***The Old Testament Offerings

Colossians 2:18-19

COL-432***

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Our topic is "The Error of Legalism," number 44 in Colossians 2:16-17.

**Grace**

The apostle Paul, in the book of Colossians condemns the legalism of the Mosaic Law as a way of life for Christians. Christians enjoy the ocean of God's grace provisions, from which to fill (whatever the size of) the container of spiritual maturity which they have built in their souls through the Word of God, and through their positive volition to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Christians, at the time of spiritual life, have super-grace capacity containers for showers of blessing in time and eternity. And this is what James 4:6 calls upon us, as believers, to reach out for: the highest of all – our position in grace: "But He gives super grace (surpassing grace). Therefore, it says, 'God is opposed to the proud, but he gives grace to the humble.'"

The person who is willing to say, "Yes, I will learn what God thinks; I will subject myself to His ways; and, I will find blessings beyond my fondest dreams, and, I will find, then, in eternity, that I have done more than just to have existed." That is the problem that all of us face: having a life; or, an existence.

**Christian Giving**

Now giving one's material possessions to God's work, we have pointed out, is, in Scripture, called "grace." It is an act of grace capacity to be able to provide the funding for God's work, as is our talents, and our time, along with our treasures. But it is interesting that, when Paul talks about Christian giving, the word "grace" is there. That's what we're doing it from.

So, if all you have, out of the ocean of God's grace, is a thimbleful, because that's the limitations of your maturity that you choose, then you will not be giving a whole lot back to the Lord in material things. But if you have a tank carload, you'll be giving a whole lot more. And the happy thing about that is that whatever your container is, He will refill it.

So, having a life is not in what we possess, but in what we do with what God has given to us, in terms of being able to take possession, and run through our mission – purposeful living. All kinds of magazines; all kinds of articles; all kinds of conferences; all kinds of clinics are held among Christians; and, all kinds of seminars are held – all for purposeful living. I get them in the mail all the time: purposeful living in this area; and, purposeful living in that area. And most of them are inspirational talks. They do not come from the mind of God in Scripture, because that's not being given to people.

So, this evening, we begin looking at the spiritual life and the Old Testament sacrifices. We have said that everything that was in the Mosaic Law was symbolic. It had a meaning, and that meaning was to be found in the person of Jesus Christ, the sinless God-Man, and in His ministry as the Lamb of God to be given for the sins of the world.

So, the first thing, if we were going to understand that we are a grace people, is to understand that we have a life now. The phrase "get a life," as the world uses it, does not signify what the Bible means by that. What God gives us, as His children, is a material means for our livelihood, and for our ministry. But having material things that's not having a life. That is having an existence.

People say, "So-and-so has a good life," by which they mean that he has a lot of wealth; he has a lot of things; and, he has a lot of freedom. But that's not life. That's an existence. In Luke 12:15, Jesus said, "Beware (be on your guard against) every form of greed, for not even when one has in abundance does his life consists of his possessions." Do you believe that? Can you believe that? Your life is not what you possess? But for most people, that's a good life – the things that you possess, and what that enables you to do. But Jesus says, "No, that's an expression of greed. Your life is not in the abundance of the money and things that you have. Your life is something more than your existence.

**Walk Wisely**

In Ephesians 5, the apostle Paul takes up this point about: what is a life? In Ephesians 5:15-17, Paul says, Therefore, be careful how you walk as Christians, not as unwise men, but as wise – people who have a doctrinal frame of reference that is compatible for the church age lifestyle. You should make the most of your time, because the days are evil. It is going to be harder and harder for Christians to be a testimony for righteousness. It's going to be harder and harder for local churches to be able to stand true to expository teaching, and to the concepts of the grace way of life. And God Himself is going to have to come through with the grace provision, because there'll be fewer and fewer people who want to know what it is to have a life that is invested in God's service. They're too busy for that. They already have a life with their things: "Therefore, be careful how you walk, not as unwise man, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

**Understand God's Will**

"So, then, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." That's where your life is. It's the will of the Lord. And that's the problem. Regularly, we are faced with the fact that our self-will, in moments of carnality, comes up against the will of God. It's standing right there in the pathway. God the Holy Spirit leads His children. When you're in fellowship, He will nudge you into the way you should go. You may count on it. He will burden your heart. He'll move in the right direction. He will put you on guard. He'll alert you: "Don't do this. This is not a good thing to do. This is not for your blessing. This is not in My plan. He doesn't leave us out there, so that we don't know what to do with our time; our talent; and, our treasures. But the issue each day is self-will against God's will.

**The Parable of the Rich Fool**

So, it's not enough to accumulate material wealth. That is not the full blessing that the Father wants to bestow. And a classic example, biblically, is in Luke 12, which is a passage that you know: the parable of the rich fool. Jesus said, "Let me put this whole business of what a life is in perspective for you." And it is not in how well you're doing with your bank account. If that's all you have, you've missed the boat. That is the means. The life comes in the will of God. Luke 12:16: "And He (Jesus) told them a parable, saying, 'The land of a rich man was very productive." So, we begin with a person about whom we would say, "Boy, he has got a good life. Look at all the possessions he has. Look at the means and the freedom he has." Well, this man had it. And he kept accumulating more in his agricultural society setting.

"So, he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do since I have no more place to store my crops?' And he said, 'This is what I will do. I will tear down my barns, and I'll build larger ones. And there I will store all my grain and my goods.'" Now, probably everyone here tonight could tell me that there was a better way. When he found that he had even no more room to store his wealth, he should have said, "I don't need more wealth. God has made the provision. Now what I need is more than this existence, I need a life." That life would have been the life of service that his wealth would make possible for him. That's a great thing: to have financial means to do the work of the Lord; and, to have met nudge you in a direction, and to say, "Here's what needs to be done, and you have the means to do it." This happens all the time with Christians who understand about living with a container full of the grace of God and said, this man.

This man could have said, "I'll start a program to help feed these poor people in Israel. I'll start a program to help these women who have lost their husbands, and now they're widows, and they have children who are orphans. And I'm going to help them in rearing their children, and making provision. I will make it easier for our priests of the temple by providing means for the conduct of the temple ministry, and the assistance to them." There was no end of things that were open to him, that the will of God would have given him. But his self-will stood in the pathway. So, when God was nudging him in the right direction, he was coming up against his own will.

So, the man said, "I'll say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come. Take your ease. Eat, drink, and be merry. Is that a life? Just to eat, drink, and be merry (entertainment)? For many people, that's it. And when it's over, what do you have? It's not a life? You have an existence.

Now, in steps God: And God says, "I've been trying to nudge you in the right direction, but you wouldn't take it." So, now I have to make a decision. God said to him, "You're a fool. This very night, your soul is required of you. You just made a deal with your soul such that you're going to have a good existence. You've just complimented yourself on how wonderful you are, and that you have accumulated so much. And now you've made a plan, that you have this vast financial resource. And I'm going to take your life. I'm not even going to tell you what hour. You're going to hit the sack, and you're going to try to fall asleep, and you're going to toss and turn. But before morning, you're going to be gone. Your soul is required of you. Now let me ask you something: 'Who will own what you have prepared?'" He could have sent it ahead, as part of his eternal blessing and reward in heaven. But he didn't have a life. All he had was a wealthy existence.

Verse 21: "Thus is the man who lays up treasures for himself, and is not rich toward God." And down in verse 31, we have the summary statement: "But seek for His kingdom, and these things shall be added to you." The things (logistical provision) for our ministries – God will give them. Our focus is to be on them, in His service. That's our life.

So, the issue is the use of life (time and wealth) in God's service (the mission of our service) for receiving rewards in heaven. Luke 9:23-25: "Jesus was saying to them all. If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself; take up this cross daily (his mission), and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his physical life is going to lose it. Whoever invests his physical life for my sake, he'll save it. For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and he loses (or forfeits) himself?" Nothing. To waste your life capacity, and the means to do great things for God, is not living. That is the way the world does.

**Existence is not Living**

In 2 Corinthians 5:10, the apostle Paul reminds us: "We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body according to what he has done, whether good or bad." Now, that is living – to be able to stand up there and say, "I've completed my mission. I've enjoyed the things that God has given me, but I remember that existence is not living."

This is a constant danger for each one of us as Christians – That our will act as a roadblock to God's will for us. So, we don't go for the super-grace container.

**The Burnt Offering**

Now the Old Testament pictured these wonderful grace provisions of God beforehand that were to come through Christ in the Mosaic Law. And we pointed out that, in terms of the sacrificial system, there were three voluntary offerings. These three, God said, were a fragrant odor to Him. He was pleased when a person decided, I want to bring God this offering as an expression of my love and thanksgiving to Him. First was the burnt offering. This offering dealt with portraying the doctrine of propitiation. Propitiation has to do with satisfying the justice of God toward sin. Now the burnt offering portrayed the future work of Jesus Christ in salvation as the Lamb of God, Who would be substituted in death for us. So, when a burnt offering was performed, it was picturing what Jesus Christ was going to do – the Lamb of God Who came to take away the sins of the world.

**The Meal Offering**

Secondly was the meal offering. It was also a fragrant odor offering. This dealt also with the doctrine of propitiation. But it was in terms of portraying the kind of person that was to be sacrificed – the future Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who was sinless. The animal sacrifice had to be without physical blemish. Here is the impeccability of Christ. The word impeccability means that Jesus Christ was not able to sin, and He was able not to sin. In His humanity, He could not do anything that His divine nature would not do. So, here was a man like Adam, capable of completely obeying God, and He was a sinless person. Therefore, He was qualified to bear the sins of others.

**The Peace Offering**

The third fragrant offering was the peace offering. This had to do with the doctrine of reconciliation – the great and wonderful thing that grace has done in removing the wall that separates man and God (this wall of sin).

**The Sin Offering**

Then there were two compulsory offerings. Those three were voluntary. But here were two that you had to perform, as they were necessary. And they and they were both non-fragrant odor offerings to God. One was called the sin offering. This was the doctrine of temporal fellowship – the restoration in terms of your unknown sins.

**The Trespass offering**

The other compulsory was the trespass offering. This also dealt with the doctrine of temporal fellowship. This was in terms of one's known sins. So, when you sin, you brought the sin offering to cover unknown sins first. 1 John 1:9 covers that by confession of your nonsense. The trespass offering was when you knew that you had broken the laws of God, and you had come for sin. So, you came, and you made this offering to God, symbolizing what was to come in Christ, and that your trust was there.

Now, we're not going to go through the many things in the Old Testament. That would be a monstrous operation to show how these things were reflective (symbolic) of the grace work of God to come. And these burnt offerings are enormously instructive, but we're going to do this: We're just going to focus on the burnt offering, which will be a good illustration of everything else that is done in the Old Testament which doesn't actually change anything. But it was a symbol of the reality, which was to come.

**The Burnt Offering**

So, Leviticus gives a procedure for the sacrificial system in the temple of Israel. We will be looking at the Levitical burnt offering, the sweet Savior offering – one that you chose to bring to God to deal with the doctrine of propitiation, the substitute for your sin, portraying Jesus Christ. It was a voluntary offering. And what it conveyed was the concept of a perfect substitute sacrifice for another person who was guilty – for his sin guilt. Propitiation satisfies the justice of God against a sinner.

Jesus Christ was the sinless Lamb of God. He had no sin nature, and He never was guilty of any act of sin. Notice Romans 8:3: "For what the Law (the Mosaic Law) could not do, weak as it was through the flesh (the sin nature), God did, sending His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." He was a human being, but he was not quite like a human being. He had no sin nature, and as an offering for sin, He the condemned sin the flesh.

Then Hebrews 4:15 also stresses that Christ, as the Lamb of God, was absolutely sinless: "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things just as we are, yet without sin. He has been tempted, but without a sin nature to appeal to. So, the Lord Jesus Christ, the God-Man, was absolutely shameless. That's why, when you brought an animal for sacrifice, it had to have no physical blemishes, to convey that idea of sinlessness.

Now, the Lord Jesus Christ, here in the burnt offering, is pictured as coming under God's judgment, against the sins of the world. He experienced that judgment during the last three hours, from noon to 3 o'clock in the afternoon, as he hung on the cross, and the sins of all mankind were placed upon Him.

2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "He (God the Father) made Him (God the Son) Who knew no sin, to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness (the absolute righteousness) of God in Him." And all of this is very clear. You cannot save yourself. You cannot bring anything acceptable to God. It has to come as a gift. He has to do it all for you.

**A Bull or an Ox**

Now, there were three categories of animals which could be used in the burnt offering. It depended on your financial status. First of all, is the animal from the herd. Let's read about that in Leviticus 1:2-9. What we're talking about here is a bull or an ox. You did this if you are a person of means. This was a more expensive offering to bring: "Speak to the Sons of Israel, and say to them, 'When any man of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of animals from the herd or flock. It is offered as a burnt offering from the herd. He shall offer a male (You can see the significance here that it had to be a male animal – Jesus Christ was a male), without defect (He was sinless, with no physical defects). He shall offer it at the doorway of the tent of the meeting, that he may be accepted before God.'" This means that he was accepted vicariously, based upon what Christ was going to do to pay for this in the future.

**Atonement**

"And this man (who is offering it now) shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf." Now, the word "atonement" does not mean forgiveness. The word "atonement" means "covering." What he's going to have is a temporary covering between him and the wrath of God – a covering which is going to be fulfilled eventually in the death of Christ, when forgiveness will actually be made. So, this is covering the problem.

Verse 5: "And he shall slay the young bull before the Lord and Aaron son's. The priest shall offer up the blood, and sprinkle the blood around on the altar that is at the doorway of the tent of meeting. He shall then skin the burnt offering, and cut it into pieces. And the sons of Aaron, the priest, shall put fire on the altar, and arrange wood on the fire. Then Aaron's son and the priest shall arrange the pieces, with the head and the suet over the wood, over the wood, which is on the fire that is on the altar. Its entrails, however, and its legs, he shall wash with water. And the priest shall offer it up in smoke (all of it) on the altar as a burnt offering, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the Lord."

So, this is category number one. The worshiper has selected a suitable animal for sacrifice, and brought it to the altar to the priest. It is a perfect specimen, portraying the sinless Jesus Christ. This animal has done nothing to deserve this death, as Christ was innocent. He lays his hands firmly on the animal, to identify this animal with his sins. He transfers this, as it were, to the Lord Jesus Christ. This was done to Christ on the cross (2 Corinthians 5:25:21, as we rea. He knew no sin, but He became sin for us. And God will then accept this symbolic gesture, on the part of this man, of his faith in the coming Messiah Savior.

Leviticus 1:4: "He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, saying, "God, I'm a sinner, and I'm depending on you, through the symbol of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, that it may be accepted for Him to make atonement, and He is accepted." Propitiation has taken place. God's justice is satisfied. His wrath is subdued. This is a picture for sin, a covering until the death of Christ, when comes the actual removal of the guilt.

Then the worshiper kills the animal. He cuts the throat, and the blood comes out. A strong animal gradually is weakened, and he dies because of the sin of the worshiper. Gradually the life pours out.

If you've ever been to a Hispanic society, like in Mexico, and attended the bullfight, you had this picture exactly. It's pretty brutal, but the people who were preparing this bull, who comes out with great strength, charging out – they had these sharp darts ("bondlias"). And they come charging on a horse, and they stab them into the bull. And every time they hit him, the blood begins flowing. And pretty soon, the animal is pumping blood. And you can see he's getting weaker. Than the matador comes in with his cape, and goes through his motions. It is very choreographed (dancelike), and very graceful. And under that cape, he has the sword. And gradually, more and more, the bull is weakening by the treatment physically to him. Finally, he comes to the high point where the matador ends up on his toes, and lifts up, and right between the back of the neck, he hits the animal in the heart, and the animal wobbles on his feet, and he falls over.

Now, this is not a very pleasant sight. People are cheering madly. But you're seeing how, gradually, this animal's life is drained out of it. The life is in the blood. And this is what happens. He has brought this animal to the priest at the temple; the throat has been cut; the blood is pumping out, and, this animal gradually collapses and dies, in place of the believer (in place of this Jew), symbolically representing the covering of his sin.

This act symbolized both the spiritual and the physical death of Christ on the cross. He died from 12:00 noon to 3 o'clock. And He said, "My God, My God (addressing the Father and Holy Spirit), why have you forsaken me. As the father and the Holy Spirit turned from the Son, as he bore all the corruption of the sins of mankind), and then he died physically – completing the sacrifice. It's a shocking sight, and what was done to this bull was made clear what would be done to Jesus Christ on the cross in paying for our sins. It would be enormous suffering. There would be enormous physical abuse. And it would result, then, in His death.

And when the animal's blood poured out of the animal, the priest caught the blood in a container, and he disposed of it in a prescribed way around the altar. The worshiper, then, skinned the animal, and cut it into pieces. When he skinned it, it demonstrated that there was no blemish. Indeed, this was a perfect animal.

I was one time on a hunting trip for deer, and one of the men in our party shot a deer. And we picked him up; strung him up; and, the man proceeded to drain the blood, and to skin him. When he pulled the skin back, on one of the thighs, there was a defect. The animal, from the outside, looked perfect, but once the skin was removed, there was a serious defect of some kind in the muscular structure of this animal. And here is the symbolic taking of the hide off this animal, at the temple, and showing that this was perfection – Christ in His humanity was sinless. And the physical suffering of Christ on the cross was depicted in the process of killing this animal.

The priest then puts part of the animal into the fire on the altar, and he burned them. This burning depicts the judgment of God upon sin. God is going to judge sin. His righteousness demands that sin be covered – that sin be paid for, either by Christ, or for the rejecter of Christ, to spend all eternity suffering for that sin that he can never pay for. This burning of the parts of the animal depicted the judgment of God upon sin. It was all accomplished on the altar. The man who brought the animal did not do anything to achieve this. It was all done through the agency of the priest, representing God's action, and it all provided symbolically what Jesus Christ was to do on the cross. The worshiper had no part in this burning process, because salvation is a gift from God by grace alone. Our salvation done by our High Priest, Jesus Christ.

The head and the fat were burned. The head represented the mental purity of Jesus Christ; ant, the fat, His overt righteousness, qualified to be the redeemer. Then the viscera and the legs were washed in water before they were burned on the altar. They represented the interrelationship to God, and the external walk before God to cleanse internally, and to walk in righteousness. This is what salvation enables you to do. It brings righteousness internally, and gives you the capacity to walk a godly life.

These parts were cleansed by water before they put on the fire. Of course, that represented the Word of God. In the Bible, the water is the cleansing of the Word of God. This was a fragrant offering, a sweet-savor type, that pictured Christ in His perfection, and obedient to the will of God, to bear the sins of the world. The fire – that was the kicker. In the Bible, fire is a symbol of God's holiness. That fire is the judgment of God, and nobody is going to escape judgment for sin – to have it uncovered, there is no other way except the lake of fire then.

Hebrews 12:2-29: "Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire." How foolish it is to think that by something you have done, you can satisfy the judgment of God against your sin. Once that worshiper said, "I want to present this burnt offering as an expression of my confidence in the coming Savior Messiah," the priest, representing God, had to do it all. The worshipers had certain stages. But for the ultimate presentation upon the fire of that altar, here came the ministry of the priest. And this was a manifestation of that holiness that God condemns.

Genesis 19:24: "Then the Lord reigned on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven." Regularly, fire is associated with the judgment of God against sin. Here in these homosexual cities, it was literal fire, and it's a manifestation of what God himself approves: what He approves has blessing; what he does not approve comes under His fire.

Exodus 3:2: "And the angel of the Lord appeared to him (to Moses) in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush. And he looked and, behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed." And as you know, Moses was told: "Take off your shoes. You're on holy ground." The fire of God represents the holiness of God.

And fire also represents purification. 1 Corinthians 3:12-14: "Now, if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stone, wood, hay, or straw, each man's work will become evident. For the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire. Are you producing divine good works from the Holy Spirit, or human good works from your sin nature? The fire of the judgment of God, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, is going to show which kind it is: "The fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work, which he has built upon it, remains, he shall receive a reward." The remainder of the carcass of this animal in the ashes were then disposed of in the proper way.

**A Sheep or a Goat**

Now, perhaps you were not a person of means. In that case, you had an offering which is not that expensive. You brought an offering from the flock. Leviticus 1:10-13: "But if his offering is from the flock of the sheep or of the goats, for a burnt offering, he shall offer it: a meal without defect. And he shall slay it on the side of the altar, northward, before the Lord. And Aaron's sons, the priest, shall sprinkle its blood around the altar. He shall then cut it into its pieces, with its head, and its suet. The priests shall arrange them on the wood, which is on the fire, which is on the altar. The entrails, however, and the legs, he shall wash with water, and the priest shall offer all of it, and offer it up in smoke on the altar. It is a burnt offering, an offering of fire, of a smooth aroma for the Lord." Here you have another picture. Here you have a male without blemish. You have either a sheep or a goat. This is pictured as Christ unresisting – the sinless Lamb of God, bearing the sins of the world.

So, a person, who cannot afford a bull or an ox, brings this offering sacrifice from the flock. The procedure is similar. The symbolism is similar. Here, it pictures the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. This is the way that John the Baptist identified his cousin: "Behold, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world – including the world of unbelievers. Everybody's sins were covered by this Lamb. This animal, a sheep or a goat, was killed on the north side of the altar. That's interesting. They did this on the north side of the altar. The significance of this is indicated in Isaiah 14:13.

**"The North"**

This passage deals with the rebellion of Lucifer in heaven, against the authority of God. Isaiah 14:13: "But you said in your heart (God describing Lucifer's sin), 'I will ascend to heaven. I will raise my throne above the stars of God (the angelic host). I will sit on the Mount of the Assembly, in the recesses of the North.'" This declares that one of Satan's goals, in his rebellion against God, had to do with the North. He wanted to sit on the mount of the assembly in the direction of the North.

In the ancient world, it is interesting that they viewed, in pagan mythology, that the location of divine authority was always in the northern regions of the world. Mount Olympus was an example of that. In Isaiah 2:2, we read, "Now it will come about that in the last days, the mountain of the house of the Lord (the Kingdom of God) will be established as the chief of the mountains (the chief of the kingdoms), and will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream into it." In the last days, the Kingdom of God and all nations are streaming into it. The hill represents government authority. Here Isaiah is speaking of the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ: "And he shall exercise government authority over all nations."

So, Satan's goal was to substitute for Christ in this authority. Satan's goal was to control the center of the universe, in the north, where God reigned. Satan decided to bring the universe under his sole sphere of authority in the place of God's control. So, the north side of the altar speaks of this challenge of Satan, who wanted to substitute for the sovereignty of God, and wanted to cause sin to predominate.

The slaughter of the animal was not a pleasant sight. It speaks of the horror of sin, and it's nauseating to God. But it's the sweet, fragrant quality that God mentions. In the ancient world, a sweet savor offering signified something that was acceptable to the gods. People were perfumed, to make them smell sweet. It made them acceptable in the company of the home. Jesus Christ was totally acceptable, as John 8:29 says: "to the Father." At the animal sacrifice, the smoke would arise to God as a fragrant odor, in that it represented the person of His Son, Jesus Christ, in all of His Holiness. Ephesians 5:2: "And walk in love, just as Christ, who loved you, and gave Himself up for us, as an offering and a sacrifice to God, as a fragrant aroma."

So, if you are a person of wealth, you brought the bull or the ox in a burnt offering. All of this: the very procedure, and the animal symbolized Christ and His work. If you were of less means, you brought a goat or a sheep. And again, the procedure symbolized the purity and the holiness of God, and the substitutionary work of Jesus Christ.

**A Bird**

However, if you are a really poor person, then you had the third category of offering, which was acceptable. And that was from the birds. Leviticus 1:14-17: "But if his offering to the Lord is a burnt offering of birds, then he shall bring his offering from the turtledoves, or from the young pigeons. And the priest shall bring it to the altar, and ring off its head, and offer it up in smoke on the altar. And its blood is to be drained out on the side of the altar. He shall also take away its crop with its feathers, and cast it beside the altar, eastward, to the place of the ashes. Then he shall tear it by its wings, but he shall not divide it. And the priest shall offered it up in smoke, on the altar, on the wood, which is on the fire. It is a burnt offering – an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to God."

The procedure here, in the sacrifice of the birds, was a voluntary offering representing Christ, the God-Man, now in His phase of His resurrection. The bird is rising up, as it were, from the dead. 2 Corinthians 8:9: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet, for your sake, he became poor, and that, through His poverty, you became rich." This portrays the resurrection of Christ. In this procedure, the priest killed the bird, and poured the blood out on the north side of the altar. The priests plucked away the crop, with the feathers, and threw it away on the side, the ash pile, signifying the place of sin removed. He split the bird down the middle, but he doesn't divide it. What could be the symbol of that? Splitting the bird represented Jesus Christ: two parts; and, yet the parts always joined – Christ had two natures. He was divine, and he was human. This symbolized what we call "the hypostatic union of Christ's two natures. And because the bird was not separated, it showed that the two natures are in one person, and they will be there forever. He will always be the God-Man in heaven. The division, without the separation, also spoke of the singleness or the purpose of Christ in His humanity, and in His deity.

John 8:29: "He Who sent Me," Jesus says, "is with Me. He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him." Because of His deity, He always please the Father in His humanity.

So, summarizing whether it's the bull; the ox; the goat; the sheep; or, whether it's the turtledove (the pigeon), the burnt offering has a significance. It has something in the work of Christ on the cross which is even more important to God than the salvation of sinners. God created man for His own glory. And, yet all have dishonored him.

**Belshazzar**

An example of that is Belshazzar, in Daniel 5:23, who was condemned for his dishonoring God. Man was created to glorify God. God's character could be vindicated only by a man who would live on earth wholly to God's glory. It was through Adam that sin came – that God's glory had been dishonored. Only another Man, Who could qualify to do so, could bring glory to God, and resolve the problem. It had to be the God-man, Jesus Christ.

So, as a God-Man, minus the sin nature, pure of all acts of evil, lived on this earth in such a way of perfection, that he vindicated the Father, and the justice of God, with his death, on the cross. And the burnt offering is that aspect of the cross. This sinless, perfect person became the substitute in death for all of us. There was no other way. There was no works way. And because it is all of God, once you have the salvation, you can't lose it. This brought more glory to God than had been denied Him in Adam. Do you understand that? God wanted to save us. But more important, He was to demonstrate His Holiness, and to demonstrate that He could overcome what Satan had led man into.

What did Adam do? He sinned. Now we have those of us who are regenerated. We're way ahead of Adam. No matter how you may fall into sin, you can never again be lost. You have infinitely more than Adam had. Adam's future could be compromised. Your eternity cannot be removed. God has removed all question of His abhorrence of sin. And this character of Jesus Christ was unstained. Regenerated sinners gained a lot more than Adam lost for us in sin.

So, the Father takes us through the burnt offerings, in His thinking, about the son, Jesus Christ. And our fellowship with that Son is what it's all about. And the only way you enter into that eternal fellowship is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And all these Old Testament procedures, in themselves, never saved anybody. You couldn't be saved by offering an animal. But the significance of what that meant – that Christ then fulfilled, and in which we trust: that could do it. And it was: believe; and, be saved, because someone has paid the price for us.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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