

YAHWEH, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, IS WITH US!

**Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins ...
(Isaiah 58:1)**

Animal Sacrifices

Study Carefully & Study Prayerfully

Hebrews 7:27

Who needeth not daily, as those priests, to offer up sacrifice,
first for his own sins, and then for the people's:
for this he did **Once**,
when he offered up himself.

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The Sacrificial System

Before we can even begin to understand **Yahweh's purpose** in giving the sacrificial system to Israel it is essential that we understand what the system involved. A brief outline is now given for this purpose. Brief though it is, it will give the reader a good idea of what the Almighty commanded Israel to do as regards animal sacrifices. The sacrifice of animals, incidentally, is merely one type of offering. There are others which are not considered in this booklet, though they often accompanied the sacrifice of an animal. They were:

- **Vegetable / Meal Offerings**

Fruit, white meal, unleavened bread, roasted grain, salt and oil.

- **Drink Offerings**

Wine and strong drink which accompanied burnt offerings. (Numbers chapters 28 & 29)

Animal Sacrifices

Animal sacrifices consisted of three kinds. The following quotation from the Westminster Dictionary of the Bible, pages 434-435 will introduce them:

1. "**The Burnt Offering**: for which a male lamb, ram, goat or bullock was prescribed. The case in 1 Sam.6:14 is extraordinary. The blood was sprinkled round about/upon the altar, and the entire animal was consumed on the altar. It was expressive of the entire self-dedication of the offerer to Jehovah.
2. "**The Sin/Trespass Offerings**: In which a bullock, a male or female goat, a female lamb a dove or a pigeon was used ... The blood was symbolically displayed, but in different ways ... The fat only was burnt on the altar. The flesh of those sin offerings of which the blood was taken into the sanctuary was burnt without the camp, whereas the flesh of other sin offerings and of trespass offerings belonged to the priests. No part of these offerings was eaten by the offerer; as in the peace offerings; for the sacrificer came as one unworthy of communication with God, and these offerings were for the purpose of **expiation** ...
3. "**The Peace Offerings**: Three kinds are distinguished:
 - **Thank offerings** in recognition of unmerited and unexpected blessing.
 - **Votive offerings** in payment of vows.
 - **Freewill offerings**, probably not in gratitude for a special favour but as an expression of irrepressible love for God (Lev.3) ... The blood was sprinkled; the fat was consumed on the altar; and when the offering was private, the breast and shoulder went to the priest and the rest of the flesh was eaten by the offerer and his friends before the Lord **at the place of the sanctuary**. (Lev.chs 3; 7:11-21, cf.ch. 7:22-27; Ex.29:20-28; Deut.12:7, 18, 1 Sam 2:15-17)

"The sacrificial acts were five

1. Presentation of the sacrifice at the **door of the sanctuary** by the offerer himself as his personal act.
2. Laying on of hands. The offerer placed his hands on the victim's head, thereby dedicating it to God and making it his own representative and substitute (Lev 16:21)
3. Slaying the animal by the offerer himself, who thus symbolically accepted the punishment due for his sin. In later times the priest slew the animal.
4. The symbolic application of the blood. The priest sprinkled or smeared it on the altar and poured it out at the base ...
5. Burning the sacrifice, the whole, or its fat only on the altar of burnt offering, whereby its essence and flavour ascended to God."

(Westminster Dictionary of the Bible pages 434-435)

The Daily Sacrifice

Now that we know something about the types of sacrifices and the various rituals employed, let us consider the **times** at which these sacrifices were offered and the **number of animals** involved. The most well known sacrifice was the daily sacrifice. This sacrifice, as its name implies, was offered every day. One lamb was killed in the morning and another in the evening. The **daily sacrifice** is also called the '**continual burnt offering.**'

Numbers 28: 3: *And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the LORD; two lambs of the first year without spot **day by day**, for a continual burnt offering.*

4: The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even;

5: And a tenth part of an ephah of flour for a meat offering, mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil.

6: It is a continual burnt offering, which was ordained in mount Sinai for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.

7: And the drink offering thereof shall be the fourth part of an hin for the one lamb: in the holy place shalt thou cause the strong wine to be poured unto the LORD for a drink offering.

8: And the other lamb shalt thou offer at even: as the meat offering of the morning, and as the drink offering thereof, thou shalt offer it, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

This meant that in the course of a 12 lunar month year (some 354 days) a total of approximately 708 lambs (354 x 2) were sacrificed.

Sabbath Sacrifices

In addition to the **daily sacrifice** there was the **Sabbath sacrifice**.

Numbers 28: 9: *And on the Sabbath day two lambs of the first year without spot ...*

10: This is the burnt offering of every Sabbath beside the continual burnt offering ...

This meant that in the course of a 12 month year (48 Sabbaths) another 96 lambs were sacrificed in addition to the 708 daily sacrifice total.

New Moon Sacrifices

Then at the start of each month a further sacrifice was commanded.

Numbers 28: **11: And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the LORD; two young bullocks, and one ram, seven lambs of the first year without spot;**
12: And three tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, for one bullock; and two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, for one ram;
13: And a several tenth deal of flour mingled with oil for a meat offering unto one lamb; for a burnt offering of a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.
14: And their drink offerings shall be half an hin of wine unto a bullock, and the third part of an hin unto a ram, and a fourth part of an hin unto a lamb: this is the burnt offering of every month throughout the months of the year.
15: And one kid of the goats for a sin offering unto the LORD shall be offered, beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.

This meant that in a 12 month year 24 bullocks, 12 rams, 84 lambs and 12 goats were sacrificed: all of these in addition to the **Daily** and **Sabbath** sacrifices.

Sacrifices during the Passover Week

During the Passover week the following additional sacrifices were required.

Numbers 28: **16: And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD.**
17: And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten...
19: But ye shall offer a sacrifice made by fire for a burnt offering unto the LORD; two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven lambs of the first year: they shall be unto you without blemish:... 24: After this manner ye shall offer daily, throughout the seven days, the meat of the sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD: it shall be offered beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.

This meant that 14 bullocks, 7 rams, 49 lambs and 7 goats were offered during the Passover week: once again all in addition to the **Daily**, the **Sabbath**, and the **New Moon** sacrifices already mentioned.

Sacrifices at Pentecost

At the Feast of First Fruits (Pentecost) further sacrifices were required.

Numbers 28:26-31 *"... But ye shall offer for burnt offerings for a sweet savour unto the Lord; 2 young bullocks, 1 ram, 7 lambs of the first year ... and 1 kid of the goats to make an atonement for you."*

Sacrifices at Trumpets

At this Feast the number of sacrifices varied slightly.

Numbers 29:1-5 *"... And ye shall offer for a burnt offering 1 young bullock, 1 ram, 7 lambs of the first year without blemish ... and 1 kid of the goats for a sin offering to make atonement for you."*

Sacrifices on the Day of Atonement

The sacrifices on this fast day were similar to those on the Feast of Trumpets.

Num 29:7-11 *"... 1 young bullock, 1 ram, 7 lambs of the first year ... and 1 kid of the goats."*

In Lev.16 we are told of how another bullock and two goats were involved in a special ceremony to make atonement for the priesthood and the people.

Sacrifices during Tabernacles

The sacrifices during Ingathering (Tabernacles) were numerous. According to the details given in Number 29:12-40 they were:

Day	Bulls	Rams	Lambs	Goats	
First day:	13	2	14	1	
Second day:	12	2	14	1	
Third day:	11	2	14	1	
Fourth day:	10	2	14	1	
Fifth day:	9	2	14	1	
Sixth day:	8	2	14	1	
Seventh day:	7	2	14	1	
Eighth day:	1	1	7	1	
Totals:	71	15	105	8	= 199 animals

Annual Totals

Adding these national sacrifices together the following totals emerge:

Time	Bulls	Rams	Lambs	Goats
Daily sacrifice			708	
Sabbath sacrifice			96	
New Moon	24	12	84	12
Passover Week	14	7	49	7
Feast of Pentecost	2	1	7	1
Feast of Trumpets	1	1	7	1

Day of Atonement	2	1	7	3	
Tabernacles	71	15	105	8	
ANNUAL TOTAL:	114	37	1063	32	= 1246 animals.

Pause a while and consider that staggering annual total of **1246 animals**. In a leap year (which has an extra month of 30 days) add a further:

- New Moon: 2 Bulls 1 ram, 7 lambs and 1 goat
- Daily Sacrifice: 60 lambs
- Sabbath sacrifices: 8 lambs 79 animals.

Very briefly, that was the sacrificial system ordered by the Most High. Bear in mind that all these sacrifices were accompanied by prescribed amounts of **drink, flour and oil**. Also remember that these totals only represent the **national offerings**: that is those made by the nation of Israel. In addition there were the **personal sacrifices** made by individual Israelites. They included:

- **Burnt Offerings** (representing total commitment)
- **Sin/Trespass Offerings** (made for personal sins)
- **Peace and Votive offerings** (made as vows or for special thanksgiving)

All these offerings, which totalled many thousands of animals each year, were made in addition to the totals already mentioned. The sacrificial system, in other words, was an extremely **bloody** and **costly** affair involving many thousands of animals every year. Indeed it was a '**yoke**' Israel found difficult to bear. As the Apostles commented:

Acts 15: 8: *And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;*
 9: *And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.*
 10: *Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?*

Nevertheless, costly and bloody though the sacrificial system was, it was designed by the Almighty to teach several very important lessons; which no other educational process could hope to match. The lessons Yahweh wanted to teach His people, and the angel host which looked on in stunned amazement, were as follows:

- That the result of disobedience (sin) is death: the death of each animal being a dramatic reminder of that fact.
- That the process of purging sin is a costly and bloody affair.
- That access to Yahweh's presence without first being purged from sin is totally impossible: for only the purified believer could stand before a righteous God! All others must keep at a distance or risk being consumed by His holiness and glory.
- That God Himself would - at the appointed time - PAY the enormous price of salvation by

shedding His own life blood in the person of His only begotten Son.

- And that a repentant sinner would be forgiven his sin, if he had faith in the Most High and presented the prescribed offering.

These lessons were all dramatically portrayed each time an **innocent animal's blood** was spilled and a worshipper entered the presence of the Almighty. In other words, each sacrifice was a **dramatic object lesson** which pointed to the price Yahweh Himself would pay to make salvation possible. And what was the price that the Almighty Himself had planned to pay to secure man's salvation?

It was the life-blood of His only begotten Son.

Yes every animal sacrifice that was made at God's command was in fact a dramatic pointer to **Christ's death on Calvary!** Indeed the whole sacrificial system was a **symbolic drama** unfolding the Almighty's provision for man's forgiveness, cleansing and eternal salvation from sin and death. How true was Abraham's description of Yahweh's provision and personal involvement in sacrifice when he answered Isaac's question about the sacrificial lamb:

Genesis 22: 7: And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

8: And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

And God did provide the **Lamb - His only begotten Son**. Indeed He provided a grown **RAM** which portrays His own (still hidden) involvement in the Plan of Salvation. That experience was also a spiritual **object lesson** designed to teach Abraham and the watching heavenly host that Yahweh Himself would one day pay the ultimate sacrifice to secure man's salvation. The word salvation encompasses the following:

- **Redemption:** A word which means to **buy back** one's own possessions, which have either been lost, stolen or mortgaged.
- **Purification:** A process of **cleansing** which converts a filthy person to an acceptable state of purity.
- **Sanctification** The process of **setting apart** a soul for sacred use.
- **Atonement:** To set **at-one** those who previously had been at variance
- **Glory:** The granting of honour and power in the Kingdom of Heaven.
- **Eternal Life:** To grant immortality to the ransomed soul.

Nevertheless the sacrificial system, costly, dramatic and explicit as it was, could never accomplish the Almighty's real objectives, which were:

- The salvation of mankind

- And the eradication of evil from the universe.

At best that system was a **spiritual object lesson** to teach certain facts about salvation. Beyond that illustrative function it had little value. Why? Because the blood of bulls and goats is totally incapable of saving mankind from **degeneration, disease and death**. Salvation from these things calls for a far better solution. And so it was that to save the universe from sin and its result - death, the Almighty decided to pay the price Himself: to **sacrifice His Son Yeshua (Jesus)**. This name means **Saviour from sin**.



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