel; but served, as we said before, to open their eyes, and enable them to look forward to the time of the coming of the Savior, and rejoice in His redemption. We find also, that when the Israelites came out of Egypt they had the Gospel preached to them, according to Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, which says: "For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (see Heb. iv:2). It is said again in Gal. iii:19, that the law (of Moses, or the Levitical law) was "added" because of transgression. What, we ask, was this law added to, if it was not added to the Gospel? It must be plain that it was added to the Gospel, since we learn that they had the Gospel preached to them. From these few facts, we conclude that whenever the Lord revealed Himself to men in ancient days, and commanded them to offer sacrifice to Him, that it was done that they might look forward in faith to the time of His coming, and rely upon the power of that atonement for a remission of their sins.<sup>1</sup>

When the children of Israel were in bondage to the Egyptians, God witnessed their distress and "remembered" the covenant he had made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.<sup>2</sup> As a means of helping the Israelites to develop so close a relationship with God that the gospel covenants could be established with them, the Lord commanded that after their release from bondage, the children of Israel were to "serve God,"<sup>3</sup> "sacrifice to the Lord,"<sup>4</sup> "hold a feast,"<sup>5</sup> and "know that the earth is the Lord's."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 60-61.

<sup>2</sup>Ex. 2:24

<sup>3</sup>Ex. 3:12; 7:16; 9:13; 10:3; 12:31

<sup>4</sup>Ex. 3:18; 5:3,8,17; 8:8,25-29; 10:25-26.

<sup>5</sup>Ex. 5:1; 10:9

<sup>6</sup>Ex. 9:29

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The Israelites failed to develop the required measure of communication with God, so a "preparatory" type gospel was given to them.<sup>1</sup> A fundamental lesson had to be learned: As man obeys the principles of the gospel, he receives promise that the Lord will bless him,<sup>2</sup> for the covenant places God under obligation to the obedient man only. He has said: "I the Lord am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise."<sup>3</sup> Again he has said:

There is a law irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated--and when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.<sup>4</sup>

#### A Holy Nation

Another facet of the covenant relationship pertains to the followers of God as a collective body. They were promised that if they would obey the voice of the Lord and keep his covenant they would "be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."<sup>5</sup> The responsibility placed upon Israel by this distinctive honor is explained in the following:

Under the terms of that contract Israel has undertaken, in return for God's providence and protection, to serve as His witness in the world of men--that is, as a model society, . . . a self-dedicated "kingdom of priests,"

<sup>1</sup>Doc. & Cov. 84:23-27

<sup>2</sup>Ex. 20:24

<sup>3</sup>Doc. & Cov. 82:10

<sup>4</sup>Doc. & Cov. 130:20-21

<sup>5</sup>Ex. 19:5-6

committed to this holy task. As the sages put it, Israel has voluntarily taken upon itself what is at once a crown and a yoke.<sup>1</sup>

The Lord spoke of Israel as the "salt of the earth"<sup>2</sup> and "the light of the world."<sup>3</sup> Apparently for the purpose of helping Israel to understand the effect they would have upon the rest of the world, the Lord instructed them to use salt with their offerings.

And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.<sup>4</sup>

The effect of the salt upon the flavor of the meat offering should suggest to Israel the effect that they were to have on the world. Hence if the salt used in the offering did not have the quality of "saltiness" in it, the flavor would not be affected thereby. In like manner, if God's holy nation did not have the quality of "holiness" in it the world would not be influenced for good. This is explained in the gospel of St. Mark as follows:

For everyone shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves and have peace one with another.<sup>5</sup>

Just as every sacrifice should have salt, so should every offerer have "fire" (Holy Ghost, light, truth, holiness, etc.) in himself. With these qualities existing in God's followers

<sup>1</sup>Gaster, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Matt. 5:13

<sup>3</sup>Matt. 5:14

<sup>4</sup>Lev. 2:13

<sup>5</sup>Mark 9:49-50

the "savor" of the whole world would be improved. Hence Israel is the "salt of the earth." Further clarification was given by the Lord when he said:

When men are called unto mine everlasting gospel, and covenant with an everlasting covenant, they are accounted as the salt of the earth and the savor of men; they are called to be the savor of men; therefore if that salt of the earth lose its savor, behold, it is thenceforth good for nothing only to be cast out and trodden under the feet of men.<sup>1</sup>

As indicated earlier, this calling upon Israel was both a "crown and a yoke."<sup>2</sup> The honor was not without its responsibility. Israel would have to bear the burden of consequence if they failed.

But inasmuch as they keep not my commandments and hearken not to observe all my words, the kingdoms of the world shall prevail against them. For they were set to be a light unto the world, and to be the saviors of men; and inasmuch as they are not the saviors of men, they are as salt that has lost its savor, and is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.<sup>3</sup>

Sacrifice should have served always to remind Israel of the peculiar position they held as a nation toward the rest of the world in serving as the "leaven" which would influence the whole world to respond to the light of the gospel.<sup>4</sup>

### Symbolism

Symbolism has maintained an important place in the meaning of sacrifice. The ritualistic act itself represented

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<sup>1</sup>Doc. & Cov. 101:39-40

<sup>2</sup>Gaster, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Doc. & Cov. 103:8-10

<sup>4</sup>Luke 13:20-21

the many spiritual truths which existed beneath the surface, and which were discoverable only through a gradual process of spiritual development on behalf of the worshipper.

Wheeler Robinson suggests the sacrifices were symbolic acts, "actualized approaches to God," not mere opera operata in the realm of magic, but expressions of the spirit of the offerer, which initiated a new relation to God. It cannot be denied that many in Israel had a merely magical view of sacrifice, as many other nations had had, and thought that the correct performance of the ritual was all that mattered. But if they were 'actualized approaches to God,' they were meaningless without the approach in spirit which they were designed to actualize.<sup>1</sup>

Symbolism was highly useful in that it provided means for projecting the mind far beyond the immediate. It established a goal which would guide one to the realization of his greatest potential. Sacrifice, properly understood and utilized, was designed to keep the mind of man oriented on Christ, who represented the ultimate in human achievement.

Sacrifice is not the only institution of God which bears this symbolic quality. Jacob taught that "all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world unto man are the typifying of him."<sup>2</sup> The Lord, speaking to Adam has said:

And behold, all things have their likeness, and all things are created and made to bear record of me, both things which are temporal, and things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath: all things bear record of me.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Rowley, The Meaning of Sacrifice . . . , p. 96.

<sup>2</sup>II Nephi 11:4

<sup>3</sup>Moses 6:63

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To be effective, the outward act of sacrifice must be considered in the following light:

Moreover, no sacrifice is represented as achieving anything by the mere act of offering it. In popular thought so often challenged by the prophets, sacrifices were believed to have automatic power, as they were widely thought to have among non-Israelite people. But that is not the real teaching of the Old Testament, where it is clearly taught that sacrifices must be the organ of the spirit of the offerer, if they were to be effective.<sup>1</sup>

Difficulty is usually experienced in any attempt to understand symbolism. The rite itself usually does not reveal all the meaning.

The symbolic meaning of a thing does not inhere in the physical nature of the thing but is traditionally attached to it by analogy; it therefore may be apprehended only by one who knows the tradition. A salute to a flag has no natural significance; symbolically it is full of significance which can be understood only by those who have had some instruction.<sup>2</sup>

So it is with sacrifice. To acquire a full knowledge of its meaning, there must be a source of instruction.

After sacrifice had been established with Adam and the basic principles of the gospel had been explained to him,<sup>3</sup> God made provision for Adam to be baptized in water and to be born of the spirit.<sup>4</sup> This caused him to be "quickened in the inner man," or simply to receive the Holy Ghost.<sup>5</sup> It is the Holy Ghost that gives spiritual enlightenment and understanding to man. When Jesus promised the bestowal of

<sup>1</sup>Rowley, The Meaning of Sacrifice . . . , p. 87.

<sup>2</sup>Yerkes, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup>Moses 5-6

<sup>4</sup>Moses 6:64-65

<sup>5</sup>Moses 6:65-66

the Holy Ghost upon his disciples he spoke of the direction it would give to them.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you.<sup>1</sup>

The degree of understanding which will come to a person through the Holy Ghost seems to depend mainly upon conditions within the individual himself. Alma expressed it in these terms:

And now Alma began to expound these things unto him, saying: It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him. And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full.<sup>2</sup>

The principle of gaining understanding on the level of one's spiritual capacity was illustrated by the Savior when he explained to his apostles the reason for teaching the multitudes with parables:

Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. And the disciples came and said unto him, Why speaketh thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>John 14:26

<sup>2</sup>Alma 12:9-11

<sup>3</sup>Matt. 13:9-13



In summary: symbolism has been employed by God as a means of guiding man to Christ. The sacrificial system portrays similitude of the sacrifice of the only Begotten Son of God, and at the same time provides the means whereby the channels of communication can ever remain functional between God and man.

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## CHAPTER V

### PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED BY GOD

In order for sacrifice to be meaningful, there were definite requirements of personal worthiness resting upon the individual. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord."<sup>1</sup> Educative powers found in the act of sacrificing assisted the worshipper in his spiritual growth, but a certain amount of worthiness had to exist as a prerequisite if the sacrifice was to be acceptable unto the Lord. This condition is explained in the following:

The essential condition for the sanctification of a man who wished to offer sacrifice was that he should first purify himself. This meant that he freed himself from the tarnish of everyday life which sullied his soul. Of course this was only possible if his soul was not poisoned by greater sins; he who approached what was holy with a corrupt soul merely hastened on its complete destruction.<sup>2</sup>

#### Obedience

One of the basic purposes for which men were placed on earth was to "prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them."<sup>3</sup> Obedience as it pertains to sacrifice is a means of testing one's faithfulness to the commandments of God. Many rabbinical writers have cited its importance. For example:

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<sup>1</sup>Prov. 15:8

<sup>2</sup>Pedersen, 359-60.

<sup>3</sup>Abraham 3:25

It was also a Midrashic dictum to which Maimonides appealed in support of his view that the details of the sacrifices have been given to serve only as tests of obedience.<sup>1</sup>

A footnote comment from the same source adds the following:

What difference does it make to God whether a beast is killed by cutting the neck in front or in the back? Surely the commandments are only intended as a means of trying man (Midrash Gen. Rab. XLIV,1). This Midrash dictum is generally understood in the sense that the commandments are educative, enobling in character . . .<sup>2</sup>

The classical scriptural example of sacrifice being used as a means of testing man's obedience is the command of God to Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice.<sup>3</sup>

The King James translation states that God did "tempt" Abraham with this command.<sup>4</sup> The Jewish Publication Society translation uses the word "prove." Paul used the term "tried" in his reference to the incident.<sup>5</sup> The Doctrine and Covenants makes the following contribution:

Abraham was commanded to offer his son Isaac; nevertheless, it was written: Thou shalt not kill. Abraham, however, did not refuse, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness.<sup>6</sup>

A further explanation of the test placed upon Abraham is as follows:

This sacrifice shows clearly that the outward slaying of the ram was of quite secondary importance. This was not what God valued most highly, but rather the intention with which it was done, the inner sacrifice, the worship of the heart. In essentials this was the sacrifice of Abraham's fidelity, of the reality of his love for God. God carried this testing to its extreme limit in order that there might be shown more plainly the truly

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<sup>1</sup>Babylonian Talmud, xxx.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Gen. 22:1-18

<sup>4</sup>Gen. 22:1

<sup>5</sup>Heb. 11:17

<sup>6</sup>Doc. & Cov. 132:36

heroic quality of the servant's fidelity, of the friend of God, in spite of all the apparent contradictions in God's conduct toward him.<sup>1</sup>

The secondary nature of the act of sacrifice is emphasized as follows:

Surely there is a unity of view dominant in the Bible on this matter, even though there is a difference of emphasis and of the strength of passion put into the words. Nowhere is sacrifice presented save as secondary to obedience and to rightness of spirit.<sup>2</sup>

When men choose "their own ways" rather than follow God, they bring condemnation upon their own heads.<sup>3</sup> Such a lack of obedience prompted the Lord to say to Eli, "I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind."<sup>4</sup>

When King Saul offered unauthorized sacrifice, Samuel's announcement that he had done foolishly was based on the fact that Saul had disobeyed the commandments of the Lord.<sup>5</sup> When disobedience to specific instruction was repeated so soon,<sup>6</sup> Samuel brought the problem into clear perspective with these words:

And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than to sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the

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<sup>1</sup>M. D. Philippe, The Worship of God (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1959), Vol. 16, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>H. H. Rowley, The Unity of the Bible (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), p. 46.

<sup>3</sup>Isa. 66:3-5

<sup>4</sup>I Sam. 2:35

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 13:13

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 15:19

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Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.<sup>1</sup>

Obedience qualifies man to receive divine favor, without which, sacrifice is of no value to man.

### Holiness

The quality of holiness develops mainly as a result of obedience. When an individual chooses to obey God, he is faced first with learning what is the will of God, and secondly with incorporating God's will into his own life. As he succeeds, he becomes like God: holy.

Those who teach the will of God must help others to understand the difference between right and wrong. "And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean."<sup>2</sup> Once the difference between the holy and profane is known, the quality of holiness can be developed through consistent application of that which is holy. The effectiveness of sacrificial worship depends upon the degree of holiness which the worshipper has developed in his life.

Repentance is a necessary principle in the growth process. The holy person must therefore be a repentant person. From Midrashic writings, Rowley has selected many statements which express the need of repentance as it relates to the offering of sacrifice. Some of them as recorded in his footnote comments are as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 16:22-23

<sup>2</sup>Ezek. 45:23

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"If a man say, I will sin again and repent, he will be given no chance to repent. If he say, I will sin and the Day of Atonement will clear me, the Day of Atonement will effect no clearance." (Mishnah, Yoma, viii. 9)

"Sin offering and guilt offering and death and the Day of Atonement all put together do not effect atonement without repentance." (Tosephta Yoma, Vol. 9)

"Be not like fools who sin and make an offering without repenting." (Berachoth-23a, Babylonia Talmud)

To suggest that Judaism was concerned only with the act and not with the spirit is quite unfair. It did not condone deliberate sin, or think of sacrifice as a magical means of evading its consequences.

"This is so that a man shall not say within himself, I will go and do things which are ugly and unseemly, and I will bring an ox on which there is much flesh, and offer it on the altar and lo! I shall be in favour with Him and He will receive me as a penitent." (Midrash Rabbah).<sup>1</sup>

The Savior taught that if a man had not repented, he should wait and make amends before presenting his offering,<sup>2</sup> for God wants righteousness, not gifts.<sup>3</sup>

Moroni, the last of a long line of ancient prophets among the Nephites spoke of the need for personal holiness in these words:

For behold, God hath said a man being evil cannot do that which is good; for if he offereth a gift, or prayeth unto God, except he shall do it with real intent it profiteth him nothing. For behold it is not counted unto him for righteousness. For behold, if a man being evil giveth a gift, he doeth it grudgingly; wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had retained the gift; wherefore he is counted evil before God. And likewise also is it counted evil unto a man if he shall

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<sup>1</sup>Rowley, The Unity of the Bible (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953), footnote 3, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup>Matt. 5:24

<sup>3</sup>Matt. 23:23

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pray and not with real intent of heart; yea, and it profiteth him nothing, for God received none such. Wherefore, a man being evil cannot do that which is good; neither will he give a good gift.<sup>1</sup>

Many other scriptural statements could be added to enhance and clarify this concept.<sup>2</sup>

The gift or sacrifice given should represent the moral essence of its giver. To give an offering without blemish, while at the same time remaining unrepentant of known sins would stand as an act of hypocrisy, which thing Jesus was first to denounce.<sup>3</sup> Hence the sacrifice, along with being a similitude of Christ, should also be representative of the life of the one who offered it to God. Fairbairn gives the following impression:

. . . the particular animal offered in sacrifice was to be always perfect in its kind. In the region of the animal life it was to be a fitting representative of what man should be--what his real and proper representative must be, in the region of the moral and spiritual life. Any palpable defect or blemish, rendering it an imperfect specimen of the natural species it belonged to, would have visibly marred the image it was intended to present of the holy beauty which was sought by God first in man, and now in man's substitute and ransom.<sup>4</sup>

It is true that God wanted perfection in the animal offered, but only as a representation of what he wanted in the life of the giver. In reality then, the giver was giving

<sup>1</sup>Moroni 7:6-10

<sup>2</sup>See: Lev. 17-26; Psalms 4:5, 15:1-2; Prov. 15:8, 21:3,27; Ecc. 5:1; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:6; Matt. 5:24, 9:13, 12:7; Mark 12:28-34; Rom. 12:1-2; I. Cor. 3:17, 6:19-20; Omni 26; Doc. & Cov. 29:34-35; Doc. & Cov. 124:75.

<sup>3</sup>Matt. 23

<sup>4</sup>Fairbairn (1870 Edition), II, 311.

of himself and it was of himself that God had genuine concern. Oesterley quotes Emerson in one of his essays as follows:

Our tokens of compliment and love are for the most part barbarous. Rings and other jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only gift is a portion of thyself. Thou must bleed for me. Therefore the poet brings his poem; the shepherd his lamb; the farmer, corn; the miner, a gem; the sailor, coral and shells; the painter, his picture; the girl the handkerchief of her own sewing.<sup>1</sup>

The sacrifice must represent a life which has "bled" in its conquest of holiness; a life of dedication and consecration to God. This kind of dedication is sensed in an inscription on a bronze tablet from Sabwat, the ancient capital of Hadramaut, located in extreme southern Arabia, which speaks of that which a father dedicates to his God and in part includes his "soul, and mind, his children, his possessions, the light of his eye and the thoughts of his heart."<sup>2</sup>

The kind of holy consecration desired by God is expressed in the words of Ehler as follows:

While the people in appearing before God did not come before him empty, but brought Him gifts of the increase they had gained in their ordinary calling, they not only gave a practical testimony that all their gain, all the fruits of their labor were from the divine blessing, but they at the same time consecrated their worldly activity, and along therewith their life itself, with all its powers to the Lord, who had taken them for His peculiar treasure.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Oesterley, 143-4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 49-50.

<sup>3</sup>Fairbairn (Zondervan Reprint Edition), II, 282; Quoted from Ehler in Herzog's Encyclopaedia, X, 625.



### A Broken Heart and A Contrite Spirit

The concept of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, although very closely related to holiness, is given special consideration because it embodies the deeper spiritual elements of sacrifice which were to continue as an essential function in worship even after the cessation of blood sacrifice by the atonement of Christ. To the Nephites the Savior gave the following commandment:

And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings. And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not.<sup>1</sup>

As indicated also in this quotation, the condition of a broken heart and a contrite spirit was required before the baptism of the Holy Ghost could take place. Moroni indicated that baptism by water was withheld until the recipient had repented of his sins and had "come forth with a broken heart and a contrite spirit."<sup>2</sup>

The Lord is no respecter of persons, but requires rich and poor alike to produce these qualities in order to be accepted.

Woe unto you rich men, that will not give your substance to the poor, for your riches will canker your souls; and this shall be your lamentation in the day of visitation,

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<sup>1</sup>III Nephi 9:19-20

<sup>2</sup>Moroni 6:2

and of judgement, and of indignation: The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my soul is not saved! Woe unto your poor men, whose hearts are not broken, whose spirits are not contrite, and whose bellies are not satisfied, and whose hands are not stayed from laying hold upon other men's goods, whose eyes are full of greediness, and who will not labor with your own hands! But blessed are the poor who are pure in heart, whose hearts are broken and whose spirits are contrite, for they shall see the kingdom of God coming in power and great glory unto their deliverance; for the fatness of the earth shall be theirs.<sup>1</sup>

It should be clearly understood that the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit had always existed and ought to have been offered along with every blood sacrifice in Old Testament times. The Psalmist expressed the need for it when he said: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart."<sup>2</sup>

One of the basic purposes for which the Law of Moses was given was so "ye shall believe in me, and that ye shall repent of your sins, and come unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit."<sup>3</sup> Those who do come forth with this condition in their hearts are the only ones who will be redeemed through the Holy Messiah who gave himself as a sacrifice for sin.<sup>4</sup>

A description of the type of life one would live if his heart was broken and his spirit contrite is given in the following words of the Lord:

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<sup>1</sup>Doc. & Cov. 56:16-18

<sup>2</sup>Psalms 51:17

<sup>3</sup>III Nephi 12:19

<sup>4</sup>II Nephi 2:6-7

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Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And that thou mayest keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day; for verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High; nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times; but remember that on this, the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord. And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full. Verily, this is fasting and prayer, or in other words, rejoicing and prayer. And inasmuch as ye do these things with thanksgiving, with cheerful hearts and countenances, not with much laughter, for this is a sin, but with a glad heart and a cheerful countenance--verily I say, that inasmuch as ye do this, the fullness of the earth is yours. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Development of these qualities of obedience and personal worthiness in connection with sacrifice give deeper meaning and import to the purpose of the sacred rite as an institution of God for the benefit of man.

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<sup>1</sup>Doc. & Cov. 59:8-16

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## CHAPTER VI

### BASIC TYPES OF OFFERINGS

The Hebrew sacrificial system embodies various types of offerings. Some are designated as having belonged to an older period than others. Two offerings which are usually thought of as being older are the burnt offering and the sacred meal or peace offering.<sup>1</sup> Fairbairn speaks of these two offerings as follows:

There appears to have been at most but two distinct forms of sacrifice, and these probably but slightly varied--the burnt-offering, and the peace-offering. That such distinctions did exist, as to constitute two kinds of sacrifice under these respective appellations seems unquestionable, from mention being made of both at the ratification of the covenant, prior to the introduction of the peculiar distinctions of the Mosaic ritual.<sup>2</sup>

The Talmudic writers list three basic categories of offerings. The first is designed "Honorific," and includes the peace, thank and burnt offerings. The second is called "Piacular," under which is listed the sin and guilt offerings. The last is the "Tributary," which includes firstlings and tithes.<sup>3</sup> It is significant that the three kinds of offerings listed under "Honorific" are the same as those already seen belonging to the earlier period.

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<sup>1</sup>Adolphe Lods, Israel From Its Beginnings to the Middle of the Eighth Century (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), p. 277.

<sup>2</sup>Fairbairn (1870 Edition), II, 21.

<sup>3</sup>The Babylonian Talmud, p. xx.

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Thomas O. Hall lists but two divisions: "Sin Offerings" and "Sweet Savor Offerings." Under the first he lists the regular sin offerings, the trespass or guilt offerings, and the special sin offerings on the Day of Atonement.<sup>1</sup> The second division lists the burnt offerings and peace offerings.<sup>2</sup> Again it is interesting to note that the division, "Sweet Savor Offerings," include those which belong to the earlier period.

The earlier forms of sacrifices seemed to maintain their prominence even during the later period. The book of Leviticus in its enumeration and explanation of the various forms gives precedence to the earlier types.<sup>3</sup> On the important occasion of the dedication of Solomon's Temple, burnt, meat and peace offerings were sacrificed, which adds significantly to the fundamental position which they held.<sup>4</sup>

#### Burnt Offerings

The burnt offerings hold a position of precedence in the whole sacrificial system. Its significance and particular meaning are explained in the following:

It is, no doubt, partly on account of this greater antiquity, especially of the burnt-offering and of its more comprehensive character, that the precedence was given to it in the sacrificial ritual. Yet only partly on that

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas O. Hall, Jr., "The Meaning of the Old Testament Sacrificial System in Hebrew Religion" (unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1955), pp. 9-15.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 15-24.

<sup>3</sup>Lev. 1-6

<sup>4</sup>I Kings 8:62-64

account; for as this kind of offering is the only one that had no special occasions connected with it, and was that also which every morning and every evening was presented for all Israel, it was plainly intended to be viewed as the normal sacrifice of the covenant people--embodying the thoughts and feelings which should habitually prevail in the bosom and regulate the life of a pious Israelite. Hence also, the altar of sacrifice bore the name of the altar of burnt-offering. As the true members of the covenant stood already in an accepted condition before God, the idea of expiation could manifestly not hold the most prominent place in the sacrifice; what should rather have held such a place was the sense of entire dependence on God, and devoted surrender to His service, which Israel was called as God's redeemed heritage to profess and manifest.<sup>1</sup>

The burnt offerings "shadowed forth Christ as the one and all for His people,"<sup>2</sup> meaning that they must develop a sense of entire dependence upon God for their redemption.<sup>3</sup>

Apparently it was intended that meat (or meal) offerings were never offered alone, but only in connection with the burnt and peace offerings.<sup>4</sup>

#### Peace Offerings

The peace offering carried with it the idea of complete, peaceful relations with God, and was usually accompanied by a whole burnt offering.<sup>5</sup>

Thoburn suggests that the idea of a common meal or fellowship with God is significant in the peace offering.<sup>6</sup> Further development in the communion concept in the peace offering is given in the following:

<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn (1870 Edition), II, 321-22.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 304.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 279.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 311.

<sup>5</sup>Oesterley, 87-88.

<sup>6</sup>Thoburn, p. 45.

The participation by the offerer and his friends, this family feast upon the sacrifice, may be regarded as the most distinctive characteristic of the peace-offerings. . . . It was therefore the symbol of established friendship with God, and near communion with Him in the blessings of His kingdom, and was associated in the minds of the worshippers with feelings of peculiar joy and gladness,--but these always of a sacred character.<sup>1</sup>

The peace offering is recognized as being one of the oldest. Its purpose seems to have been designed for the maintenance or restoration of proper relations with God.<sup>2</sup> In a footnote comment, this same source refers to Pedersen, who says of this offering: "They are called 'covenant offerings.' Their name shelamim is connected with the word shalom = peace, but their precise purpose is difficult to define."<sup>3</sup> Thank, praise, vow and free-will offerings usually all fall under the classification of peace offerings. A description of each is given as follows:

The thank or praise offering was the expression of the worshipper's feelings of adoring gratitude on account of having received some spontaneous tokens of the Lord's goodness--this was the highest form, as here the grace of God shone prominently forth. The vow-sacrifice was the expression of like feelings for benefits received from the divine beneficence, but which were partly conferred in consideration of a vow made by the worshipper--this was of a lower grade, having something of man connected with it. And the free-will offering, which was presented without any constraint of necessity, and either without respect to any special acts of mercy experienced, or with a view to the obtaining of such, occupied a still lower ground, as the worshipper here took the initiative and appeared in the attitude of one seeking after God.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn (Zondervan Reprint), II, 309.

<sup>2</sup>Rowley, Meaning of Sacrifice . . . , 84-85.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 85.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 307.

The joyous and thankful nature of the peace offering provided inspiration for the Psalmist.<sup>1</sup> The positive framework into which this offering fits portrays a feeling of hope and joy which is consistent with the idea that sacrifice was originally in similitude of the merciful sacrifice of Christ.

### Sin Offerings

The sin offering belongs more particularly to the Mosaic period of time and as such will receive further treatment later on as a sacrifice unique to the law of Moses. Only brief treatment will be given here. The sin offering was concerned mainly with the "consciousness of sin and its atonement,"<sup>2</sup> that is, to help man to recognize sin and thus take steps to overcome it. The "practical motive" as seen by the Talmudic writers was for the "prevention of sin,"<sup>3</sup> or as another has stated, to "purge the soul of evil."<sup>4</sup> Since all atonement for sin must come ultimately through the blood of Christ, the specific meaning of atonement as it is associated with the sin offering will be given special consideration when the offering is discussed under the law of Moses.

The guilt offering is so closely related to the sin offering that the Lord has given but one law for both.<sup>5</sup> One distinction between the two offerings is that the sin

<sup>1</sup>Psalms 27:6; 107:22

<sup>2</sup>Fairbairn (Zondervan Reprint), II, 283.

<sup>3</sup>Babylonian Talmud, xxvii.

<sup>4</sup>Pederson, 272-273.

<sup>5</sup>Lev. 7:7



offering is consistently referred to as sinning against the "commandments of the Lord," whereas in the trespass offering the sin has been against the "holy things of the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

Variations of these basic offerings were used on special occasions or for special purposes. Of these the consecration offering and offerings on the Day of Atonement would be typical.

Although particular meanings existed with each of the various types of offerings, it is still evident that the specific and fundamental meaning of every offering was to show forth similitude of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

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<sup>1</sup>Lev. 4-7.

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## CHAPTER VII

### PRE-MOSAIC SACRIFICE

Old Testament and Mosaic sacrifices are often viewed synonymously with no consideration being given to sacrifice in pre-Mosaic times.<sup>1</sup> Modern scriptural sources quoted in this thesis substantiate the existence of sacrificial worship since the time of Adam's expulsion from the Garden of Eden. In view of this fact, a brief historical account of their pre-Mosaic existence will now be given.

#### Cain and Abel

Since sacrifice with Adam has already been considered, this chapter begins with the account of the sacrifice offered by Cain and Able. The main facts involved are that Cain offered up an offering of the fruit of the ground and it was not accepted, while Abel offered up the firstling of his flock and it was accepted.<sup>2</sup> The question is why one offering was accepted and the other rejected.

The account of this event as recorded in the book of Moses adds valuable information to the details of the event as it appears in the Bible. Some additions are as follows: Before the sacrifices were even offered, it indicates that

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<sup>1</sup>H. H. Rowley, The Faith of Israel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), pp. 46-47.

<sup>2</sup>Gen. 4:3-7

"Cain hearkened not, saying: Who is the Lord that I should know him?"<sup>1</sup> And "Cain loved Satan more than God. And Satan commanded him, saying: Make an offering unto the Lord."<sup>2</sup> After stating that the Lord had no respect for Cain's offering, Moses adds: "Now Satan knew this, and it pleased him."<sup>3</sup> The Lord warned Cain that if he did not do well, sin would lie at the door. Moses continues, "And Satan desireth to have thee; and except thou shalt hearken to my commandments, I will deliver thee up, and it shall be unto thee according to his desire."<sup>4</sup>

It should be observed from the account in Moses that Cain rebelled against God and hearkened instead to Satan.<sup>5</sup> This suggests that the basic problem was with Cain himself. This position is supported by the following account concerning Seth: "And God revealed himself unto Seth, and he rebelled not, but offered an acceptable sacrifice, like unto his brother Abel."<sup>6</sup>

Apparently, <sup>one of</sup> the things that made Seth's sacrifice like Abel's and hence unlike Cain's was the fact that he rebelled not. Paul commented to the Hebrews that it was Abel's faith and righteousness that caused his sacrifice to be "more excellent."<sup>7</sup>

The door was left open for Cain to repent and again

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<sup>1</sup>Moses 5:16

<sup>2</sup>Moses 5:18

<sup>3</sup>Moses 5:21

<sup>4</sup>Moses 5:23

<sup>5</sup>Moses 5:16-18

<sup>6</sup>Moses 6:3

<sup>7</sup>Heb. 11:4

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establish his relationship with God when the Lord said, "If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted," but "except thou shalt hearken unto my commandments, I will deliver thee up."<sup>1</sup>

There is the probability also that Cain erred in the kind of offering. The original commandment did state that the firstlings of the flocks should be offered,<sup>2</sup> and Cain's offering was of the fruit of the ground.<sup>3</sup>

The prophet Joseph Smith taught that since Cain's offering was not in obedience to the command of God, he could not have given it in faith, and without faith it would be sin. His statement is as follows:

By faith in this atonement or plan of redemption, Abel offered to God a sacrifice that was accepted, which was the firstlings of the flock. Cain offered of the fruit of the ground, and was not accepted, because he could not do it in faith, he could have no faith, or could not exercise faith contrary to the plan of heaven. It must be shedding the blood of the Only Begotten to atone for man; for this was the plan of redemption; and without the shedding of blood was no remission; and as the sacrifice was instituted for a type, by which man was to discern the great Sacrifice which God had prepared; to offer a sacrifice contrary to that, no faith could be exercised, because redemption was not purchased in that way, nor the power of atonement instituted after that order; consequently, Cain could have no faith; and whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.<sup>4</sup>

Without attempting to explain the full reason for the rejected sacrifice, the following elucidation is given as a good summary statement:

The power, glory and blessings of the priesthood could not continue with those who received ordination only as

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<sup>1</sup>Moses 5:23

<sup>2</sup>Moses 5:5

<sup>3</sup>Gen. 4:3

<sup>4</sup>Smith, Teachings of the Prophet . . . , 58.

*Priesthood*

their righteousness continued; for Cain also being authorized to offer sacrifice, but not offering it in righteousness, was cursed. It signifies, then, that the ordinances must be kept in the very way God has appointed; otherwise their priesthood will prove a cursing instead of a blessing.<sup>1</sup>

### Patriarchs

Although the body of information is small, evidence of sacrificial practice all through the Patriarchal Period is recognized. The questions most often raised pertain to its origin and significance during that period. Maimonides views the sacrifice of the Patriarchal Period as "honorific," meaning that they were a voluntary type and had probably grown out of a desire to be like other nations around them. In other words he suggests that they were borrowed from the heathen nations.<sup>2</sup> However, he also points out that they were not suppressed in the Torah, but "paradoxically enough," they even received "divine approval."<sup>3</sup> This position is problematic when considered in light of God's commands that Israel break completely with their heathen neighbors.<sup>4</sup> Rowley maintains that "it is impossible that all of Israel's ritual was derived from Canaanite sources."<sup>5</sup> Fairbairn holds no reservations whatever. He simply states:

From the time of Abel, then, downwards through the whole course of antediluvian and patriarchal history, it appears

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1949), Vol. IV, p. 209.

<sup>2</sup>Babylonian Talmud, xxvi.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ex. 33:16

<sup>5</sup>Rowley, The Meaning of Sacrifice . . . , 82-83.

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that the regular and formal worship of God mainly consisted in the offering of sacrifice, and that this was not rendered by a sort of religious venture on the part of the worshippers, but with the known sanction, and virtual, if not explicit, appointment of God.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that sacrifice was so significant in the Abrahamic dispensation, and that it stood as the basic criteria upon which the Israelites sought release from bondage,<sup>2</sup> would seem to establish clearly the scriptural support of sacrifice during this early period.

### Universal Practice

Another factor which sheds light on Pre-Mosaic sacrifice is its widespread existence among other nations from the very earliest times. From the introduction to the Talmud we read:

All that can be said with certainty is that sacrifices are found to have formed a universal element of worship from the earliest times, and that there are traces among the precursors of Israel of sacrificial practices anterior to those instituted in the Torah.<sup>3</sup>

Rabbi Epstein is quick to assert, however:

This admission does not detract from the claim of the sacrificial laws of the Torah to divine origin any more than the fact that religious belief did not begin with the Sinaitic Revelation affects the validity of the Religion of Israel. On the contrary, the universality and antiquity of sacrifices only serve to testify to a deep-rooted sacrificial instinct in the human heart which seeks to respond to the claims of God upon man, and which like all other instincts needs correcting, purifying and directing.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn (1870 Edition), 288-89.

<sup>2</sup>Ex. 3-12

<sup>3</sup>Babylonian Talmud, xxi

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

The modern discovery of the Ras Shamra Tablets has accomplished much to establish the existence of sacrifice before the time of Moses. Their discovery, however, has led many to believe that the Israelites borrowed almost entirely from the Canaanites. Rowley has quoted Dussaud as saying "our knowledge of the Phoenician-Canaanite cult is now quite sufficient to warrant the conclusion that the greater part of the Israelitish sacrificial practices had been learnt from the Canaanites."<sup>1</sup> After describing many similarities between Ras Shamra and Hebrew sacrificial worship, Jack maintains that "much of it was common to both peoples, and consequently that the Jewish Pentateuchal codes embody cultural elements of a pre-Mosaic nature."<sup>2</sup>

With the knowledge we now have that sacrifice was practiced by Adam, it is not difficult to comprehend that it would become a part of every culture. Likewise, the fact that it can be traced into every culture gives strong support to the concept that sacrifice was instituted with the father of the human race.

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<sup>1</sup>Rowley, The Meaning of Sacrifice . . . , 79.

<sup>2</sup>J. W. Jack, The Ras Shamra Tablets: Their Bearing on the Old Testament (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 38 George Street, 1935), pp. 6, 31.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### SACRIFICE UNDER THE LAW OF MOSES

The children of Israel were led out of Egyptian bondage and into the Land of Canaan in fulfillment of a covenant which the Lord had made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.<sup>1</sup> Although not fully worthy of this blessing, the Lord granted it to Israel because of the covenant he had made previously.<sup>2</sup>

Moses attempted to lead this nation of emancipated slaves in the path of obedience but they would not follow, so a "preparatory gospel" was given to help them develop the holiness they needed. This action on the part of the Lord is explained in the following:

Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; but they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fullness of his glory. Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also; and the lesser priesthood continued, which priesthood holdeth the key of the ministering of angels and the preparatory gospel; which gospel is the gospel of repentance and of baptism, and the remission of sins, and the law of carnal commandments, which the Lord in his wrath caused to continue with the house of Aaron among the children of Israel until John, whom God raised up, being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ex. 6:4-8

<sup>2</sup>Deut. 9:5

<sup>3</sup>Doc. & Cov. 84:23-27



This system of "carnal commandments" with all of its ritualistic detail is referred to as the "law of Moses." Understanding the relationship of this law to sacrifice and covenants which were already in existence is vital to an understanding of sacrifice as it was practiced under the law of Moses.

Consideration is given first to the relationship between the law of Moses and the original covenant. Paul explained that the law did not "disannul" the covenant which had been previously established.

And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.<sup>1</sup>

The law was "added" to help accomplish the purposes of the covenant.

Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. . . . Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.<sup>2</sup>

The following commentary on Paul's explanation describes the relationship between the law and the covenant:

The view now presented as to the primary reason for the giving of the law is in perfect accordance with what is stated by the apostle in Gal.iii. 19: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." The meaning is, it was added to the provisions and blessings secured in the earlier covenant of promise, because

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<sup>1</sup>Gal. 3:7

<sup>2</sup>Gal. 3:19, 24-25

of the disposition in the hearts of the people to transgress the obligations under which they stood, and fall in with the corruptions of the world. To check this disposition--to keep their minds under the discipline of a severe and holy restraint--and circumscribe and limit their way, so that no excuse or liberty should be left them to turn aside from the right path--for this reason the law was added to the covenant. But for that inherent proneness to sin, now sufficiently made manifest, there should have been no need for such an addition. Had the members of the covenant thoroughly imbibed its spirit, and responded as they should have done to the love God had manifested toward them in making good its provisions, they would of themselves have been inclined to do the things which were contained in the law. This, however, they were not; and hence the law came, presupposing and building upon the moral aim of the covenant, and more stringently binding upon their consciences the demands of righteousness, in order to stem the current of their sinful inclinations. It was to these inclinations alone that the law carried a hostile and frowning aspect: in respect to the people themselves, it came as a minister of good, and not of evil; and so far from being opposed to the promises of the covenant, it was rather to be viewed as a friendly monitor and guide, directing the people how to continue in the blessing of the covenant, and fulfill the ends for which it was established.<sup>1</sup>

The law did not stand at all in opposition to the covenant. It was designed as a temporary aid which would in due time be removed. This was explained by Christ to the Nephites when he said:

And because I said unto you that old things have passed away, I do not destroy that which hath been spoken concerning things which are to come. For behold, the covenant which I have made with my people is not all fulfilled; but the law which was given unto Moses hath an end in me.<sup>2</sup>

The covenant, or gospel as it is usually called, will not be fulfilled until it shall have accomplished its full intended

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<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn (1870 Edition), II, 172-73.

<sup>2</sup>III Nephi 15:7-8

purpose in the salvation of man.<sup>1</sup>

The ultimate ends desired under the law were the same as those desired under the original covenant.

And behold, this is the whole meaning of the law, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal.<sup>2</sup>

Although the ends sought were the same, the law of Moses dealt with them in a more elementary way.

Consideration is now given to the method employed by the law of Moses in the accomplishment of its purpose. Recognizing the individuality of man, God works with man on man's own level. Hence, Jacob taught:

Behold, if ye were holy I would speak unto you of holiness; but as ye are not holy, and ye look upon me as a teacher, it must needs be expedient that I teach you the consequences of sin.<sup>3</sup>

The extensive detail of the law was given for the following purpose:

And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.<sup>4</sup>

Israel's priests "violated" God's law when they failed to show "difference between the holy and profane" and "between the unclean and the clean."<sup>5</sup> To teach the "sinfulness of sin" would prepare the way for a soul to eventually come to

<sup>1</sup>Moses 5:59

<sup>2</sup>Alma 34:14

<sup>3</sup>II Nephi 9:48

<sup>4</sup>Leviticus 10:10-11

<sup>5</sup>Ezek. 22:26

Christ through obedience.<sup>1</sup> The function of both the positive and negative in the educational process under the law of Moses is seen in the following:

While the positive precepts have been ordained for the cultivation of virtue and for the promotion of those finer qualities which distinguish the truly great religious and ethical being, the negative precepts are designed to combat vice and suppress other evil tendencies and instincts that stand athwart man's strivings towards perfection.<sup>2</sup>

The ultimate end of both the positive and negative commandments in the law seem to have been for the purpose of helping Israel to understand the commandments and to come unto the Lord "with a broken heart and a contrite spirit."<sup>3</sup>

The law of Moses, like the original covenant and the rite of sacrificial worship had its most significant expression in the holiness developed in the lives of men. The law was superimposed upon these former institutions. This superstructure did not alter the ends desired, but simply provided a means commensurate with the ideological level of the people with whom it was initiated.

#### The Significance of Ritual

The process of developing holiness in the lives of men was facilitated through the use of ritual.<sup>4</sup> The detailed, systematic method of performing a rite functioned as a

<sup>1</sup>Charles F. Pfeiffer, The Book of Leviticus. A Study Manual (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1957), p. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup>Babylonian Talmud, xxiii.

<sup>3</sup>III Nephi 12:19

<sup>4</sup>Babylonian Talmud, xxiii.

"vehicle" for the spiritual qualities needed in the life of the worshipper. \

The observance of the ritual law which the sacrificial cult inspired made it a vehicle of Holiness of the highest expression. Whatever its root meaning, Kodesh, the Hebrew term for Holiness, devotes that which pertains to God and that which is recognized to be the character of God. . . . The pursuit of Holiness involved for man a self-surrender to God accompanied by a resolve to make the divine pattern of righteousness his own. This is the Holiness which the sacrificial cult was divinely designed to foster.<sup>1</sup>

The ritualistic detail appears, at least in the law of Moses, to be very burdensome. Maimonides maintains, though, that details are a necessary part of anything and that the reason is not always discernible. He has said: "Those who . . . trouble themselves to find a cause for any of these detailed rules are in my eyes void of sense."<sup>2</sup> Epstein, commenting on the position held by Maimonides, gives the following:

What Maimonides means to convey, in deprecating all attempts to discover a reason for the details, is that their value is derived not from their content but from the fact that they are grounded in the will of God.<sup>3</sup>

Although there is no explanation for each minute detail in the ritual, the Book of Mormon does give a specific reason for the strict nature of the law. Abinadi explains the reason as follows:

And now I say unto you that it was expedient that there should be a law given to the children of Israel, yea,

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., xxi.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., xxvii-xxviii.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

even a very strict law; for they were a stiff-necked people, quick to do iniquity, and slow to remember the Lord their God; therefore there was a law given them, yea, a law of performances and ordinances, a law which they were to observe strictly from day to day, to keep them in remembrance of God and their duty towards him. But behold, I say unto you, that all these things were types of things to come.<sup>1</sup>

It should be observed from the scripture just cited that the Mosaic code added many strict laws of performance which did not previously exist. This would indicate that originally sacrifice may well have been a relatively simple ordinance.

There is a strong element of discipline in the ritualistic system through which the very heart of man "might be wrought into some conformity to the righteousness itself."<sup>2</sup>

The relationship between the ritual and spiritual goal is summed up as follows:

The Mosaic ritual had at once a shell and a kernel,-- its shell, the outward rites and observances it enjoined; its kernel, the spiritual relations which these indicated, and the spiritual truths which they embodied and expressed.<sup>3</sup>

Consistent obedience and deep contemplative reflection inspired by the power of the spirit provides opportunity for much to be learned through the ritualistic detail of sacrifice.

#### Sacrifices Unique to the Law

The establishment of the law of Moses seemed to affect

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<sup>1</sup>Mosiah 13:29-31

<sup>2</sup>Fairbairn (1870 Edition), II, 181.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., I, 76-77.

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sacrifice in two ways. First, the types of sacrifice which had previously existed were laden with many new regulations,<sup>1</sup> and second, new types of sacrifices were instituted for purposes incident to the law of Moses itself. Sin and guilt offerings which were basic among these new types, served a unique purpose in developing in man the concept of atonement for sin. In order to understand the function of sin offerings, especially as they relate to expiation and atonement, it is necessary to consider the emotional and intellectual nature of a liberated slave.

It was rather difficult for the Israelites to envision the blessing and opportunities that lay ahead of them as a free people. Their shallow background experience caused them to fear any semblance of independence. Imposed security had destroyed their sense of individual responsibility. It had so subdued their faith in God and in themselves that even after witnessing his mighty hand in parting the sea through which they passed dry-shod, the first pangs of hunger caused them to cry out with murmuring words:

. . . Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.<sup>2</sup>

In response to their need, the Lord promptly sent manna from heaven to satisfy their hunger.<sup>3</sup> Inconceivable as it may appear, the "children" of Israel were soon heard to say:

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<sup>1</sup>Lev. 1-3

<sup>2</sup>Ex. 16:3

<sup>3</sup>Ex. 16:4

And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna before our eyes.<sup>1</sup>

There was no power of projection in their minds. The children of Israel seemed to recognize only that which lay within immediate reach. Is it reasonable that the concept of a yet distant redeemer could have had much impact on them? This description is not to be construed as a condemnation upon Israel, but only an attempt to understand what happens, or better still, what does not happen to the soul of man when his agency is lost and he becomes a slave, dependent upon someone else to supply his needs and make his decisions for him. In order to wrest the mind of man away from such victimized complacency and at the same time lift it to a condition of faith in an eternal redeemer, the economy of the law of Moses had to employ methods of a most elemental nature. It had to begin with man on his own existing level and slowly transform his power of comprehension from the simple to the more complex.

The essence of sacrificial worship originally required personal abstract analyzation in the mind of man before it could become very meaningful. Man had to be capable of realizing that atonement for his personal sins existed in the far distant future act of an infinite redeemer. He also had to

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<sup>1</sup>Num. 11:4-6



realize that the existing rite of sacrifice was only in similitude of that future event and as such had no immediate expiation quality, except as born of faith and hope in the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ himself.

Having a concept of atonement only in and through Jesus Christ, one may well become perplexed when he finds consistent reference in the law of Moses to the effect that "the priest shall make an atonement for his sin . . . and it shall be forgiven him."<sup>1</sup> The entire sacrificial system of sin offerings under the law of Moses seemed to some to imply that the animal sacrifices had actual powers of atonement.

Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews, provides significant help in understanding the meaning of atonement in the sin offering. He indicates that the priests who offer gifts and sacrifices under the law, serve as an "example and shadow of heavenly things."<sup>2</sup> In other words, it would appear that God was providing through the priests an immediate earthly representation of that which would eventually be accomplished by God himself. As if to say that since Israel could not comprehend the far distant atonement sufficiently to live in faith toward it, God was providing an immediate example or shadow of things to come which expressed the concepts which existed in the infinite atonement, and hence would help the mind to develop an understanding of that which was to come. This type of relationship had previously been utilized by

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<sup>1</sup>Lev. 4:35

<sup>2</sup>Heb. 8:4-5

God in leading Israel out of bondage. Of Aaron, God said to Moses:

And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.<sup>1</sup>

Moses was as God to Aaron. In the sin offering the priests seemed to function on behalf of the people in much the same way as God would. They offered offerings for sin which were representative of the offering which Christ himself would make.

Paul explains that blood sacrifices under the law purifies the "patterns" of heavenly things, but that the sacrifice of Christ purified the "heavenly things themselves."<sup>2</sup> It appears that by "patterns" he meant the extensive ritualistic ceremony so prevalent under the law. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood."<sup>3</sup> Webster defines "purged" as follows: "To cleanse or purify by separating and carrying off whatever is impure . . . To clear of guilt or moral or ceremonial defilement."<sup>4</sup> This idea correlates well with the general nature of the Mosaic procedure. For example:

And he brought the bullock for the sin offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bullock for the sin offering. And he slew it; and Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar,

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<sup>1</sup>Ex. 4:16

<sup>2</sup>Heb. 9:23

<sup>3</sup>Heb. 9:22

<sup>4</sup>Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Cambridge, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1949).

and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it.<sup>1</sup>

(By constantly having before them the pattern of atonement, by applying it in a ceremonial or ritualistic sense, the children of Israel would be able to envision the meaning of an infinite atonement and its effect upon their moral sins.)

It would appear that sins for which atonement was made under the law of Moses were transgressions of the ritualistic code like the sacrifice of Christ would make atonement for the moral transgressions of man, thus setting a "figure" or "pattern" of that which was to come. This concept helps to explain why sin offerings were required for such things as childbirth,<sup>2</sup> leprosy,<sup>3</sup> touching the bed or flesh of one afflicted,<sup>4</sup> and the many other similar happenings in normal living where there is no indication of moral sin.

The sin offering through the "blood of bulls and goats" purified the "flesh," while the "blood of Christ" would purge the "conscience."<sup>5</sup> Never was the blood of animals intended to relieve the conscience of sin, but only to keep sin in remembrance. Paul explains that if the animal sacrifices had been capable of relieving the conscience of sin, that one sin offering would have been sufficient, but instead of clearing the mind, the first offering for sin was repeated at least once a year to keep the consciousness of sin alive in

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<sup>1</sup>Lev. 8:14-15

<sup>2</sup>Lev. 12:1-7

<sup>3</sup>Lev. 13-14

<sup>4</sup>Lev. 15:5-15

<sup>5</sup>Heb. 9:13-14

~~the mind of man.~~<sup>1</sup> This explains the basic purpose of the Day of Atonement" which was established to "make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year."<sup>2</sup>

The ~~sin offerings~~ then, were essentially for the purpose of ceremonially purifying the flesh, and at the same time providing a means of keeping the sin in remembrance. By contrast, ~~when man had been cleansed through the blood of Christ, his sins and iniquities were remembered no more,~~<sup>3</sup> and there is "no more offering for sin."<sup>4</sup>

Paul makes another point that should be mentioned. It is that under the new covenant, which would fulfill the law of Moses, the laws of God would be in the minds and hearts of men, and hence they would not have to teach one another.<sup>5</sup> This condition was to be accomplished through the Holy Ghost.<sup>6</sup> The context seems to suggest that after Christ had offered the sacrifice "once for all," the example constantly set forth by the priests would no longer be needed. In other words, the law of "carnal commandments" kept them in remembrance,<sup>7</sup> while under the full gospel, the Holy Ghost was a witness to them that their sins had been forgiven.<sup>8</sup> On another occasion, Paul said to the saints at Galatia, "But if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Heb. 10:1-4

<sup>2</sup>Lev. 16:34

<sup>3</sup>Heb. 10:14-17

<sup>4</sup>Heb. 10:18

<sup>5</sup>Heb. 8:7-11

<sup>6</sup>Heb. 10:14-16

<sup>7</sup>Doc. & Cov. 84:27; Heb. 10:1-4

<sup>8</sup>Heb. 10:14-18

<sup>9</sup>Gal. 5:18

An excellent statement describing the attitude that should have existed in the mind of man under the law of Moses is contained in the Book of Mormon as follows:

And not withstanding we believe in Christ, we keep the law of Moses, and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ, until the law shall be fulfilled. For, for this end was the law given; wherefore the law hath become dead unto us, and we are made alive in Christ because of our faith; yet we must keep the law because of the commandments. And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins. Wherefore, we speak concerning the law that our children may know the deadness of the law; and they, by knowing the deadness of the law, may look forward unto that life which is in Christ, and know for what end the law was given. And after the law is fulfilled in Christ, that they need not harden their hearts against him when the law ought to be done away.<sup>1</sup>

As is evident in the Old Testament itself, it is impossible to talk about the sin offering without involving the element of atonement. However, that atonement is only a provisional and exemplary one intended to establish a pattern of an infinite atonement which is eternally efficacious. It is within this context that quotations from other scholars will now be employed to develop further meaning. Many speak as if the sin offering actually effected permanent atonement for certain sins of man, but it is to be understood that this thesis maintains the position that atonement for any and all moral transgressions of man must be through the blood of Jesus Christ. By the blood of Christ we are sanctified.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>II Nephi 25:24-27

<sup>2</sup>Heb. 10:10

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The strict detail of the Mosaic system would naturally increase the possibility of breaking a law which would bring the individual under condemnation. This awareness of sin might be referred to as the starting point of the law of Moses. Speaking of the detailed nature of the law, Maimonides maintains that its object is to "impress on the mind of every sinner and transgressor the necessity of continually remembering and mentioning his sin."<sup>1</sup> He explains further that constant repetition of this process of remembering one's sins will eventually lead a person to the point of considering "disobedience to God as a disgraceful thing. Everyone will thus be careful that he should not sin."<sup>2</sup> Transgression in this sense has been designated as "ritual sin." The function of sacrifice in expiating these ritualistic sins is explained as follows:

The ritualistic law is charged with a moral and religious dynamism capable of transforming the individual and through the individual, the society of which he forms a unit. The disregard of a ritual precept is accordingly no longer a private affair; insofar as it lowers man's moral fibre and his power of resistance to evil, even ritual offence is in a sense a social offence. Viewed in this light, the insistence of the Torah on the need of sacrifice in expiation of ritual sin becomes readily intelligible. The purpose is twofold. They serve to bring home to the offender the seriousness of ritual sins even if committed unwillingly, and at the same time they guard him from lapsing through force of habit into willful transgression.<sup>3</sup>

Fairbairn adds the idea that the Mosaic sacrifices

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<sup>1</sup>Babylonian Talmud, xxiv.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

provided a "present relief."<sup>1</sup> Paul expressed the idea that the Mosaic sacrifices could never remove the sin completely. Through such man could never become perfect.<sup>2</sup> After recounting many acts of faith on the part of Old Testament followers Paul concludes with these words:

And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.<sup>3</sup>

Even though they had obtained a good report through their faithful actions, they still had to look forward to a day when some better thing would be provided, if they were to "be made perfect." Paul had already explained what it was that would make them perfect. Speaking of Christ he said:

By the which we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God . . . For one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.<sup>4</sup>

The Book of Mormon emphasizes the necessity of Christ's atonement as follows:

And now ye have said that salvation cometh by the law of Moses. I say unto you that it is expedient that ye should keep the law of Moses as yet; but I say unto you, that the time shall come when it shall no more be expedient to keep the law of Moses. And moreover, I say

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<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn (Zondervan Edition) II, 159.

<sup>2</sup>Heb. 10:1-4

<sup>3</sup>Heb. 11:39-40

<sup>4</sup>Heb. 10:10-12, 14

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unto you, that salvation did not come by the law alone; and were it not for the atonement, which God himself shall make for the sins and iniquities of his people, that they must unavoidably perish, notwithstanding the law of Moses.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever degree of expiation may have been obtained through the Mosaic sacrifices, it seems evident that they in no way precluded the need for propitiation through Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

Some unique characteristics of the Mosaic sin offerings are explained in the following quotation:

In considering the Jewish sacrificial system, we are impressed by two unique features which characterize it. First, sacrifices were ordained exclusively for ritual or religious sins, and not for social sins. Second, no sacrifice could be offered in expiation of the deliberate transgression, but only for such offences as had been committed in error or under constraint.<sup>3</sup>

As mentioned above, there is distinction between "deliberate transgressions" and those "committed in error and constraint." The primary distinction appeared to be determined by the state of mind of the transgressor.<sup>4</sup>

The sin offering had restrictions as to its effectiveness. The attitude of the sinner was most significant and the ritual of the sin offering, it would seem, would atone only when the sin was committed by erring, by mistake, or oversight.<sup>5</sup>

Speaking more specifically of the distinction between these two types of sin, Rowley has said:

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<sup>1</sup>Mosiah 13:27-28

<sup>2</sup>I John 2:2

<sup>3</sup>Babylonian Talmud, xxii.

<sup>4</sup>Davidson, 15.

<sup>5</sup>Fairbairn, (Zondervan Edition), II, 284.



. . . it is a distinction between sins which a man commits through ignorance or through weakness, or willy-nilly, and those which he commits because they are the expression of his real nature, arising out of the essential purpose of his heart. For these no sacrifice could atone. Moreover, there are whole classes of sins for which no ritual is provided. These are heinous sins of too great a magnitude to be dealt with by ritual acts. For murder and adultery the Law provided no means of atonement, and only demanded the execution of the murderer or adulterer.<sup>1</sup>

### Everything Points to Christ

There was but one ultimate purpose for which the law of Moses was given. Amulek expressed it this way:

And behold, this is the whole meaning of the law, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal.<sup>2</sup>

King Benjamin explained the law as it related to their faith in the coming of Christ. He has said:

Yet the Lord God saw that his people were a stiffnecked people, and he appointed unto them a law, even the law of Moses. And many signs, and wonders and types, and shadows showed he unto them, concerning his coming; and also holy prophets spake unto them concerning his coming; and yet they hardened their hearts, and understood not that the law of Moses availeth nothing except it were through the atonement of his blood.<sup>3</sup>

The law of Moses was given to man in a day when it was greatly needed. It taught man to recognize the sinfulness of sin and at the same time took him by the hand to lead him into a life of holiness. All of this directed the mind to look unto Christ, who ultimately fulfilled the whole meaning of

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<sup>1</sup>Rowley, The Meaning of Sacrifice . . . , 97.

<sup>2</sup>Alma 34:14

<sup>3</sup>Mosiah 3:14-15

the law when he offered himself a willing sacrifice for sin.

### Sacrifice and the Prophets

Out of the Mosaic period comes a problem dealing with the attitude of the prophets towards sacrifice. There are those who interpret the prophets as teaching that sacrifice per se was an abomination and had no legitimate purpose whatever in the worship of God. Speaking of Isaiah 1:10-17, one writer portrays Isaiah's God as one who "indignantly rejects the sacrifice and all the pompous worship which are offered him in his temple in Jerusalem."<sup>1</sup> Speaking of the other prophets he continues:

. . . So Amos a few years before had condemned the worship at Bethel (Amos vi. 6-8; Jer. 7, especially vss. 21-23). It is the fundamental doctrine of prophecy: the will of God is wholly moral. For worship he cares nothing at all; for justice, fairness, goodness between man and man he cares everything.<sup>2</sup>

Most of the belief that the prophets were against sacrifice is based on two scriptures, Amos 5:25 and Jer. 7:22.<sup>3</sup> These scriptures appear to condemn sacrifice on the basis that God denies having commanded Israel to offer sacrifice when he brought them out of Egypt.

For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all

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<sup>1</sup>George Foot Moore, The Literature of the Old Testament (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1913), pp. 149-50.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Thoburn, 63.

the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.<sup>1</sup>

Amos repeats the same idea: "Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O House of Israel?"<sup>2</sup> On the surface these prophets' statements appear rather conclusive, but when considered in light of other statements by these and other prophets, the evidence against sacrifice is not nearly so impressive. Rowley comments as follows:

So far as Jer. vii, 22 is concerned, I find the passage to indicate the relative importance of sacrifice and obedience, in accordance with the well-known Biblical idiom, whereby "not this but that" means "that is more important than this" . . . Moreover, in Jer. vi, 19, Jeremiah again condemns sacrifices, but couples with his condemnation a complaint that the people had not hearkened unto the voice of God. If he really meant that the condemnation would have stood unchanged even if they had hearkened to the voice of God, he might have been expected to avoid mentioning irrelevances. Further, though in Jer. vii, 1-15 he announces the coming destruction of the Temple, he makes it quite clear that if the people would amend their ways this might be averted. Clearly, therefore, he does not regard the Temple ritual as something that is unacceptable to God in itself, but only as something that is unacceptable when it is observed by people whose spirit is an offence to Him.<sup>3</sup>

The Lord expressed concern over fasting and prayer, as well as sacrifice:

Then said the Lord unto me, Pray not for this people for their good. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Jer. 7:22-23

<sup>2</sup>Amos 5:25

<sup>3</sup>Rowley, The Meaning of Sacrifice . . . , 79-80.

<sup>4</sup>Jer. 14:11-12

Certainly this statement does not mean that God wanted his people to cease their fasting and praying. The overall context of Jeremiah's message is that the wickedness of the people had closed the ears of God. He would not hear, neither would he accept the empty form offered to him as sacrifices.

The sense to be obtained from Amos 5:25 is explained as follows:

. . . It is not a negative answer that is implied, but an affirmative one, and that the meaning is this: "Did not your forefathers offer me sacrifices which were acceptable because they were offered in faithfulness and sincerity." The implication being: "Why then do you offer sacrifices which on account of your sins and on account of your false ideas about your God Yahweh, are worthless and unacceptable."<sup>1</sup>

It was the worshippers, not the worship that God rejected.<sup>2</sup> "Had sacrifices been offered to Yahweh alone, had they been offered in purity of spirit, the prophet's denunciations would not have found utterance."<sup>3</sup> The popular tendency was to think that obligations to God could be fulfilled in ". . . terms of sacrifices--the more the better and that morals were a separate area of life."<sup>4</sup>

The prophets ought not to be criticized for their denunciation of sacrifice during this period. Their message was a friendly one, if those who heard would have listened and obeyed. An unrighteous sacrifice is worse than none at all.

<sup>1</sup>Oesterley, 194.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 214.

<sup>4</sup>Thoburn, 65,66.

They were offering vain and meaningless sacrifices, which were an offence to God, and which but added to their sin, so there were voices in Judaism which renewed the same message and rebuked those who supposed that a formal act unrelated to the spirit could suffice to win God's favour. In the second century B. C. Ben Sira wrote: "The sacrifice of an unrighteous man is a mockery, and the oblations of the wicked are not acceptable. The Most High hath no pleasure in the offerings of the godless; nor is pacified for sins by the multitude of sacrifices."<sup>1</sup>

It is discernible that the prophets were emphatic in their denunciation of what they saw in Israel's sacrificial worship. Instead of condemnation upon the whole system, their concern ought to be viewed as explicit evidence that the heart of sacrifice is not to be found in the ritualistic act, but in the heart of man himself, without which, sacrifice is a burden difficult to bear.

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<sup>1</sup>Rowley, Meaning of Sacrifice . . . , 102-3.

## CHAPTER IX

### FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST

All blood sacrifices depicting the similitude of the Only Begotten of the Father were to have ceased with the shedding of the blood of Christ.

And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings. . . . Behold I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin. Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved.<sup>1</sup>

The ninth and tenth chapters of Hebrews goes into some detail in discussing the effect of the blood of Christ upon the sins of man. In them Paul also elucidates the relationship between the blood of Christ and the animal sacrifices which had been offered prior to Christ's death. A summary of Paul's message has been made as follows:

He is the great high priest, and by once offering himself, the true and perfect sacrifice, and by perpetual intercession in the celestial sanctuary, he makes a priestly atonement, and is the author of eternal salvation. Of these supersensible realities the Aaronic priesthood and the sacrifices of the Jewish Law were but types or shadows having in themselves no efficacy to expiate sin or to purge the conscience of the sinner.<sup>2</sup>

Judaism does not accept Christ in any role of Messiahship. One writer has explained their position as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>III Nephi 9:19, 21-22

<sup>2</sup>Moore, 137.

The Jews may be willing to acknowledge the greatness of Christ, but they only seek thereby to emphasize the greatness of Judaism, for they vindicate Jesus as their greatest son. If they would recognize him as their Messiah and Savior, they would no longer be able to be Jews.<sup>1</sup>

Since the Jewish people do not accept Christ, they take a vastly different point of view toward Paul and his teachings on sacrifice and the blood of Christ. The following portrays their attitude:

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, there is a laboured attempt to show that in the crucifixion Christ was a sacrifice, like one offered up at the Temple in Jerusalem, only that the death of the Son of God was an immolation of such transcendent superiority over every possible sacrifice that he by his death atoned once for all for the sins of the whole human race, and so rendered all further sacrifices superfluous and useless. What led to this reasoning is the fundamental assumption that "without blood there can be no remission of sin." . . . The institution of sacrifices was indeed the chief part of the Temple service, and the regulations in connection therewith occupy a large proportion of ancient Jewish ritualism, but it is a woeful misconception of the religion of the Hebrew scripture and a travesty of Judaism to assume as was done by Paul, that the sacrificial system is the only means to obtain the forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God.<sup>2</sup>

The contention is sometimes raised that Christ made no claim to have been the redeemer of man. The following quotation expounds the idea:

If the doctrine of the Atonement, in the sense that the shedding of our Lord's blood on the cross was an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, a propitiation, and the means of obtaining forgiveness, if this, a central doctrine of the Christian religion, really was of such paramount importance, in effect, the salvation of the human race, would it not have found definite, emphatic, and

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<sup>1</sup>Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, Judaism and Christianity: The Differences (New York: The Jewish Book Club, 1943), p. 14.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Goodman, The Synagogue and the Church (London: George Routledge and Sons, Limited, 1908), p. 352.

reiterated utterance in the teaching of our Lord? We have been searching the Gospels; and everybody must admit that there are, at most, only the faintest traces of this doctrine to be found in His teaching. . . .<sup>1</sup>

It does appear that Christ did not spend time bearing witness of himself, so to speak, but he did verify on occasion that he was the Son of God, the Redeemer of man.<sup>2</sup>

Other teachings of the Savior suggest that it was the mission of the Holy Ghost to give individual witness of the divine nature of Christ. Some examples are:

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.<sup>3</sup>

Many people had suggested their different ideas concerning the identity of Christ, but the one who knew had gained the knowledge through revelation, not through personal acquaintance.

In giving the promise of the Holy Ghost to his disciples, Jesus said: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me . . ."

Paul also taught that knowledge of Christ's divinity comes only from the Holy Ghost. "Wherefore I give unto you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God

<sup>1</sup>Oesterley, 290-91.

<sup>2</sup>Matt. 26:26, III Nephi 9:15; 15:9

<sup>3</sup>Matt. 16:13-17



alleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."<sup>1</sup>

The sacrifice of Christ was in every way a willing one. Being the Son of God, Christ had power over his own life.

Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life, that I might take it up again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.<sup>2</sup>

The suffering associated with the sacrifice was so intense that "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."<sup>3</sup> The Book of Mormon describes this suffering more in detail:

And lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people.<sup>4</sup>

The extent of this suffering is portrayed still further:

And he cometh into the world that he may save all men if they will hearken unto his voice; for behold, he suffereth the pains of all men, yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women, and children, who belong to the family of Adam.<sup>5</sup>

So great was the anguish of the occasion that the Savior pled for release from the responsibility if such were possible, but never at the expense of obedience; for Jesus said: ". . . let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."<sup>6</sup> And again, "O, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy

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<sup>1</sup>I Cor. 12:3

<sup>2</sup>John 10:17,18

<sup>3</sup>Luke 22:44

<sup>4</sup>Mosiah 3:7

<sup>5</sup>II Nephi 9:21

<sup>6</sup>Matt. 26:39

will be done."<sup>1</sup>

Difficult as the sacrifice of Christ was for him to bear, eternal joy must have filled his obedient soul when after his resurrection he was introduced to the Nephites with the following words of his Father: "Behold my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name--hear ye him."<sup>2</sup> Then, after descending out of heaven, the Savior of all mankind stretched forth his hand and spake unto the people, saying:

Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.<sup>3</sup>

Even the sacrifice of Christ would have been meaningless if it had consisted only of a ritualistic formality. Instead, it was filled with the very epitomy of moral perfection: ". . . love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."<sup>4</sup>

### Atonement

The necessity of Christ's atonement is expressed by Amulek:

For it is expedient that an atonement should be made; for according to the great plan of the Eternal God there must

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<sup>1</sup>Matt. 26:42

<sup>2</sup>III Nephi 11:7

<sup>3</sup>III Nephi 11:10-11

<sup>4</sup>John 15:12-13

be an atonement made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish; yea, all are fallen and are lost, and must perish except it be through the atonement which it is expedient should be made.<sup>1</sup>

The meaning of the atonement, coupled with an explanation of the responsibility resting upon the individual has been made known in the following revelation:

Therefore I command you to repent--repent lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore--how sore you know not, how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not. For behold, I, God have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent. But if they would not repent, they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit--and would that I not drink the bitter cup, and shrink-- Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men. Wherefore I command you to repent, lest I humble you with my almighty power; and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest, yea, in the least degree you have tasted at the time I withdrew my spirit.<sup>2</sup>

Just as the animal sacrifice required holiness of the worshipper if it was to be accepted of God, so must one's life become holy if the blood of Christ is to cleanse him from all sin. Man's responsibility is to repent. When he does repent, the merciful plan of redemption takes effect in his life. The method by which the plan functions in the lives of men has been expounded by Alma as follows:

Therefore, according to justice, the plan of redemption could not be brought about, only on conditions of repentance of men in this probationary state; for except it were for these conditions, mercy could not take effect except it should destroy the work of justice. Now

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<sup>1</sup>Alma 34:9

<sup>2</sup>Doc. & Cov. ¶9:16-20

the work of justice could not be destroyed; if so, God would cease to be God. . . . And now the plan of mercy could not be brought about except an atonement should be made; therefore God himself atoneth for the sins of the world, to bring about the plan of mercy, to appease the demands of justice, that God might be a perfect, just God, and a merciful God also. . . . But God ceaseth not to be God, and mercy claimeth the penitent, and mercy cometh because of the atonement; and the atonement bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead; and the resurrection of the dead bringeth back men into the presence of God; and thus they are restored into his presence, to be judged according to their works, according to the law and justice.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the resurrection of Christ brings all men into the presence of God where they shall be judged according to the holiness that is within them. The relation of the resurrection to the atonement and sacrifice of Christ is explained in the following:

Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth. Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered. Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah, who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise. Wherefore, he is the firstfruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved. And because of the intercession for all, all men come unto God; wherefore, they stand in the presence of him to be judged of him according to the truth and holiness which is in him. Wherefore, the ends of the law which the Holy One hath given, unto the inflicting of the punishment which is affixed, which punishment that is affixed is in opposition to that of the happiness which is affixed, to answer the ends of the atonement . . .<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Alma 42:13, 15, 23-26

<sup>2</sup>II Nephi 2:6-10

The assurance of a resurrection plus the fact that the suffering of Christ has paid the price of man's sins so that man himself does not have to suffer IF he will repent,<sup>1</sup> is the gift of Christ to man. The relationship between this gift and the repentance of man is summed up by Nephi when he said: ". . . we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do."<sup>2</sup>

### Sacrament

Just as sacrifice was instituted by God as a symbolic means of directing the mind forward to the Only Begotten of the Father, so did Christ establish a means whereby the mind could look back in remembrance of the one sacrifice that had paid the price for all. The token or symbol so instituted by Christ is known as the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Jesus introduced the ordinance to his apostles in the following way:

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.<sup>3</sup>

The sacrament also seems to strengthen and renew the covenant relationship between God and man. The Sacramental prayers express the responsibilities and promises of both.

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<sup>1</sup>Doc. & Cov. 19:15

<sup>2</sup>II Nephi 25:23

<sup>3</sup>Luke 22:17-20; see also I Cor. 11:24-25

By revelation, the Lord has designated the prayers that are to be used.

O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them; that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ to bless and sanctify this wine to the souls of all those who drink of it, that they may do it in remembrance of the blood of thy Son, which was shed for them; that they may witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they do always remember him, that they may have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.<sup>2</sup>

The same prayers were in use among the Nephites.<sup>3</sup>

When the sacramental rite was established among the Nephites,<sup>4</sup> the Lord stressed the necessity of worthiness. Just as with sacrifice, there were certain pre-requisites which must be met or it would be better not to partake at all. To the Nephites the Lord said:

And now behold, this is the commandment which I give unto you, that ye shall not suffer any one knowingly to partake of my flesh and blood unworthily, when ye shall minister it. For whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul; therefore if ye know that a man is unworthy to eat and drink of my flesh and blood ye shall forbid him.<sup>5</sup>

More explicit instructions were given by the Apostle Paul as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>Doc. & Cov. 20:77

<sup>2</sup>Doc. & Cov. 29:79

<sup>3</sup>Moroni 4-5

<sup>4</sup>III Nephi 18:1-12

<sup>5</sup>III Nephi 18:28-29

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation unto himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.<sup>1</sup>

There is no forgiveness of sin in partaking of the sacrament any more than there was in offering sacrifice. Both institutions symbolized the actual source of forgiveness. (The sacrament only directs the mind back to Christ, just as sacrifice pointed it forward to Christ.)

Even as a sacrifice provided the basis for worship in Old Testament times, the sacrament is the basis for worship today.<sup>2</sup>

(Sacramental hymns of praise which speak of the sacrifice of Christ develop deep feelings of adoration and worship. The message they give adds to the meaning of both sacrifice and sacrament.) A few selected expressions are given here for the contribution they make.

In humility, our Savior, Grant thy Spirit here, we pray;  
As we bless the bread and water, In thy name this holy day.  
Let me not forget, O Savior, Thou didst bleed and die for me  
When thy heart was stilled and broken On the cross at Calvary.

Fill our hearts with sweet forgiving; Teach us tolerance and love  
Let our prayers find access to thee In thy holy courts above.  
Then when we have proven worthy of thy sacrifice divine,  
Lord, let us regain thy presence; Let thy glory round us shine.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>I Cor. 11:26-30

<sup>2</sup>Doc. & Cov. 59:8-10

<sup>3</sup>Mabel Jones Gabbott, "In Humility Our Savior," Hymns: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1957), p. 49.

O thou, before the world began,  
 Ordained a sacrifice for man,  
 And by the eternal spirit made  
 An offering in the sinner's stead  
 Our everlasting Priest art thou,  
 Pleading thy death for sinners now.

Thy offering still continues new,  
 Before the righteous Father's view  
 Thyself the lamb forever slain;  
 Thy priesthood doth unchanged remain  
 Thy years, O God, can never fail,  
 Nor thy blest work within the veil.<sup>1</sup>

When in the wondrous realms above,  
 Our Savior had been called upon,  
 To save our world of sin by love  
 He said, "Thy will, O Lord, be done."

The King of kings left worlds of light,  
 Became the meek and lowly one;  
 In brightest day or darkest night  
 He said, "Thy will, O Lord, be done."

No crown of thorns, no cruel cross  
 Could make our great Redeemer shun.  
 He counted His own will but loss,  
 And said, "Thy will, O Lord, be done."

We take the bread and cup this day,  
 In memory of the Sinless One,  
 And pray for strength, that we may say,  
 As he, "Thy will, O Lord, be done."<sup>2</sup>

The sacrifice of Christ provided a meaningful culmination for all blood sacrifice that had been offered in his similitude. In shedding his own blood and in compassionate suffering which only a God could endure, Christ satisfied the demands of justice and atoned for the sins of the whole world--effective upon man according to his repentance. The sacrament of the Lord's supper provides a continual means of helping man remember the source of his salvation.

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<sup>1</sup>W.B. Turton, "O Thou Before the World Began," Ibid., 274.

<sup>2</sup>Frank I. Kooyman, "When in the Wondrous Realms Above," Ibid., 199.



## CHAPTER X

### BLOOD SACRIFICE IN THE FUTURE

There is evidence that in the divine scheme of the history of Israel, the offering of blood sacrifices will again take place as a part of the restoration of all things "which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."<sup>1</sup>

The blessings of the covenant which were promised through the lineage of Abraham were to last until the end of the world. This promise was made definite with Abraham when God said:

Behold, I will lead thee by my hand, and I will take thee, to put upon thee my name, even the Priesthood of thy father, and my power shall be over thee. As it was with Noah, so shall it be with thee; but through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever, for I am thy God.<sup>2</sup>

It was because of this covenant that the Lord set his hand to lead ancient Israel out of Egyptian bondage.<sup>3</sup> In order to keep the covenant the Lord drove the idolatrous nations out of Canaan, so that it might be possessed by Israel.<sup>4</sup> It was by reason of the covenant that Christ organized the work of the ministry among the house of Israel.<sup>5</sup> All who were baptized became Abraham's seed according to the covenant.<sup>6</sup>

Even though Israel was scattered because of their

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 3:21

<sup>2</sup>Abraham 1:18-19

<sup>3</sup>Ex. 6:5-6

<sup>4</sup>Deut. 9:5

<sup>5</sup>Matt. 15:24; 10:5-6

<sup>6</sup>Gal. 3:27-29

transgressions,<sup>1</sup> the Lord promised that in the "latter days," he would again remember the covenant,<sup>2</sup> and Israel would be gathered a second time.<sup>3</sup>

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints declares that the Lord has set his hand to gather Israel in the latter days,<sup>4</sup> and that the process of restoration of all things has been undertaken.<sup>5</sup> That the restoration is to be gradual is portrayed in the following statement by the Lord to Joseph Smith and other church leaders in his day:

Therefore your life and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through you and your lineage until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began.<sup>6</sup>

The future offering of blood sacrifices exists within this framework of a gradual but complete restoration of all things. Speaking of how sacrifice would be a part of this restoration, the prophet Joseph Smith has said:

. . . He talked with him [Noah] in a familiar and friendly manner, that he continued to him the keys, the covenants, the power and the glory, with which he blessed Adam at the beginning; and the offering of sacrifice, which also shall be continued at the last time; for all the ordinances and duties that ever have been required by the Priesthood, under the directions and commandments of the Almighty in any of the dispensations, shall all be had in the last dispensation, therefore all things had under the authority of the Priesthood at any former period, shall be had again, bringing to pass the restoration spoken of by the mouth of all the holy prophets; then shall the sons of Levi offer an acceptable offering to the Lord.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Deut. 4:25-28

<sup>2</sup>Deut. 4:29-31

<sup>3</sup>Jer. 16:14-15

<sup>4</sup>Doc. & Cov. 103:17-18

<sup>5</sup>Doc. & Cov. 128:19-21

<sup>6</sup>Doc. & Cov. 86:10

<sup>7</sup>Joseph Smith, History of the Church of . . ., 210-211.

Along with scriptural predictions of this restoration period, there are some extrabiblical references of particular interest. Some of them are as follows:

It is instructive to note what is said about sacrifices in some more or less orthodox writings belonging to the decades following the final destruction of the Temple, A.D. 70. The earliest of these is probably the Apocalypse of Abraham; here the writer consoles himself with the thought that when the "Age of the righteous" shall have come the traditional worship will be re-instituted: "And they shall live and be established through sacrifices and gifts of righteousness and truth in the age of righteousness, and shall rejoice in me continually." (xxxix). A similar restoration is looked forward to in the Apocalypse of Baruch: "And I saw him (i.e. one of the 'four angels') descend into the Holy of Holies, and take from thence the veil, and the holy ephod, and the mercy-seat, and the two tables, and the holy raiment of the priests, and the altar of incense, and the forty-eight precious stones, wherewith the priest was adorned, and all the holy vessels of the tabernacle. And he spake to the earth with a loud voice: 'Earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the mighty God, and receive what I commit unto thee, and guard them unto the last times, so that when thou art ordered, thou mayst restore them so that strangers may not get possession of them. For the times come when Jerusalem also will be delivered up for a time, until it is said that it is again restored forever.' And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up." (vi. 7-10; cp. lxxx. 2). Again in lxciii. 5 it is said: "And at that time after a little interval Zion will again be builded, and its offerings will again be restored, and the priests will return to their ministry, and again the Gentiles will come to glorify it."<sup>1</sup>

Although he personally leans toward an interpretation of a "spiritual" fulfillment, Fairbairn gives the following description of what a literal restoration would entail:

It is possible enough, however, that what we have put here in the form of extravagant suppositions, will be readily embraced by many who believe in the future restoration of Israel to Canaan. An entire reproduction of the old is now contended for, as necessary to establish

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<sup>1</sup>Oesterley, 262-3.

the literal truthfulness of scripture. And among other things to be expected, we are told, in connection with the return of Israel to Canaan, is the building anew and on a style of higher magnificence of the material temple, the resuscitation of the Levitical priesthood, and the re-institution of the fleshy sacrifices and pompous ceremonial of the ancient worship. To hold this, indeed, is only to follow to its legitimate results the idea that the former possession of Canaan was typical of another; since, if that earlier possession gave promise of a later one, the establishment of the religious economy connected with it must have forshadowed its future restoration.<sup>1</sup>

The Jewish attitude toward sacrifice has varied. Within the reform segments of Judaism, belief in sacrifice has vanished, but the more orthodox position is portrayed as follows:

The fact that the Jews considered that the service in the Temple with the sacrifice was merely temporarily suspended, owing to the impossibility of carrying it out, is shown also by the compilation of many treatises in the Mishnah forming the section Koddashim, i.e. things connected with the sanctuary in which minute details are preserved as to services, sacrifices, offerings, etc., in the Temple; and the belief in the re-establishment of sacrifice is found repeatedly referred to in the Jewish prayers recited in the daily service and on festive occasions. . . . Thus in the Amidah, which every observant Jew is expected to repeat three times daily, he prays: "Mayest thou bring back the sacrifices to thy holy house, and the fire offerings as well as their prayers receive with favor." This constant prayer for the re-establishment of sacrifice has been a bone of contention between the reform Jews and the conservative Jews. The former contend that they can no longer pray for the re-establishment of sacrifices.<sup>2</sup>

A renewed interest is developing among Jews in the Holy Land as shown by the following:

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<sup>1</sup>Fairbairn (1870 edition), Vol. I, pp. 497-8.

<sup>2</sup>M. Gaster, "Sacrifice (Jewish)," Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, editor James Hastings, XI (1951), p. 25.

. . . In our own times the conviction that has seized many minds that we are witnessing the Athhalta di-Geulah ("beginning of the redemption") has led to the assiduous study of Seder Kodashim in many of the higher schools of learning in the Holy Land.<sup>1</sup>

As indicated previously, the prophet Joseph Smith made reference to Malachi 3:3, which refers to an "acceptable offering" which the sons of Levi were to offer to the Lord.<sup>2</sup> Joseph Smith comments further about this prediction as follows:

It will be necessary here to make a few observations on the doctrine set forth in the above quotation, and it is generally supposed that sacrifice was entirely done away when the Great Sacrifice [i.e., the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus] was offered up, and that there will be no necessity for the ordinance of sacrifice in the future: but those who assert this are certainly not acquainted with the duties, privileges and authority of the priesthood, or with the Prophets. The offering of sacrifice has ever been connected and forms a part of the duties of the Priesthood. It began with the Priesthood, and will be continued until after the coming of Christ, from generation to generation. We frequently have mention made of the offering of sacrifice by the servants of the Most High in ancient days, prior to the law of Moses; which ordinances will be continued when the Priesthood is restored with all its authority, power, and blessings.

Elijah was the last prophet that held the keys of the Priesthood, and who will, before the last dispensation, restore the authority and deliver the keys of the Priesthood, in order that all the ordinances may be attended to in righteousness. It is true that the Savior had authority and power to bestow this blessing; but the sons of Levi were too prejudiced.<sup>3</sup>

First of all, it should be observed that the prophet discounted the idea that the sacrifice of Christ had done

<sup>1</sup>Babylonian Talmud, xx.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Smith, History of the Church of . . ., 210-11.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

away with all sacrifice. On the surface it may seem that this position contradicts the scriptures, but it should not be overlooked that when the scriptures speak of the end of sacrifice by the shedding of blood, it is always within the context of the Law of Moses.<sup>1</sup> The question might be asked: "What was the prime cause for the end of sacrifice by the shedding of blood?" In answer, two more questions might be asked: "Did sacrifice end because of the fact that the blood of Christ had been shed?" or "Did sacrifice end because the shedding of the blood of Christ fulfilled the law of Moses, which brought an end to all sacrifices which were being offered under that law?" The fact that the death of Christ ended sacrifice by the shedding of blood does not necessarily include the sacrifice belonging to the covenant or gospel period, and the prophet Joseph Smith makes it clear that these earlier sacrifices, those existing "prior to the law of Moses" are the ones to be restored.<sup>2</sup> It might be contended that if Christ ended all Mosaic sacrifices, but not those that existed prior to Moses, then he would logically have established again the original ones at the same time he ended the provisional ones. This is a good contention, and according to Joseph Smith, the Savior may well have done that very thing, except for the fact, as he has already stated, that the "sons of Levi were too prejudiced."<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the day has not yet come when

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<sup>1</sup>See Alma 34:13-14; III Nephi 9:17-19; Heb. 7-10

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Smith, History of Church of . . ., 211-12.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 211.

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the sons of Levi will be purified to the degree that their offering will be acceptable to the Lord. Joseph Smith completes his explanation as follows:

These sacrifices as well as every ordinance belonging to the Priesthood, will, when the Temple of the Lord shall be built, and the sons of Levi be purified, be fully restored and attended to in all their powers, ramifications, and blessings. This ever did and ever will exist when the powers of the Melchizedek Priesthood are sufficiently manifest; else how can the institution of all things spoken of by the holy Prophets be brought to pass? It is not to be understood that the law of Moses will be established again with all its rites and variety of ceremonies; this has never been spoken of by the prophets; but those things which existed prior to Moses' day, namely sacrifice, will be continued. It may be asked by some, what necessity for sacrifice, since the Great Sacrifice was offered? In answer to which, if repentance, baptism and faith existed prior to the days of Christ, what necessity for them since that time? The Priesthood had descended in a regular line from father to son, through their succeeding generations.<sup>1</sup>

When these animal sacrifices are restored, they apparently will be offered for only a short time. This has been described in this manner:

We are living in the dispensation of the fulness of times into which all things are to be gathered, and all things are to be restored since the beginning. Even this earth is to be restored to the condition which prevailed before Adam's transgression. Now in the nature of things, the law of sacrifice will have to be restored, or all things which were decreed by the Lord would not be restored. It will be necessary, therefore, for the sons of Levi, who offered the blood sacrifices anciently in Israel, to offer such a sacrifice again to round out and complete this ordinance in this dispensation. Sacrifice by the shedding of blood was instituted in the days of Adam and of necessity will have to be restored.

The sacrifice of animals will be done to complete the restoration when the temple spoken of is built; at the beginning of the millennium, or in the restoration, blood sacrifices will be performed long enough to complete the fulness of the restoration in this dispensation. After-

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 210-211.

wards, sacrifice will be of some other character.<sup>1</sup>

It would also appear that as part of this restoration of all things there will even be sacrifices representing the Mosaic period. President Joseph Fielding Smith speaks of them as follows:

What kind of offering will the sons of Levi make to fulfill the words of Malachi and John? Logically such a sacrifice as they were authorized to make in the days of their former ministry when they were first called. Evidently not in any temple as they are constructed for salvation and of exaltation today. It should be remembered that the great temple, which is yet to be built in the City Zion, will not be one edifice, but twelve. Some of these temples will be for the lesser priesthood.

When these temples are built, it is very likely that provision will be made for some ceremonies and ordinances which may be performed by the Aaronic Priesthood and a place provided where the sons of Levi may offer their offering in righteousness. This will have to be the case because all things are to be restored. There were ordinances performed in ancient Israel in the tabernacle when in the wilderness, and after it was established at Shiloh in the Land of Canaan, and later in the temple built by Solomon. The Lord has informed us that this was the case and has said that in those edifices ordinances for the people were performed.

These temples that we now have, however, the Lord commanded to be built for the purpose of giving to the saints the blessings which belong to their exaltation, blessings which are to prepare those who receive them to "enter into his rest, . . . which rest is the fulness of his glory," and these ordinances have to be performed by authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood, which the sons of Levi did not hold.<sup>2</sup>

The temple wherein these offerings are to be made, as seen in the preceeding quotation, is of singular significance. In the section of his writings which are concerned with the

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, compiled by Bruce R. McConkie (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1956), Vol. III, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 93-94.



restoration of Israel, Isaiah refers to a "house of prayer" in his "holy mountain" in which burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted.<sup>1</sup> Ezekial refers to a similar condition as follows:

For in mine holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things.<sup>2</sup>

The last portion of the book of Ezekial, chapters forty through forty-eight, give a description of a future temple which Ezekiel saw in vision. It was designed to accommodate the restored twelve tribes of Israel in their various responsibilities and offerings unto the Lord.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry in his book, The Voice of Israel's Prophets, provides a very informative discussion of Ezekiel's temple. He explains that the description of the offerings to be offered in the temple make them appear to be strictly Mosaic,<sup>4</sup> which leads him to the following conclusion:

It is enough to observe here that the temple which Ezekiel saw in his great vision will probably have very specific and restricted uses. May not the ordinances performed in it symbolize for this dispensation the work of the lesser priesthood as it functioned in the temples of the Mosaic dispensation?<sup>5</sup>

Consideration is now given to the sons of Levi who

<sup>1</sup>Isa. 56:7

<sup>2</sup>Ezek. 21:40-41

<sup>3</sup>Ezek. 47-48

<sup>4</sup>Sidney B. Sperry, The Voice of Israel's Prophets (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co., 1952), pp. 232-33.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

are to make the offerings unto the Lord. Malachi makes this prediction in connection with the second coming of the Savior:

And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.<sup>1</sup>

Reference was again made to the sons of Levi and their offering when John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. His words were:

Upon you, my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which hold the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning the matter of identifying the sons of Levi, Dr. Sperry, speaking of those who held the priesthood in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, has said:

A point of doctrine not generally noticed in the church is that those who hold the priesthood are called "the sons of Moses and of Aaron." That is to say, they are to all intents sons of Levi, since both Moses and Aaron were literal descendants of Levi.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Sperry's statement is based on the following explanation:

Therefore, as I said concerning the sons of Moses--for the sons of Moses and also the sons of Aaron shall offer an acceptable offering and sacrifice in the house of the Lord, which house shall be built unto the Lord in this generation, upon the consecrated spot as I have appointed--And the sons of Moses and of Aaron shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, upon Mount Zion in the Lord's house, whose sons are ye; and also many whom I have called and

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<sup>1</sup>Mal. 3:3

<sup>2</sup>Doc. & Cov. 13

<sup>3</sup>Sperry, Voice of Israel's Prophets, 439.

sent forth to build up my church. For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies. They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God.<sup>1</sup>

It will be noticed in the above quotation that reference is made to an "acceptable offering" and "sacrifice." As quoted earlier, Ezekiel breaks the offering down into more specific areas. He says: "I will require your offerings, and the firstfruits of your oblations, with all your holy things." This suggests that there may well be various types of offerings involved in the acceptable sacrifice. Speaking specifically of the "acceptable offering," Dr. Sperry says, "The Latter-day Saints, as a church and as a people, are the ones who are to offer up an offering in righteousness in the Temple in the form of a book containing the records of our dead."<sup>2</sup> This explanation is based on the following statement of Joseph Smith:

Behold, the great day of the Lord is at hand; and who can abide the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appeareth? For he is like fuller's soap; and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Let us, therefore, as a church and a people, and as Latter-day Saints, offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness; and let us present in his holy temple, when it is finished, a book containing the records of our dead, which shall be worthy of all acceptance.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Doc. and Cov. 84:31-34

<sup>2</sup>Sperry, Voice of Israel's Prophets, 438.

<sup>3</sup>Doc. & Cov. 128:24

Returning to Dr. Sperry's distinction between the "acceptable offering" and the "sacrifice," he states:

By "sacrifice" is probably meant one or both of the following things: (1) There will be a return to the blood sacrifice of animals as provided in the law of the Gospel as practiced by Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the days prior to Moses. This would take the place as part of the Restoration in our day. . . . (2) There will be a limited return to the blood sacrifice of animals as practiced under the law of Moses.<sup>1</sup>

After further discussion upon the subject, Dr. Sperry then concludes: "The return of 'sacrifice' as described in (1) I consider certain, that in (2) is highly probable."<sup>2</sup>

Although full detail is not known, the above information seems to place future blood sacrifice upon a firm foundation. Certainly the prominence given to sacrifice as a part of the restoration of all things, adds greatly to the significance of its original meaning in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>1</sup>Sidney B. Sperry, Doctrine and Covenants Compendium (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co., 1952), pp. 393-94.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 394.

## CHAPTER XI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Summary

One of the most significant concepts resulting from this study is that sacrifice has always existed as an essential element of religion. Its implementation, however, has varied according to the needs of the people and the time position relative to the sacrifice of Christ.

Viewing sacrifice in terms of an eternal existence gives new insight to its origin, as far as man on earth is concerned. The origin of sacrifice has always perplexed scholars, and many theories have developed in an effort to justify its existence.<sup>1</sup> The predominant attitude has been that sacrifice developed as a natural expression of man to God. This has given rise to the formulation of such theories as the "gift," "communion," "life-giving," or "expiation," which are thought to represent the various basic motives responsible for man's desire to offer sacrifice.

Utilized in this study are certain scriptural and historical sources which have not heretofore been represented in any work formally devoted to the subject of sacrifice. Principally they are: The Pearl of Great Price, which contains writings relative to the early Patriarchal and Mosaic periods;

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<sup>1</sup>Oesterley, 22-23.

the Book of Mormon, containing an account of certain Israelites coming out of their dispersion period, and the Doctrine and Covenants, which contains a compilation of modern-day revelations.

These additional scriptural sources maintain that sacrifice was established with Adam by command of God. The rite was then perpetuated down through the Patriarchal period and later maintained a fundamental position in the Mosaic system.

It is commonly believed that the motives which prompted the initiation of sacrifice also revealed its original meaning. This position would be reasonable if sacrifice was viewed as having a human origin. With a divine, God-imposed origin, it would be necessary to look to the same source for an explanation of its meaning. Such was given in the following:

And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me. And then the angel spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth. Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore.<sup>1</sup>

The action taken by God in instituting sacrifice with Adam was part of a plan of redemption which had been formulated before the earth was made.<sup>2</sup> Thus the earth and its entire creation rests in the hand of God. Sacrifice was not to be viewed as a means of providing for God, but as a means

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<sup>1</sup>Moses 5:6-8

<sup>2</sup>I Peter 1:18-20; Alma 12:29-33

of qualifying man to prosper in the necessities of earthly existence.<sup>1</sup>

In the gospel plan there was provision for a covenant relationship between God and man. By submitting himself to a promise of obedience, man received assurance that God would bless him in his needs. Sacrifice provided man with a perpetual means of maintaining this relationship with God. It was an avenue of approach through prayer when specific help was desired,<sup>2</sup> and sometimes it was offered in thanks for blessings already obtained.<sup>3</sup> Whatever the specific justifications might have been at the time, sacrifice always pointed the mind to the blood of Christ which would be shed for the sins of man.

There was no magical quality in ancient sacrifice which would give it powers in and of itself. To be effective, the worshipper had to qualify with a life of personal holiness. Obedience always came first. It was not so much what God had commanded but how well man obeyed, that gave validity to sacrificial worship.<sup>4</sup> Man's moral relationship with others had to be suitable else it would have been better for his sacrifice to have remained unoffered.<sup>5</sup> Jesus taught that all the teachings of both the law and the prophets depended upon

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<sup>1</sup>II Nephi 5:10-11

<sup>2</sup>Abraham 2:17

<sup>3</sup>I Nephi 2:6-7

<sup>4</sup>I Sam. 13:12-13; 15:21-22

<sup>5</sup>Matt. 5:24; Moroni 7:6-10

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the two commandments: to love ". . . God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" and to "love thy neighbor as thyself."<sup>1</sup>

The covenant of a "broken heart and a contrite spirit" has been used throughout the scriptures to portray the most essential attitude to be developed in sacrificial worship. It is the kind of sacrifice that God demands in lieu of the shedding of blood.<sup>2</sup> Such an attitude embodies all the elements that will perfect man individually.

The Mosaic period of time brought significant changes in the sacrificial system. Up to that time the act of sacrificial worship had been relatively simple, but under the law of Moses, many ritualistic laws and regulations were imposed upon it. This resulted from the need to teach the basic concept of right and wrong to the children of Israel. Integrity cannot be developed without the function of agency and individual responsibility, and for Israel these had been precluded by the Egyptian bondage. Hence the need:

Behold, if ye were holy I would speak unto you of holiness; but as ye are not holy, and ye look upon me as a teacher, it must needs be expedient that I teach you the consequences of sin.<sup>3</sup>

The many carnal regulations under the law of Moses were designed to produce an awareness of sin. Once the distinction between right and wrong can be discerned, it becomes

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<sup>1</sup>Matt. 22:37-40

<sup>2</sup>III Nephi 9:19-20

<sup>3</sup>II Nephi 9:48

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possible for man to develop morality by choosing to obey that which he knows to be right.

The detail of this ceremonial code resulted in frequent transgression. Sin and guilt offerings were instituted for the purpose of cleansing man from his ritualistic error, and to provide an ever available reminder of the need to look to Christ for atonement. The strictness of the law of Moses kept Israel in "remembrance of God and their duty towards him."<sup>1</sup>

With the atonement of Christ all sacrifice by the shedding of blood as practiced under the law of Moses was brought to an end.<sup>2</sup> This was an infinite atonement,<sup>3</sup> and as such it paid the price for man's sins so that man himself would not have to suffer IF he would repent,<sup>4</sup> and the power of the resurrection brings man back into the presence of God for judgement. Realization of this event had constituted the essence of sacrificial blood offerings from the time they were first instituted with Adam.

As a means of helping man remember the sacrifice of Christ, and also for the purpose of renewing one's covenants with the Lord, the sacrament of the Lord's supper was instituted. It provides means of worship and access to God in much the same way as sacrifice had done previously. Although sacrifice by the shedding of blood ceased after the atonement

<sup>1</sup>Mosiah 14:29-30

<sup>2</sup>III Nephi 9:17-19

<sup>3</sup>Alma 34:9-12

<sup>4</sup>Doc. & Cov. 19:16-18

of Christ, it appears that at some future time it will again be offered as part of the "restoration of all things" which is now in process of fulfillment.

### Conclusions

Sacrifice as practiced under the gospel is not to be considered obsolete. Even though the act of blood sacrifice is not practiced today, there are elements of meaning which God expects his followers to develop in their lives. It is therefore concluded that those who would worship God "in spirit and in truth"<sup>1</sup> would do well to seek through the power of the spirit and through study of the scriptures, a deeper understanding of the law of sacrifice. Obedience to God in his demands for sacrificial worship, whatever the specific form may be, will lead the soul of man into an existence of eternal holiness. His very life will become a sacred offering to God.

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<sup>1</sup>John 4:24

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THE ORIGIN AND ORIGINAL MEANING OF SACRIFICIAL  
BLOOD OFFERINGS AS REVEALED IN THE BIBLE  
AND MODERN SCRIPTURE

An Abstract of  
A Thesis  
Presented to the  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

by  
Theo E. McKean  
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## ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with the origin and original meaning of sacrificial blood offerings as practiced by the ancient Israelite people and their progenitors. "Modern" scriptural sources including the Pearl of Great Price, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants are used along with the Bible as the basic reference material.

The lack of explicit information in the Bible as to the inception and meaning of sacrifice has resulted in the development of many theories which suggest that this rite had a human beginning. These theories imply that by natural expression man began to seek favor from his god by offering sacrifice. Through the use of these additional scriptural sources, the ordinance is seen to have had a divine origin. As part of a preconceived plan which was designed to provide a means of salvation for man, God commanded Adam to offer the firstlings of his flock to the Lord.

The intricate meaning of sacrifice is developed from the basic concept that it was in similitude of the one infinite Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who would offer his own life for the sins of man. Through symbolic representation, all the qualities of holiness which the Savior emulated were embodied in the sacrificial ritual, and it was intended that these qualities would be developed in the life of the worshipper. Instead of having automatic powers in and of itself,

sacrifice was always subservient to obedience. Without an attitude of obedience, this ordinance, as shown by the Israelitish prophets, was more of a curse than a blessing.

Sacrifice under the law of Moses was much more complicated than it had previously been. For purposes of helping the children of Israel to realize the "sinfulness of sin" and to help them remember God day by day, a very strict and detailed law of performances and ordinances was given to them.

These ritualistic commandments were imposed upon all the forms of sacrifice that had come down from the Patriarchal period, and were even more demanding of new types of offerings which were introduced under Moses. Although these new forms were used to cleanse one from ceremonial sin, all the offerings were intended to point the mind to the sacrifice of Christ.

Sacrifice by the shedding of blood ceased with the atonement of Christ, but it was intended that the deeper soul qualities which had been developed should continue. This concept is summed up with God's command that man should offer the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

The shedding of the blood of Christ actually paid the price for man's sins, if man would qualify through repentance. The resurrection of Christ brings every man back to God for judgement of his deeds.

As part of the "restoration of all things" Israel is

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to be gathered, and in the process of time, all the ordinances which God established with man in the beginning of the world are to be restored upon the earth. As a result of this restoration, sacrifices by the shedding of blood will again be offered.

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