

THE OFFERINGS (15)

—H. L. Heijkoop

Lev. 6:14-23

We have seen that the meal-offering speaks of the life of the Lord Jesus from the day of His birth until the moment of His death. It therefore does not concern the work of atonement that He has accomplished, but rather His Person. The glory of His Person could only be revealed during His life upon earth. His present glory in heaven is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, but His moral beauty was only revealed in His life upon earth.

We have also seen that the meal-offering was only brought together with the burnt-offering. Chapter 2 is closely connected with chapter 1; it is *one* message of the Lord. So it is in chapter 6 where we read in verse 8, "And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying..." which expression is repeated in verse 19. The eleven intervening verses (8-18) are therefore one unity; the first six of which (8-13) give the law of the burnt-offering and the remaining five (14-18), the law of the meal-offering. From this we see how closely these two offerings were connected.

The burnt-offering is mentioned before the meal-offering, which chronologically should have come first, since the death of the Lord Jesus came at the end of His life. God, however, gives us the normal course of things in our appreciation of Christ. No man is able to see the glory of the Lord Jesus, or to occupy himself with Him until he both knows the work of the Lord Jesus and he has *complete liberty* to come into God's presence on the basis of the burnt-offering. Therefore, we first have the burnt-offering. Then, as soon as a believer has learned how he has received complete liberty to approach God, he can occupy himself with the meal-offering: with the beauties of the Lord Jesus as Man upon earth. When I say, "as Man upon earth," I think of the manner in which He has been revealed here below as Man. That revelation concerned His personal glory which neither began when He came upon earth nor ended when He left this earth, but which found *expression* upon earth.

In chapter 2 we have seen how the different forms in which the meal-offering could be brought represented the various tests the Lord had to endure, how He has been tested in these by the fire of God, and how they only produced a sweet savour before God. Never was there anything in the life of the Lord Jesus that was not perfect before God. But here, in the *law* of the meal-offering, we do not find such variety of forms. If we only had this law we would only know the *ingredients* of the meal-offering. In verse 15 there is mention of fine flour, oil and frankincense. The accent here is not on the various glories of the Lord, but on the priest's portion.

First, *one* of the sons of Aaron had to present the meal-offering before Jehovah; it was done by *one* person. Afterwards we read in verse 15 that "he shall take of it *his* handful of the fine flour of the oblation, and of the oil thereof, and all the frankincense which is on the meat-offering, and shall burn it on the altar: it is a sweet odour of the memorial thereof to Jehovah." This refers, therefore, to the activity of one of Aaron's sons. This son did not stand there all by himself, for he was one out of a group of persons; therefore, what he did was connected with all.

Let us review in some detail the significance of the expression "the sons of Aaron." Aaron offered a sin-offering for himself and for his house. Now Hebrews 3:6 says that *we* are the house of the true Aaron, so all believers belong to this house; together they form that priestly generation of which we read in 1 Peter 2:5. But here special mention is made of the *sons* of Aaron. In Scripture, the feminine speaks of the *position*, whereas the masculine speaks of the *power* in which this position is realized. We find this latter thought in the expression: "the sons of Aaron." Every believer is a priest, but does everyone bring this into actual practice? A priest is regularly in the sanctuary to serve God there. Every believer knows that he has free access to God, but in what measure does he bring this into practice? In the sons of Aaron we see those who *do* practice it, all those who not only know that they have been given liberty to enter into the sanctuary, but who utilize that liberty, and who in that manner are regularly in God's presence to serve there. In the sanctuary these persons have entered into the thoughts, the feelings (sentiments) of God; now they discern what is suited in God's presence, and how God evaluates all things.

We saw in these verses how one of the sons of Aaron brought this offering. The most exalted act of presenting this offering before the Lord's face, before the altar, and of sacrificing it to God, could only be done by the sons of Aaron. Here in verse 14 we see the same thing in connection with the meal-offering: "One of the sons of Aaron shall present it, before Jehovah, before the altar." But he did not do this for himself alone, he did it in connection with *all* the sons of Aaron, as

one of the sons of Aaron. Then we see that he sacrificed *God's portion* on the altar. I do not want to speak in detail of this, for we saw this in chapter 2; but I want to stress that one of Aaron's sons had to offer it upon the altar. What a wonderful service! He offered that which speaks of the glorious manhood of the Lord, of the anointing with the Holy Spirit during the entire life of the Lord, and of His preeminent Person as typified by the frankincense. All of this he was allowed to bring upon the altar, "a sweet odour." I repeat it: what a wonderful service!

The frankincense was too exalted for us to enjoy. God desires the frankincense just for Himself: that which is expressed by the frankincense can only be enjoyed by Him. Although we can not fathom it, we may see that the frankincense is precious, and we may also sacrifice it to God. But only one accustomed to the Lord's presence was allowed to do so, for only in His presence can one distinguish what the frankincense is.

But then we read in verse 16, "And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat: unleavened shall it be eaten in a¹ holy place; in the court of the tent of meeting shall they eat it." Here the sons of Aaron were allowed to eat of the same food as God. It wasn't just a portion for the one son of Aaron who had brought the offering, but the portion of Aaron and all his sons together, and we note that Aaron typifies the Lord Jesus. Thus the entire family of God (although here restricted to the son's of Aaron, which means to those who bring into practice that they are priests) may eat together of the food that God has determined as His own portion. What a beautiful thought!

But this food was only to be eaten in a holy place, not in *the* holy place, but in *a* holy place; not in the sanctuary itself, for there everything was for God; a man could not enter there to eat. Thus the place had to be holy, separated from the world, a place where everything was in complete agreement with God. Notice that the court of the tent of meeting is referred to. That means first of all: a place connected with the coming together, a place where God invites His people to meet each other; and secondly: the place where the sons of Aaron met with Aaron, separated from the world and connected with each other. We know that the altar represents the table of the Lord and there we see them, seated together and eating these wonderful foods: the holy manhood of the Lord Jesus, mixed with the oil which speaks of the anointing with the Holy Spirit which was evident in the life of the Lord Jesus.

In 1 John 2 we have a division of believers into three groups. There is mention of little children who know the Father; of young men who are strong but also of fathers of whom it is only said that they have known Him who is from the beginning. Reading this superficially, one would say, every believer knows the Lord Jesus since in chapter 5:1 we read, "Every one that believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God." But this is not the same thing as what we read in chapter 2. Don't the fathers know *more* than those who have just been born again? 1 John 1:1 provides the answer. There mention is made of "that which was from the beginning." The verse itself explains to which *beginning* it refers: "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes; that which we contemplated, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life." *The beginning* there is therefore the moment at which the Lord Jesus came upon earth, and that also is the meaning of chapter 2:13, "I write to you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning." The fathers not only have come to know the sin-offering, so that they know that their sins are forgiven, but they also know the burnt-offering. They have seen how wonderful the work of the Lord Jesus was, for through it not only our sins have been forgiven, but God has been glorified as well. The fathers realize that now all that glory is put to our account, for we have been made acceptable in the Beloved, so that God loves us as He loves the Lord Jesus. From this wonderful work the fathers have come to the Person who accomplished it, they have come to the meal-offering. We may say that fathers are those who have come to know the meal-offering, the holy life of the Lord Jesus, receiving it as a reality in their hearts. As long as the believer does not yet possess the burnt-offering as a reality, he will tend to be occupied with the Epistles which present this truth. This is certainly a good thing, but once he has learned this truth, he may proceed. We find this progress with brothers and sisters who are spiritually older. Through the Epistles they have understood the significance of the sin-offering and of the burnt-offering, and also, we may well say, of the peace-offering. They then come to the meal-offering and they read with the greatest enjoyment the Gospels while contemplating the life of the Lord and the various characters in which the Gospels present Him. For what is the key to understanding the Gospels? It is to know the character in which the Lord Jesus is presented in each particular Gospel. With that key we can study the context of every portion to see therein the wonderful glory of the Lord. These things characterize a father in Christ: he knows His glory from the beginning, he is one who has contemplated the entire life of the Lord, and these things also characterize the sons of Aaron.

We saw them performing their service by offering God His portion and we saw them meeting in a holy place, not in the holy of holies, nor in the holy place, but at the brazen altar (cf. Lev. 10:18 — in the sanctuary). They met in a holy place, separated from the world. There they occupied themselves with the holy life of the Lord. They did not do so by themselves, but in the presence of Aaron: the Lord with His own. Isn't that what we may do on Sunday mornings? I do not say that it cannot take place apart from our meetings, but I believe that the most suited place for this is there where we

¹ The KJV has, "the"; the New Translation, the NIV, and the NASB all have, "a."

come together. There the Lord is in the midst of His own, and we are gathered around Him. Don't we have then what we read in Psalm 22:22, that He Himself raises the song of praise in the midst of the Assembly? When we, with spiritual hearts meet together around Him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Lord raises the song of praise and we join in with Him. Don't we find this here? What a precious meal! As I have said before: in a holy place, separated from the world, in the presence of the Lord, we eat together with the Lord, feeding our hearts with the wonderful manhood of the Lord Jesus.

How glorious will the results be for ourselves. The food we eat enters into our bodies and the nutrients become a part of them. So it is also with this food: the more we are occupied with the Lord in this manner, the more we will be changed according to His image. I said, "in this manner," for the *manna* also speaks of the earthly life of the Lord Jesus, but in a different sense. In John 6 He spoke of it when He said that He was the bread that came down from heaven. But the thought in "feeding on the manna" is not the same as in "eating the meal-offering." True, the manna also presents the Lord in all His circumstances upon earth, but we feed ourselves with Him as the manna when we, being in the same circumstances as our Lord then, derive strength for our wilderness journey by our contemplating His life on earth. In Psalm 78:25 it is said that the manna gives strength to the angels to serve God, it is the food for the angels, or for the Mighty, and so it is for us. So we see that the manna does not present the same thought as the meal-offering. It concerns the same Lord, in the same circumstances, with the same glory, but in the meal-offering we bring these things as a sacrifice to God. In the meal-offering the thought is not the receiving of strength, as is the case with the manna, which is not a sacrifice, but food for ourselves. The manna was for every Israelite and not just for Aaron's sons. Every child of God needs strength, and even the weakest believer receives strength when he feeds himself with the Lord Jesus. But besides this, John 6 says that whosoever eats of this bread will live forever (v. 51). It shows that each sinner must eat of Him to receive life, although it goes further than the thought presented by the manna, because John 6 speaks of the Lord who has died and not just of His life.

In Leviticus 6 we have something else: here it concerns all the sons of Aaron together; that is to say, those who know the work of the Lord Jesus upon the cross and who know that they should not eat the meal-offering in the world but in a holy place. Naturally, the court is in the world but it is a separated portion thereof, a holy part: there they occupy themselves with the moral glory of the Lord. That will have results for their lives, which will be changed in agreement with this object.

We saw that the salt of the covenant of God was mentioned in chapter 2:3. It speaks of our obligation to try to realize what we have seen in Him. Now we find in Leviticus 6 the *means* to bring it into practice. It is not possible to be occupied with the Lord in a holy place without being changed according to His image. It is not the same thought as in 2 Corinthians 3:18. There we look upon the *heavenly* glory of the Lord and we are changed according to the same image — according to a heavenly Christ. In Leviticus 6, however, it concerns the *moral* glory of the Lord Jesus, wherein He has revealed Himself upon earth under all circumstances wherein He found Himself. The result of our occupation with Him, our eating the meal-offering, will be that we are changed according to the same image, His moral glory. Romans 12 speaks of this when it says that we must be transformed by the renewing of our minds; we must present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God; and we prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Now, we see the perfect will of God in the life of the Lord Jesus. All that He did was a sweet savour for God; He did everything with the purpose to glorify God. His body was a living sacrifice to God. We see this throughout His entire life; as a young child, as a young man, and as an adult. In whatever circumstances He found Himself, He was completely God's delight. Thus we consider Him here, feeding our hearts with Him. This food will enter into us and exert its influence upon our practical lives.

As an example I will relate a little story. I once heard about a believer in the United States who looked up all scriptures speaking of grace. When he had done so, he started to contemplate these verses in their context. To his surprise he noted that the entire Bible speaks of grace. For several weeks he was occupied with this subject. Then he was so full of the magnitude of this grace that he ran into the street, accosted the very first person he encountered, and asked Him, "Do you know the grace of God?" He just *had* to speak about it. It so filled him that he was forced to acquaint others with the grace of the Lord.

The sons of Aaron did not eat their part of the meal-offering just once; they had to eat it continually, for it was an everlasting institution. God has prepared this for every believer who has reached the ripeness of a son of Aaron, and everyone is able to become a son of Aaron by giving himself fully to the Lord. Our portion on earth is a heavenly portion and as long as the house of God is upon earth (until the rapture of the Assembly), it will remain the privilege of the sons of Aaron to eat together with God of this glorious meal-offering.

There is another thought as well which is most important for us: all that touched the meal-offering was holy! All that is connected with the Lord's life is holy in God's eyes; we understand that this must be so. Flour typifies manhood, but in the meal-offering it represents the manhood of the Lord Jesus. Similarly it is true that flour is an ingredient of the bread eaten by everyone. When we break bread on Sunday morning, it is bread that every man upon earth can eat; yet, it is not the

same thing. Most certainly, *it* has not changed! It is exactly the same bread, but to us it *represents something* and therein lies the great difference. For this reason the fact is accentuated here that everything that touched the offering was holy. When we observe the manhood of the Lord Jesus, seeing with Him the same things we see with ourselves, we ought never to forget who He is. The Lord may have been tired, just as we frequently are, but we ought never to forget that it was the *Lord* who was tired. Many say as a little joke, "Man shall not live by bread alone," forgetting that the Word of God is holy. We are not allowed to use the *Lord's* words for something else. All that is related to Him is holy, for it is connected with His holy manhood. Everyone has seen His glory, having come to know it in the presence of God, and who knows Him as the One who is from the beginning, will not do such a thing, for he knows that God does not want it. One who really knows Him, has seen too much of the glory of the Lord Jesus to permit anything whatsoever to degrade it.

From verse 19 onward we have another meal-offering. It is a new revelation of God concerning a special meal-offering; it was the offering the priest had to bring on the day of his anointing. It consisted of "the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour as a continual oblation, half of it in the morning, and half thereof at night" (v. 20). Then it says, "it shall be prepared in the pan with oil: saturated with oil shalt thou bring it" (v. 21). First of all "saturated" is more thorough than "mingled." In chapter 2:4-5 we saw that the flour was mingled with the oil; here it is more thorough. A priest sacrificed it. First of all we may say that the Lord Himself did so, for it represents what He brought here below to God; but in the second place it is what we may offer, if we are sons of Aaron, for a son of Aaron will see more than one who is only an Israelite.

In the following verses we see the manner in which this meal-offering had to be brought. Everything of it had to be sacrificed to God, "baken pieces of the oblation shalt thou present for a sweet odour to Jehovah" (v. 21). I want to return to what I mentioned before: they sacrificed not simply an undefined total, but the *pieces* that they had baken. This signifies our appreciation of the personal trials of the Lord Jesus in connection with the circumstances and the characteristics of the various Gospels. This appreciation may be ours once we have in a practical way understood the character of each Gospel. For instance, the same events related in Matthew and in Luke do not have exactly the same bearing, for Luke presents a different side of the truth than does Matthew. The character of each Gospel casts its own particular light on the portion in question. We need to see this to know the remarkable features of the life and of the glory of the Lord; only then can we truly bring the meal-offering of the priest.

Next we read in the verses 22 and 23, "The priest who is anointed of his sons in his stead shall prepare it: it is an everlasting statute; it shall be wholly burned to Jehovah. And every oblation of the priest shall be wholly burned; it shall not be eaten." This entering into the glories of the Lord Jesus, which can only be the portion of those who, by being regularly in God's presence, have learned to see as God sees, is so precious to God that he desires it all for Himself. Even the priest did not eat of it; God desired it for Himself alone. Once more, what a remarkable service we have! May God cause us to see more of the glories of the Lord, and to feed on Him, on all this glory. Since it is so high and exalted, God can only allow us to do so when we see this glory, or rather when we see it with the eyes of God. We can only do this if we regularly abide in His presence. As I have mentioned earlier, Scripture uses the type of the sons of Aaron to present this thought. This position can be part of every believer; yes, even the youngest believer can reach it. When we older ones do not bear the character of the sons of Aaron, it is only because we have not made use of the means which the Lord has given us. If we would just see a little of it, wouldn't we long to increase our knowledge of it so as to become true sons of Aaron, sons without defects (Lev. 21:16-31)? Wouldn't we long to bring into actual practice what, through God's grace, is the portion of each believer?

To be cont'd

THE FAITH TO CONTEND FOR (3)

—R. K. Campbell

3. The Gospel of the Grace of God and our Need.

In the epistles of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians and to the Galatians, the Gospel of the Grace of God is restated in clear language, in response to false teachers who were bringing in serious perversions of doctrine that undermined the Christian faith. To the Corinthians Paul wrote: "I delivered to you, in the first place, what also I had received, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures: and that He was buried; and that He was raised the third day, according to the Scriptures." This he said was the gospel he preached unto them, which they had received and by which they were saved (1 Cor. 15:1-4). To the Galatians he wrote: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, so that He should deliver us out of the present evil world" (Gal. 1:4). Then he went on to say that he marveled that they were so soon removed from Him that called them into the grace of Christ unto another gospel which those that perverted the gospel of Christ were preaching. In solemn words Paul then warned, "But if even we or an angel out of heaven announce as glad

tidings to you anything besides what we have announced as glad tidings to you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8) . Thus we see how the apostle Paul earnestly contended for the pure gospel of the grace of Christ. He would not allow anything else as a ground of salvation but faith in Christ dying for our sins and His resurrection for our justification. He also wrote the Galatians: "Knowing that a man is not justified on the principle of works of law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified on the principle of the faith of Christ; and not of works of law" (Gal. 2:16). To the Ephesians Paul wrote: "For ye are saved by grace (unmerited kindness), through faith; and this not of yourselves; it is God's gift: not on the principle of works, that no one might boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). To Titus the same apostle wrote: "For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared... our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all lawlessness" (Titus 2:11, 13, 14).

This wonderful gospel or glad tidings is also spoken of as "the glad tidings of the glory of the Christ" in 2 Corinthians 4:4 and 1 Timothy 1:11, or the "glorious gospel". It has come down to us from Christ glorified in heaven and links us up with Him there. The acceptance of this gospel by personal faith in Christ unites one by the Holy Spirit as a member of His body on earth to Himself the Head of the body in heaven.

The gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of the glory, must be distinguished from "the gospel of the kingdom" spoken of in Matthew 24:14. This is the good news that God's King is about to come and set up His kingdom on earth. It will be proclaimed when the present age of grace, the Church period, will be over and the tribulation period has begun.

Another vital item of teaching related to the gospel of the grace of God and the Christian faith is the depravity of man. The Scriptures teach the truth of man's total depravity, his lost and helpless condition by nature. The fallen, sinful state of man emphasizes his great need of the gospel of the grace of God, for nothing else but the sovereign, unmerited, grace of God can meet man in his depraved state and regenerate and save him.

King David wrote, "in iniquity was I brought forth, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5). Ephesians says that we were "dead in offences and sins," without spiritual life towards God, and were "by nature the children of wrath" (Eph. 2:1,3). This means that we, first of all, through our descent from sinful Adam, were born with an evil nature wherein dwells no good thing and that, secondly, our fleshly mind is enmity against God, and not subject to the law of God, and that, in the third place, in this fallen, sinful state man cannot please God (see Romans 7:18, 8:7-8). We are also instructed by Scripture that "by the disobedience of one man (Adam, the head of the race) many have been constituted sinners," and that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 5:19; 3:23).

Therefore we see the necessity of the new birth and the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit to work in sinful man repentance and faith in Christ who saves us by sovereign grace alone. Dear reader, have you owned your sinful and lost condition and turned to God in repentance and accepted the gospel of God's grace in Jesus Christ, the Saviour? As ambassadors for Christ, we beseech you to be reconciled to God. We move on now to our fourth point of the Faith delivered to the saints:

To be cont'd

QUOTE

The blessed endurance of temptation (Jam. 1:2, 12) Christ knew beyond any; but what James describes in chapter 1:13-15 was foreign to Him, and a blasphemous imputation, as it proves fundamental unbelief of Who and what He is. We are too familiar with the human and selfish argument that He could not sympathize with us adequately if exempt from those internal and evil workings, bemoaned in Romans 7 and bitterly known by every soul born of God, at least in the early days of his awakening. But if we needed the Lord to be similarly harassed in order to feel fully with us, we should on that ground want Him to have yielded, as we alas! have often done, in order to sympathize with us in our sad failures. No! that ground is absolutely opposed to Christ.

W.K. in The Bible Treasury Vol. 18, page 136.