

**THE OFFERINGS (19)**

—H. L. Heijkoop

*Lev. 4:1-12*

Previously we have observed that with this chapter a new portion begins. We noticed this for instance when we considered the introduction of the first chapter. When we considered the first three chapters, it was evident that they formed one whole and it will also become clear why chapter 4 has to follow. This chapter once more begins with the words: "And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying..." This is an indication that a new thought is to be introduced.

In chapter one we saw the burnt-offering, which shows that side of the work of the Lord Jesus whereby God has been fully glorified and through which we have received the blessings which God longed to give us. It told us that we have been made accepted in the Beloved, in Him who has finished that precious work. After we had seen how close we have been brought to God, we were allowed to be occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus as He is seen in the meal-offering. In this sacrifice we came to know Him who has finished the work and how everything about Him was precious to God. We also saw that the priests could eat from this sacrifice.

Afterwards we saw in chapter 3 the peace-offering of which every Israelite was allowed to eat with God. Therefore this offering speaks of the fellowship the people of God may have with God Himself. We sensed that this could not have been possible if we had not first considered chapters 1 and 2. Fellowship means taking part together, or to share the same part with God. And what fills the heart of God with satisfaction; with whom is He continually occupied? It is the Person of the Lord Jesus and His work which were shown us in chapters 1 and 2. On the basis of these, we may have fellowship with God, and for us this means fellowship with the Father. Now that we have been brought so close to God that we may eat with Him, and we have seen the perfections of the work and the Person of the Lord Jesus, we cannot help but feel that our condition must be in agreement with it.

We saw that the salt of the covenant was not allowed to be missing in the meal-offering. This means that a desire must be present with us to have lives that are consecrated to God when we, contemplating the perfections displayed by the Lord Jesus during His life on earth, bring these as a sacrifice to God. However, we realize who we are. James says that "we all often offend" (3:2). But is it then entirely impossible to be completely holy before God? Is fellowship, although it is given to us, not to be practically realized? For we cannot have fellowship with Him when we are soiled by sin. When it says in 1 John 1:3, "Our fellowship is indeed with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ," then verse 5 continues to say, "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." Fellowship with God must be in agreement with that light, and every sin hinders such fellowship.

Before we look further at this, we should first realize that there is a considerable difference between Israel's position and ours. As far as our position is concerned, we are as creatures completely cleansed; the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches us this. This Epistle, in which God is seen as the Creator and man as creature, says that the Lord Jesus by one sacrifice perfected forever them who are sanctified (He. 10: 14). That is to say, as soon as somebody has part in the Lord Jesus, God does no longer see any sin in him; he stands as perfect before God. On the other hand, when sin is mentioned in the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is in the sense of apostasy, for which there is no forgiveness. Apostasy takes place when one, after having been a Christian, becomes either Moslem, Jew or Gentile.

Now let us return to the first Epistle of John where we find something else. The concern there is not the relationship between God and man but between the Father and His children and this relationship is affected by sins which we may commit. This passage tells us that when a believer sins he does not come into judgment — eternal judgment that is, for there may indeed be a judgment from God in His ways of government, but this has nothing to do with eternal judgment — but his fellowship with the Father is interrupted.

Every sinful thought I have, and every sinful deed I do, has been in my heart. The Father, however, has never anything sinful whatsoever in His heart. Because He hates sin, He can not have any part with us in such a condition, and as long as it has not been removed, there is no perfect fellowship between Him and us. Should things remain like that from then on? We already considered that James 3:2 says that we all often offend, and through practice we know that every day we do several things of which God cannot approve. Besides, 1 John 3:4 tells us that everything we do without counting with the

authority of God and the Lord Jesus over us, is sin. Don't we have to acknowledge that sin is frequently found with us? Frequently we even forget to think of God and we do whatever enters our thoughts. Would it then be entirely impossible for us to have practical fellowship? Happily 1 John 2 tells us that there is a way: "If anyone sin, we have a Patron with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins" (vv. 1-2). The results of this intervention of the Lord on our behalf we find in chapters 4 to 6 of Leviticus.

If anyone sin, our Patron speaks with the Father and He does so as the One who has finished the work upon the cross. He says as it were to the Father: 'For this sin also I have died.' And at the same time He works by the Holy Spirit in the heart and the conscience. We see this in the case of Peter. Before Peter had sinned, the Lord had prayed for him; after Peter had denied Him, the Lord looked at him, and later He met with him specifically. But this was not sufficient, there had to be results within Peter. He wept bitterly and in John 21 we see how humbled he really was. All this is presented to us in this portion of Leviticus. That is to say, chapters 4 to 6 do not present what the Lord Jesus does, but the manner in which we can be restored, because we, in realization of our privileges, feel that we ought to be holy.

If we now turn to Leviticus 4, we notice in verse 2 the type of sins under consideration. "If a soul shall sin through inadvertence against any of the commandments of Jehovah in things that ought not to be done..." We notice the words "through inadvertence." It is clear enough that this does not mean sins done out of the pride of the heart; for there was no offering for such sins. No, for sins done "with a high hand" there was only the judgment of which we read in Numbers 15:30-31. In verse 27 of that chapter it says: "And if one soul sin through inadvertence..." but in verse 30: "But the soul that doeth ought with a high hand... he reproaches Jehovah; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people." For such sins there was obviously no sacrifice available. They are the sins of someone who sins purposely, who wanted what he did, and knowing that it was contrary to God's thoughts, he did it anyway. For such sins there was no sacrifice.

To a certain extent we find this back in the picture of the leper described in Leviticus 13 and 14. When someone was leprous there was no sacrifice; only the special grace of God could help, for leprosy as such is incurable. Here we see the difference between sinning and living in sin. Someone can fall into sin, and we all do so; the remedy needed for healing is given in the present chapter. But when someone sins knowingly and willingly, his condition becomes public knowledge and our chapter is not applicable to this. Such a case is treated under leprosy, for the healing of which a special grace from God is needed.

The implications of these things are most serious. Falling into sin, and the way in which one can be restored are mentioned here. However, if we do not make use of this provision, our condition becomes one of "living in sin." From this we see how important it is that we, through self-judgment, cleanse ourselves ever again after we have sinned. We should not live on as if nothing has happened, for such an attitude would end in leprosy.

In chapter 4 we find various cases in which someone has sinned. The verses we read speak of the anointed priest. In this connection I must first of all point once more to the difference between Israel and ourselves. I do not doubt in the least that Leviticus is in the first place given for ourselves. The true significance of these precepts is for *us*, God wanted *us* to understand them. Israel did not understand them; they could not understand them. These things are in the first place for us who live after the cross and who have received the Holy Spirit. The Spirit causes us to understand all things. Of course, seen from a practical viewpoint, this book was given to Israel, and God does not give anything that does not profit those who receive it. Consequently, useful results for Israel must have flowed from these chapters. In the old-testament Scriptures everything has been given in words suited to Israel.

So when we read these portions and consider them, we must ever remember that our position is not the same as Israel's. We saw this already, in Leviticus 16. There the sin-offering was brought, which is a clear type of the work of the Lord Jesus upon the cross; on that basis God could forgive the sins of the people. But that sacrifice was only valid for the sins done up to that moment. Even the next day new sins were committed requiring a new offering, but that took place only a year later. Herein lies the difference between Israel and ourselves. As far as we are concerned, through His work the Lord Jesus has done all our sins away, for by one sacrifice we have been perfected in perpetuity.

Sins of the people are mentioned here, that is to say: sins of individuals. The same holds true for us who belong to the people of God, except that we have an eternal forgiveness of our sins. For Israel this was not so; they were in need of a means through which their sins could be forgiven. Therefore an Israelite had to bring a sacrifice for his sin, for that sin had to be removed from God's presence. Consequently an evangelist can use this when he preaches the gospel. An Israelite stood before God on the ground of a sinner, whereas we never are in that position because our sins have been forgiven. For us it is a question of an interruption of our fellowship with the Father, and that fellowship is only restored when the sin in question has been judged. It is not as if the blood of the Lord Jesus has to be shed anew for our sins, for that has taken place once for all. No, our restoration of fellowship is according to the principle of 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." By self-judgment a

believer is cleansed. The same is true for a sinner, but then the blood of the Lord Jesus is needed. As far as we are concerned there is only the washing of the water, the confessing and judging of ourselves.

Now, if one is not aware of the foregoing, he will not be able to understand these types. A sinner must bring a sacrifice for sin, that is to say he must obtain a share in the work the Lord Jesus finished upon the cross. We already have a part in that work. But what then is the significance of the sin-offering for us? It is this: It leads us to a true judgment of ourselves. Where do I learn what sin is? By looking at myself? Impossible! Sometimes we meet unbelievers who are entirely satisfied about themselves and they think that God should be just as satisfied about them. They claim that they give to everyone his own and they do not know what sin is. Such is the natural man. No, we can only come to know what sin really is when we look at the cross, at the price which the Lord Jesus had to pay there for our salvation. We must look at the judgment that God had to bring over Him for our sins. When we look at Him on the cross we see how terrible sin is, and in doing so we bring a sin-offering.

Somewhat earlier I referred to the principle of sin as expressed in 1 John 3:4, "Sin is lawlessness." This means that any thought independent of the Lord is sin, even if it is not openly bad and immoral. Which natural man would ever have thought that an independent thought was sin? Man claims that thoughts are free, but this passage tells us what sin is in the eye of God. Even if there had been only one sin committed in the world, and if this sin had only been an independent thought, the Lord Jesus would have had to die for it. He would have had to undergo the same judgment. This shows how terrible sin is. J. N. Darby once made an observation which ran somewhat like this: "One sin is more terrible before God than a thousand sins are in our eyes, yes even then all the sins in the world." Leviticus 4 shows us a little of this.

Verse 4 speaks of the anointed priest who has sinned. For Israel that was certainly the high priest, for he was in a very special way anointed with oil. But what could possibly be the spiritual significance of this for us? It can not speak of the Lord Jesus. On earth He neither could nor did sin and He cannot possibly do so now that He is in heaven! An evangelist preaching the gospel could certainly see the Lord Jesus in this, but then only as the One who has made Himself one with us by bearing our sins in His body on the cross.

However, when this portion is applied to us as believers, then the priest is certainly not a type of the Lord Jesus. For that matter, the high priest is not even mentioned here, neither is there any direct reference to Aaron; it simply speaks of the anointed priest. Now we know that the New Testament calls all believers priests. All who have been born again and have received the gospel have received the Holy Spirit, and the anointing with the Spirit is an integral part of that gift. In 1 John 2:20 it is even said to the little children that they have the anointing of Holy One and that they know all things.

In connection with Leviticus 1 we spoke already about the expression: sons of Aaron; these were they who practically exercised the priesthood. Then we have also seen that there were sons as well as daughters of Aaron, and that there were even sons who were too young to serve. Finally we read in chapter 21:16-23 of sons who had a defect, although these were members of the priestly family, they did nevertheless lack the ability to exercise their priesthood practically. With the expression "sons of Aaron" those are meant who are regularly in God's presence to perform the service; they know the feelings of God and have learned to look at things according to God's thoughts. And now, the first thing we encounter here is: "If the priest that is anointed sin." This means: the brothers and sisters who are truly spiritual. Hence the expression "*the* anointed priest." It is an expression that seems to encompass all spiritual minded persons.

When one who is normally in God's presence transgresses a commandment of the Lord, it is much more serious than when just anyone from among the people does so. Suppose that a lawyer and a little educated boy are both walking along the street and both do something contrary to the law. Would they be equally punished? No, the lawyer will likely receive a more severe punishment, for he knows much better than the boy, that he shouldn't have done what he did. God acts the same way. There is a difference in the judgment of God, we see this too in the eternal judgment. In 2 Thessalonians 1:8 we read that when the Lord Jesus comes to execute judgment over the earth there will be two distinct groups: they who know not God and they who have been disobedient to the gospel, that is to say: the heathen and those who have heard the gospel but have rejected it. The latter ones are much more guilty. The Lord Himself also speaks of those who will receive few stripes and of those who will receive many (Luke 12:48).

And so it is here. The Frenchman says, "Noblesse oblige," which means something like: "Rank imposes obligations," and so it is in our case. It is much more serious when a priest sins than when someone out of the people does so. However we see here something entirely different as well. For from verse 13 onward mention is made of the sin of an entire assembly, and then it is said "... and the sin has become known" (v. 14). The same clause is found in verses 22 and 27 where it speaks of a prince and of any one of the people of the land, but this remark we do not find in the case of the priest. The Word of God presupposes that someone who is regularly in God's presence senses immediately when there is something within him not in agreement with God. One cannot be continually in God's presence without one's conscience becoming sensitive; such sensitivity characterizes an anointed priest.

With many believers some time elapses before they become aware of that which they have done wrong. I suppose, it has happened to all of us that we had done something wrong and only much later we became aware of it. Perhaps a brother had to speak to us, perhaps a word from the Scriptures opened our eyes, or God had to bring us into testing. This shows that our conscience was not tender at such a moment. One can say that the more time we need to recognize that something is wrong and to confess it, the more evident it is that there was a separation from God. However in the case of the anointed priest it is not said that his sin had to be shown him, because he was always in the presence of the Lord. He felt it immediately when something had interrupted his fellowship. And then we read in verse 3, "Then for his sin which he has sinned shall he present a young bullock without blemish to Jehovah for a sin offering."

*To be cont'd*

## **THE FAITH TO CONTEND FOR (7)**

—R. K. Campbell

### *The Lord's Supper*

The Lord's supper was instituted by the Lord Jesus at the Passover supper. After giving the apostles the cup of the Passover and saying He would not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God would come, "Having taken a loaf, when He had given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying, This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me. In like manner also the cup, after having supped, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:19-20). The Passover feast in Israel was coming to an end for the Lord, because He was about to be crucified by the Jews and the Gentiles. He was the true Passover Lamb about to be offered as the fulfillment of all the types.

Now a new covenant was to be made in His blood, so He instituted a simple memorial supper for His disciples by which they were to remember Him during the time of His rejection while He would be absent from them. The bread would speak of His body given in death for them. It would remind them of what the apostle Peter later wrote, "Who Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree... by whose stripes ye have been healed" (1 Pet. 2:24). He said, "This do in remembrance of Me." This was the purpose of the supper: a memorial of Himself in death. The cup spoke of the new covenant made in His blood shed for the remission of their sins. It would remind them of His life poured out into death as an atonement for sin.

The Lord did not imply that the bread would be His literal body or that the cup would be His literal blood. He used the language of the day, just as we do today when we show a picture and say, "This is my family" or "This is my wife." There is no thought of literalness, but of likeness and representation. When the Lord spoke in John 6 about eating His flesh and drinking His blood so that they would have eternal life, He did not imply any literal eating of His flesh or literal drinking of His blood, but of appropriation of His death by faith, just as in eating food we make it our own. He further said, "It is the Spirit which quickens, the flesh profits nothing: the words which I have spoken unto you are Spirit and life" (John 6:54, 63). If we could eat the literal body of Christ in the Lord's supper, it would profit us nothing according to the Lord's words. And yet millions are taught and believe that in eating the Lord's supper they are eating His body. They make a mystical sacrament out of the simple supper of remembrance.

In Acts 2 and Acts 20, we observe the apostolic Church remembering the Lord during His supper. They continued steadfastly "in breaking of bread" and daily they broke bread from house to house (Acts 2:42, 46). Later on it seemed to be the practice among the Gentile believers that they came together to break bread upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).

When disorder came in among the Corinthian assembly relative to the Lord's supper, the apostle Paul wrote them of the revelation he had received about the supper. He said: "I received from the Lord, that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was delivered up, took bread, and having given thanks broke it, and said, This is My body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of Me. In like manner also the cup, after having supped, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood: this do, as often as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye shall eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye announce the death of the Lord, until He come" (1 Cor. 11:23-26). Its simplicity as a remembrance of Christ's death until He comes back again was maintained in this communication.

The supper was not given for the forgiveness of sin, but as a remembrance of Christ Himself and of His atoning death for believers. The supper is not for the unsaved, but for those who are members of His spiritual body, the true Church (see 1

Cor. 10:16-17). Space fails to write further of the manner of partaking of the supper as those who judge themselves and walk godly. For this please read 1 Corinthians 11:27-32.

We trust reader, that as a result of this study these two ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper will be more meaningful and precious to each of you.

*To be cont'd*

## **BREAKING OF BREAD IN THE DAYS OF RUIN**

—J.N.D. (1881)

### *Principles and Practice*

The meeting for breaking of bread is *in principle* the meeting together of all Christians in the unity of the body of Christ. Every Christian, then, has a right to share in it.

But at the same time, in the present state of Christianity, we are called to maintain, scrupulously, faithfully, and with zeal, the holiness of the Lord's table (2 Tim. 2:22).

Now, the assembly is in no way a voluntary meeting of Christians who have chosen the assembly, for in that case it would be a sect. It is, *so far as such a thing is possible now, the meeting of all the members of the body of Christ.*

We must have sufficient evidence that those who desire to take part in it are true Christians, and that their walk is moral, Christian. Now, if they habitually meet with those who deny the truths of Christianity, they are defiled; and it is so also if they meet where immorality is allowed.

Difference in ecclesiastical views is not a sufficient reason for shutting out a soul. But if one wanted to be one day among the brethren, the next among the sects, I should not allow it, and would not receive such a person; for, instead of using the liberty which belongs to him to enjoy the spiritual communion of the children of God, he puts forward the pretension to change the order of the house of God, and to perpetuate the separation of Christians.