

**THE OFFERINGS (5)**

—H. L. Heijkoop

*Leviticus 16:7-14*

So far we saw that Aaron had to offer a bullock for himself and his house and two bucks of the goats for the house of Israel. In the bullock for Aaron and his house we find the entire atonement for ourselves presented. However, as far as Israel was concerned, there were two bucks. Later we will see the two sides of this picture: God's side and man's side.

In Genesis 3 we saw what took place when Adam sinned. Not only did he transgress a commandment whereby he became a sinner, but he had also believed what Satan had said about God. The serpent declared that God was a liar, "God has said that you would die when you ate of that fruit, but that is not true." He denied that God was righteous; otherwise God would not have forbidden the eating of that tree. Satan further denied that God loved man, "if you eat of the fruit you will be like God and God does not want you to become like Him. God withholds the fruit from you to keep you in an inferior position." Thus all God's characteristics were denied. This was a most horrible thing!

God could have given proof that His word was true. If Adam and Eve had immediately been thrown into hell, it would have proven the truth of His word and His righteousness, and His holiness would have been revealed as well. But as far as His love was concerned, there would have remained an eternal question mark. Did God love Adam or didn't He? There was however a second thing: God's love would not have been satisfied. God is love and how would He have been satisfied if His creature had perished for eternity? Therefore, God did not immediately execute the judgment.

Before God could show His grace towards the sinner, first that which man had robbed from God had to be returned. God is sovereign, but He can never act in conflict with Himself: therefore, He has to be righteous in His actions. So, when man robbed God of His honour, man had to be judged first, and only afterwards could God reveal His love. How is that possible? This question was solved on the cross of Golgotha.

In the two goats we find the two sides: what was needed for God, and what was needed for man. The first goat was for the Lord and He Himself chose which of the two would be for Him: even Aaron had no say in it. God decided by means of the lot. Only God can determine how He can be satisfied. He will say how that is possible. We see this in the first goat for the Lord.

In verse 11 we read, "Aaron shall present the bullock of the sin-offering, which is for himself, and shall make atonement for himself and for his house, and shall slaughter the bullock of the sin-offering which is for himself." But immediately upon this there is an interruption: before Aaron entered with the blood into the sanctuary, he had to, "take the censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before Jehovah, and both his hands full of fragrant incense beaten small, and bring it inside the veil and he shall put the incense upon the fire before Jehovah, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat which is upon the testimony, that he die not" (v. 12-13). In the epistle to the Hebrews it is said that Aaron could not enter without blood (9:7); there he is seen as man. But in our chapter, he is seen as type of the Lord Jesus and therefore he had to enter first without blood, to become a true picture of the Lord Jesus.

That we see in John 13. In the first verse we read, "Jesus, knowing that His hour had come that He should depart out of this world to the Father," and in verse 3, "knowing that the Father had given Him all things into His hands." But in the same verse we suddenly no longer find the Father but God, "And that He came out from God and was going to God." That is very significant. In the Gospel of John, whenever the Father is mentioned it is always in connection with love and grace. However, when responsibility is in view, it speaks of "God." Because of this, the transition of "Father" to "God" is very important. The Lord Jesus was the eternal Son of the Father and it was clear that He would return to the Father's house. But He had lived for 33 years on the earth, in this world of which Satan was the prince and of which Satan would soon become the god. In the same chapter, the Lord showed that all is defiled here. By the washing of the feet He showed us that even the dust defiles and that He has to wash our feet again and again, so that we may have part with Him.

But how was it with *Him* in this respect? He had been 33 years on this earth, in this unclean world, amongst sinners and surrounded on all sides by Satan's power. He came into contact with sin and the sinners and that raised the question. He had come from God, from God Who dwells in an unapproachable light (1 Tim. 6:16), in Whom is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5), Who is of purer eyes but to behold evil (Hab. 1:13). From there the Lord came upon earth and the angel said to Mary,

"Wherefore the Holy Thing also which shall be born shall be called Son of God." And what was the case? He went to be with God, where not a single sin could enter. How wonderful it is, He was perfectly pure, fit to return to the Father! We see a picture of this in His relationship with the lepers. From the Old Testament we know that everyone who touched a leper became unclean. But when a leper approached the Saviour and said, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou art able to cleanse me," the Lord touched him and what was the result? The Lord did not become unclean: the leper became clean! So great was His holiness (Luke 5:12, etc.)! This is shown to us here. If the Lord Jesus had only one impurity in Himself, He could not have died for us: He would have had to die for Himself. If He had committed one sin, He could not have been our High Priest. Only because He was perfectly clean could He be our representative. Because He was perfectly holy, God could receive Him.

The thought could arise that the Lord Jesus had to bring an offering for Himself. He had John the Baptist baptize Him, didn't He? And wasn't that the "baptism of repentance for remission of sins"? (Mark 1:4). This could give the impression that He had to repent and had need for His sins to be forgiven. We know that was not the case but that He was baptized to make Himself one with His own. Immediately afterwards the heavens opened and the voice of the Father said, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I have found My delight!" When we read here that Aaron had to sacrifice for himself and for his house, and when we realize that he was a type of the Lord Jesus, then it was necessary to show that the Lord Jesus did not bring an offering for Himself. This is what we find in the verses 12 and 13.

In verse 11 an animal for sacrifice was slain and in verse 14 Aaron entered behind the veil with the blood. First, however, he entered without blood as we read in verses 12 and 13. He took a "censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before Jehovah." It was fire that had come down from heaven (9:24). When the burnt-offering had first been laid on the altar, fire came down from heaven and consumed the offering. The sons of Aaron had not understood this; they brought strange fire and were judged. The fire was not allowed to come from men. A man, approaching God, must not be tested by human judgment, but by God. Whoever wants to approach God must conform to His holiness: that is what is presented here.

Then, Aaron had to take "both his hands full of fragrant incense beaten small." Exodus 30 mentions this incense. The incense is a picture of the personal perfection and beauty of the Lord Jesus, not of His work but of His Person, and this had to be tested in the presence of God. The incense had to be brought within the veil and be put on the fire there, on the fire that is the picture of the holiness that tests and searches all things. The only result was a sweet smelling savour to God! We see that in the life and death of the Lord Jesus. He has been tried under all circumstances and been found obedient. As Man He had to be obedient, but it is the *manner* in which He was obedient that is presented here. In all that He did, He was perfect. When He revealed His love, it was shown in a perfect manner. When it was a question of His righteousness or His holiness, they too were perfect. From everything, His personal glory was evident. Therefore, God could say, "I have found My delight in Him." Well then, *this* Person had to go to the cross!

The subject here is the high priest. The glory of the Lord Jesus and of His work is so great that a single picture will not suffice to give us an impression of it. The sacrifice is one picture, the priest another, and, as we have seen with the burnt-offering, the altar is another one again. However, we do not find the altar here.

So we see the Lord Jesus going to the cross after having first walked perfectly before God's face and after it had been established that He was only one sweet smelling savour. Only then did He enter with the blood of the offering. This we read in verse 14, "And he shall take of the blood of the bullock and sprinkle with his finger upon the front of the mercy-seat eastward; and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood seven times with his finger." He had to first sprinkle the blood once on the front of the mercy-seat and afterwards seven times *before* the mercy-seat. We know what the mercy-seat was. It was a part of the ark, the throne of God. On it were the cherubim, the executors of the judgments of God in the Old Testament. In the ark lay the tables of the law, and the cherubim watched to see whether man answered to the requirements of the law. They were prepared to judge all who did not conform to the required condition.

Blood was sprinkled on the mercy-seat. The blood signified that death had intervened, that judgment had been executed. But over whom had it been executed? In anti-type (the reality of which the type speaks), it was over the offering that was perfect in Himself, but Who had taken upon Himself to die for others, an Offering in which God found full satisfaction. Not merely that, but an Offering that desired to give Himself for the glory of God. We see a beautiful picture in Exodus 21:2-6. A Hebrew slave having served six years was allowed to go out free. But if He had a wife and children, he could say, "I love my master, my wife, and my children, I will not go free." Then his master pierced his ear, which was a sign of his becoming a servant for ever. Hebrews 10:5-6 and Psalm 40:6 show that this is a type of the Lord Jesus.

We read in Ephesians 5:25 that "Christ loved the Assembly and delivered Himself up for it," and in Galatians 2:20, "The Son of God, Who has loved me and given Himself for me." Those are marvelous verses, but in Exodus 21 it says first, "I love my master," and only then, "my wife and children." We should think of this as well. What did God see when He saw

the blood? He saw a Man Who had never dishonoured Him, Who had throughout His life glorified Him and obeyed Him even unto the death of the cross, One Who had delivered Himself up to restore what man had ruined. His first thought was not for man, but for maintaining the honour of God. Certainly, our salvation was bound up in this but, as is expressed by Exodus 21:5, "I love *my lord*, my wife and my children."

What a glorious language that blood spoke for God. It signified that the judgment had been executed so that satisfaction had been given to the righteousness of God. God had been offended by a man, now He was glorified by a Man and thus His righteousness was satisfied. Moreover, this Man had finished the work out of love for God and He had done it in such a wonderful way that God had been completely glorified. What I am now stating goes a little beyond our subject: it is more connected with the burnt-offering, but the burnt-offering and the sin-offering are simply two pictures of the one offering of Christ. We may be able to distinguish between them but we cannot separate them.

In Genesis 3 the serpent had said to Eve, "God is lying, you will not die." On the cross however, the Lord Jesus gave proof that God had spoken the truth. He had come to earth to take the place of man before God, and thus He had to die! The serpent had said, "God is not righteous." How did the Lord prove God's righteousness? In the fact that He had to die even though He was God's Son, because He took our place, and the judgment over Him was not less than it would have been for us. He also gave proof that God was holy, for He Who had said, "He that has sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, because I do always the things that are pleasing to Him" (John 8:29), He had to cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Above all this, He gave proof that God is love. The serpent had said, "God does not love you," but the Lord Jesus proved the contrary. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him may not perish, but have life eternal." Could there be a greater love? The blood speaks of these things before God.

The result is that God can now offer grace to every man. God has been *glorified* to a higher degree by this one Man, than He had been *dishonoured* by all men. God has been fully revealed on the cross, and when God is revealed, He is glorified, for everything in Him is glorious. Could the love of God ever have been revealed in such a way if sin had not come into the world and the Lord Jesus had not come on earth? No! We see the love of God in the fact that "we being still sinners, Christ has died for us" (Rom. 5:8). Once again, this would not have been possible if sin had not entered into the world.

Here is demonstrated how wondrously beautiful this side of the death of the Lord Jesus is. He saw sin, which was so terrible to God, and He came to take it away. But first of all, He used it to glorify God. The blood speaks of this in God's presence. His righteousness and holiness have been satisfied, His majesty has been established, and now the grace of God can reach out to every man (2 Cor. 5:20). There we read that God beseeches, prays and entreats man to be reconciled to Him. Not only does He *warn* them that they have to repent, (Acts 17:30), He *entreats* them! What grace! He can do this on the basis of the blood on the mercy-seat which has become a mercy-seat instead of a judgment seat through the blood. It was the throne of God's government, but the blood changed it into a throne of grace.

Now we want to look at the two places where the blood was sprinkled. First of all, Aaron had to sprinkle it on the front of the mercy-seat, eastward. Cain had left for the east (Gen. 4:16), and anyone who comes to God must come to God from the east so that God sees the blood between Himself and the sinner. God can accept him only on that basis. That is what we see in the blood of the bullock.

Nothing is directly said of the blood of the first buck of the goats, but we read in verse 15 that Aaron had to do the same thing with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock. We have a full description regarding the blood of the bullock, and we know that the bullock speaks of the work of the Lord Jesus for us. Israel will never enter the most holy place; even in the Millennium the priests will not enter it. But in the Epistle to the Hebrews we read that "we have boldness to enter" (Heb. 10:19). Aaron entered only once a year with blood. However, after the Lord Jesus had shed His blood and the work of the cross was finished, the veil was rent from the top to the bottom and the way is open. Each priest standing in the holy place found himself in the holy of holies, for the two parts became one whole. We are the house of Aaron, a generation of priests, exercising its service in the sanctuary and having free access into the holy of holies. On the basis of the blood we are allowed to approach God.

But there was a second place where the blood was sprinkled. What a grace of God is this also! For God the first sprinkling was sufficient: a second time was not needed because He never forgets the blood, He always sees it! But it was also sprinkled *before* the mercy-seat seven times. When the priest entered the sanctuary and approached the ark, he stood upon the ground on which the blood was, on which it had been sprinkled seven times, a perfect testimony. Therefore, no doubt ever needed to enter his heart. As far as we are concerned, when we do what Hebrews 10 tells us to do, and enter into the sanctuary, we tread on the living way, we come there where the blood has been sprinkled so that we can enter and can stand there with a free conscience for we stand there, so to say, on the blood.

The blood of the one buck was also carried within the veil; certainly it was also for Israel, for "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Heb. 9:22). When Israel is brought back to God, it will be on the basis of the blood of the Lord Jesus. But that is not presented here in detail. Both the censer, with the fiery coals, and the incense, as well as the sprinkling of the blood are only mentioned in connection with the bullock, that is in connection with the significance of the work of the Lord Jesus for us, for we come there where the blood has been sprinkled. The sprinkled blood gives us boldness to enter, for we have been made one with the Lord Jesus, the true High Priest. We find the power of this oneness in Ephesians 1 in the picture of the Christ and His Assembly where He is the Head of His body. But in Leviticus 16 we are not seen as the body of Christ but as a priestly generation. God looks upon us on the basis of the blood that has completely satisfied Him and in this manner God has also found satisfaction regarding us. Besides this, we are also made one with Christ Who is a sweet smelling savour. And so we are "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6). That gives us boldness to enter into the sanctuary.

*To be cont'd*

## QUOTES

Those who put Christians under law do not maintain its authority; for they hold them exempt from its curse, though they break it (Dt. 27:26; Gal. 3:10).

The law is the perfect rule of right and wrong for every child of Adam in itself... but now we have something much higher, not what man ought to be, but God Himself glorified.

God being revealed, sin is measured by the glory of God. There is no veil now. (Rom. 3:23).

*J.N.D. — Synopsis of the Bible, Vol. 4*

When God is revealed, He is glorified, for everything in Him is glorious.

*H.L.H. — See the article in this issue.*