

# THE MEAT-OFFERING.

(LEV. II.)

EVERY one of us is acquainted, more or less, with the ordered sequence of the movements of the heavenly bodies to which Psalm xix. points, and also with the regularity of the seasons and their results upon the earth. The "eternal power and Godhead" of the Creator is made known by the orderliness and infinite variety withal of creation. So in the holy scriptures, wherein the same God would teach us His purpose and His will, order is easily discernible when once our eyes are opened. It was in resurrection life and power that the Lord Jesus opened their understanding that they might understand in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms, for that is their order in the Hebrew Bible, the things concerning Himself. (Luke xxiv.)

I say this because there is a danger lest we should pass over the offerings of the law of Moses as of little interest, whereas they set out typically and in detail the very groundwork of our salvation from death and judgment. The Old Testament scriptures do not give what had not yet come into existence, but they are able to make us "wise unto salvation . . . which is in Christ Jesus" if we pay them attention.

In another paper we have already noticed that the first three chapters of Leviticus form one section presented from God's side, consisting of the burnt offering, the meat offering

and the peace offering, as what could yield "a sweet savour" or "savour of rest" to Jehovah. But the burnt offering takes us back to Genesis viii. 21, where a world comes into view beyond the judgment of death, cleansed from the violence and corruption wrought by man's will—in type, the resurrection world. That again takes us to the very beginning in Genesis iii., where first, though unnamed, the burnt offering is foreshadowed in the "coats of skins" provided for Adam and his wife after they had sinned and before they were driven out of the garden. However, in this paper my desire is to consider the meat offering set, as it is, between the burnt offering and the peace offering. Why is it put just there? Because the former sets forth how God from His own side has found a way by which the holy and righteous claims of His throne could be met adequately, and at the same time the distance brought in by sin between Himself and His creature, man, could be removed, typically in a victim, itself blameless, and which when tested by the fire of judgment could wholly ascend as pleasurable to God. The meat offering immediately follows, as speaking of the humanity and the life of Christ; Him who truly came to our side, and in that way within the range of our knowledge, in order that all sense of distance might be abolished, and the peace or communion offering might be made possible.

Before I pass on to its detail, I must point out that the two names, "burnt" and "meat,"

do not rightly convey the Spirit's thought; though "peace offering" is exactly right. In the language selected by the Spirit of God for writing the Old Testament or covenant, the word *עלה* *o-lah*, translated "burnt offering" or sacrifice, has in it no thought either of "burn" or "offer," but is simply "that which goes up" or ascends, and because in that particular sacrifice all was caused by the fire on the altar to go up heavenwards, we can understand how in translations it became known as the burnt offering. In Leviticus xiv. 20 the sense is interestingly and fully expressed by the use of the verb with its cognate noun: "the priest shall offer the burnt offering," is literally, "the priest shall cause to go up that which goes up," or the going up thing. This helps us to see how John's gospel answers to the burnt offering, for only in it does the Lord speak of ascending.

Again, John alone speaks of "the Lamb of God," taking up the thought of the morning and evening lamb\* in Exodus xxix., commanded directly after the establishment of the priesthood and the sanctification of the altar; which in grace is called "the altar of burnt offering" for the first time in the next chapter.

Of a large number of words in the Hebrew Bible translated "burn" and "burning," Moses uses only about nine, determined by their circumstances, as *קָטַר* *kahtar*, to burn as in-

\* "Lamb" in the Revelation is another word taken from Jeremiah xi. 19.

cense, for what is burned upon the altar for a sweet savour, is distinguished from עלה *o-lah* which means simply "to go up" like the burnt offering, and שָׂרַף *sah-raph* to consume, which is used of the sin offering; three words of quite distinct force. I am obliged to mention this because in the law of the burnt offering (Lev. vi.) he speaks not directly of the burnt offering itself, but of the altar and its fire, using a peculiar form there only, and its verb, which has the force of "quietly, steadily burning," for *that* fire was never to be quenched. The altar maintained the abiding demand of the throne of God, so that word is taken up by the prophet (Isa. xxxiii. 14), "with everlasting burnings," a figure eventuating in the lake of fire. This connection of thought is of necessity lost in translation.

The name מִנְחָה *min-chah*, meat offering, is nothing more than "a gift," and is employed in contrast to a sacrifice with blood. It is the old English use of the word as food not flesh, "every green herb for meat." (Gen. i. 30.)

If we now give a little careful thought to this chapter where the meat offering is fully described, we shall find there is that which the younger saints can appreciate, as well as that which will yield deep lessons to the oldest. In the first place instruction is given for three\* kinds of meat

\* Three is a perfect number in the sense that the end is reached; thus God has reached His end in the resurrection of Christ; "on the third day Abraham . . . saw the place afar off" (Gen. xxii. 4), and so on.

offering, just as three kinds of burnt offering were provided, from the herd, the flocks, or the fowls, and three kinds of peace offering, of the herd, or a lamb, or a goat. Here it is no question of atonement; but types which speak of the life of Christ; His death is not the point, though it is of course closely connected. Of the first kind the basis is fine flour (vers. 1-11), then there is the firstfruits of verse 12, and thirdly the firstfruits of verse 14, and in taking it up in detail we shall find a beautiful order unfolding itself.

Verses 1 to 3 give in a general way the usage of the first kind, of which there are again three varieties described in verses 4 to 11, and twice is it stated to be "a thing most holy of the offerings of Jehovah made by fire," one of the many instances where the Holy Spirit guards the Person of the Lord Jesus when His humanity on the humiliation side is referred to. With Him, a humanity apart from sin, to which the three apostles, Peter, John and Paul, bear witness—"Who did no sin" (1 Peter ii.), "In him is no sin" (1 John iii.), "Who knew no sin." (2 Cor v.) The Lord Himself said, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John viii. 46.) For it is that of which the fine flour is a type—what is grown on earth and is obtained by threshing and milling. It is the life of Jesus in this offering, the fine flour suggesting the even, perfect smoothness and regularity of character from which all the opposition and hatred around never caused Him to swerve; the perfect balance of every moral quality

always preserved. (Cf. Isa. 1.) The greater the pressure on fine flour the more perfect the surface produced.

The three varieties mentioned in verses 4 to 7 typically include the whole pathway of the Lord Jesus as portrayed by Luke in chapters ii. to xxiii. So the figure in verse 4 is an oven. What takes place in an oven is hidden and out of sight, covering the first thirty years of His life. "Mingled with oil" would be His birth (Luke i. 35), "anointed with oil" would touch and be confirmed in Luke iii. 22. The unleavened cake of fine flour mingled with oil may typify the totality of that period in its result under God's eye, and the wafer anointed with oil, perhaps the singly recorded incident when twelve years of age. The mingling and anointing with oil set forth His complete identification with the Spirit, and therefore One whose life is essentially different in spring and motive from the way of flesh. The anointing would empower for service as well as seal what is there. (Luke iii. 22.)

In verse 5 the marginal reading, "on a flat plate," is a preferable rendering, and conveys a further thought, for what is in a pan or on a flat plate is exposed to view, and can be parted in pieces and have oil poured thereon. Thus the open pan speaks of the three years of His public life under the eye of men and of angels and of God. The parting in pieces is answered by the testings of "that way" as He went about doing good, anointed with the Holy Ghost and power, exposed to the hatred

and malice that would have cast Him down from the brow of the hill of Nazareth, to the hypocrisy of the Pharisee in Luke vii., or the tempting of the lawyer in Luke x.; but these testings only served as the occasion for bringing out the two wonderful parables of those two chapters. Then there was the plotting of Herod (chap. xiii. 31), the combined complaint of the Pharisees and scribes which was met by that greatest parable of the grace of God in chapter xv., and lastly by the spies sent forth by the chief priests and the scribes. (Chap. xx. 20.)

All this is consummated in the third variety, strictly a cauldron, or boiling pot. "Frying pan" is inaccurate altogether, the noun is used here and in Leviticus vii. 9\* only, though its cognate verb is used in Psalm xlv. 1 and translated in margin rightly, "boileth." This type finds its answer at the end in Luke xxii. when, in that moment of all moments, in full communion with His Father, the Lord accepted "the cup" of judgment in the subjection of holy manhood—"not my will, but thine, be done." When from that point He turned and yielded Himself to the crowd saying, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." When "the whole multitude of them arose, and led him to Pilate," when Pilate and Herod became friends,

\* It is deeply interesting to observe that in the Hebrew Bible the Spirit of God often selects words with regard to the Lord which He does not bring into ordinary usage. As here and also the verb "part in pieces" (ver. 6) is never elsewhere employed.

when "the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him," the soldiers mocked Him, and all the power of the enemy surged around; amidst it all, the character of the "words of grace" with which His service began is again heard, unruffled, unchanged—"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

On the one hand Luke thus gives us the external or historic fulfilment of the type in which, from the nature of the case, there are sharp distinctions, though what is typified may overlap or go on together. Whereas, on the other hand, in some of the psalms the Spirit of God expresses in prophetic language the *inner* side. By their means we are allowed to know something of the feelings of Christ as He took up and entered into the path of service He had undertaken when He said, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God." (Psa. xl.) That is why the Psalms have always proved a comfort to the saints of God, for they breathe the spirit of confidence and faith in God when all around is in opposition. The first book opens with, "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against Jehovah, and against his anointed," that is, Christ. And while most can be taken upon our own lips in our measure, yet there are some peculiarly prophetic of Christ Himself, and they are in the order of the meat offering. Psalm xvi. is, I think, the "oven," and gives the secret within, of that pathway, "Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I put

my trust," or find my refuge, as the noun is often translated. (See Psa. xiv. 6.) Then there is the circle of the saints among whom was all His delight, as found in Luke ii. 40-52. The last verse of the psalm completes the picture which is answered by His being "carried up into heaven." (Luke xxiv.) Psalm xxii., however, comes in the first book, because nothing less than the full end was ever before the Lord.

In Psalm lv., as "the flat plate," we are permitted to know a little how the pure sensibilities of Christ were affected by the unholiness to which He was exposed. His holy soul would gladly have flown away (ver. 6), but no, the testimony of God was before Him, and He had to endure "the voice of the enemy," "the violence and strife in the city," even Jerusalem, the daily wickedness in the midst, and even the treachery lurking in one with whom He "walked unto the house of God in company." Therefore He is marked by prayer, "evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray"—note the order, a climax. In that day His prayer was in the deepening darkness of the evening, but now the morning of resurrection has been reached, and we with Him are awaiting the noon-tide display of His kingdom and glory. Psalm lxix. also (both in the second book) is directly personal to Christ, and opens out the parting in pieces of the offering; He is "hated without a cause," "the song of the drunkards," and could say, "Reproach hath broken my heart," but His resource is in God, "my prayer is unto

thee" (ver. 13), all is open "before thee," (Ver. 19.)

The third variety, or the cauldron, seems to be Psalm lxxxviii. of the third book, "in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps" (ver. 6); "Thy fierce wrath goeth over me . . . round about me daily like water; they compassed me about together. Lover and friend hast thou put far from me." How truly the Lord felt it all!

The meat offering speaks of the perfections in the life of Him who could therefore become the true burnt offering "without blemish," and so bring to pass the communion of the peace offering. This will help us to understand why with every burnt offering and peace offering there was always to be a proportionate meat offering (see the law of Numbers xv.), also it is spoken of in particular with the "continual burnt offering" of Exodus xxix. 42. With the morning and the evening lamb "day by day continually," there was a perfection and acceptability ever under Jehovah's eye, in type then, in fact now, of Him who has shewn God to be a righteous judge and yet a Saviour God.

That portion of the instruction concludes with verse 11, where no leaven or honey is allowed. Leaven represents two Hebrew words both used in Exodus xii. 15 and xiii. 7 and here, one having the thought of "bitter" or what is sharp, and one "fermentation," or what puffs up. The Lord explains this to the disciples in Matthew xvi. 12 as "the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees"; that is, the human

mind getting a place in the things of God. Also no honey, so that mere human sweetness is excluded; both what is humanly pleasant or of the human mind are equally excluded. How could that which is tainted by sin form part of any offering to Jehovah typical of Christ?

We find then that the chapter divides at verse 12. The Spirit of God now speaks of a second kind of meat offering, which must be carefully distinguished from the third kind (ver. 14), though for want of better English "firstfruits" is used for each; but He clearly has two distinct things in mind, for He uses two quite different words. In verse 12 firstfruits רֵאשִׁית *reh-sheeth* is the first, the head or beginning, a word always singular and referring directly to the personal pre-eminence of Christ as "the beginning of his way" (Prov. viii. 22), and looking forward to Him who would say, "I am the resurrection and the life," and so not caused to ascend from the altar (see margin), and a manhood upon which death had no claim. But in verse 14, the third kind, firstfruits is in the sense of what is produced, as "the firstfruits of thy labours" (Exo. xxiii. 16), בִּכּוּרִים *bik-koorim*, a plural word because our side and His identifying Himself with us is in view. "Green ears of corn dried by the fire" is by the Psalmist prophetically expressed in "O my God [same form as Psalm xxii. 1], take me not away in the midst of my days"—and the answer comes, "thy years are through-

out all generations" (Psa. cii.—the fourth book), and then, "Thou art the Same"—a divine title equivalent to the "I am."

These two words are taken up from Exodus xxiii. 19, "the first of the firstfruits," and expanded in these two meat offerings and further particularised in Leviticus xxiii., which should be read in this connection. Verse 10 of that chapter has been fulfilled in the resurrection of Christ and verses 16 and 17 in the forming of the church by the descent of the Holy Spirit. (Acts ii.) The "green ears" of our chapter are Himself, while the "full ears" would cover in thought His maturity in manhood and that of the saints as the result of His work; and passes on to the "new meat offering" of chapter xxiii. 16, which was "baken with leaven," and so type of the saints from Acts ii. till to-day. The intent of the Spirit is made perfectly clear by His using *reh-sheeth* in Leviticus ii. 12, xxiii. 10, and Numbers xviii. 12, but in Leviticus ii. 14, xxiii. 17 and Numbers xviii. 13 *bik-koorim*.

Again (1 Cor. xv.) Christ is said to be "the firstfruits" and we, "a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." (James i. 18.)

Between these two points verse 13 comes, "the salt of the covenant of thy God" is never to be lacking. To this the Lord gives a present application (Mark ix. 49), and our apostle expounds Colossians iv. 6, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt," as if salt gave a sense of the recognition of what is due to God; so Luke in a particular way

presents the Lord Jesus as the vessel of grace, yet ever considering for God ; and on our part we should be marked by unconditional grace toward men, while never forgetting what is due to God. Salt may be preservative, but it also gives character and is a contrast to insipidity or aimlessness, suggestive, I think, of that unique distinctive character of His path of life. No wonder the officers had to admit, "Never man spake like this man." (John vii. 46.)

While there is always that which is beyond the creature's grasp, yet God has been pleased by the exact details of the offerings to teach us something of the glory of the Lord and the wonders of His ways, in order that there might be an intelligent response of worship from us who believe, and as believers have received the Spirit.

The foregoing will help to form an idea of Inspiration. God alone, who knew the end from the beginning (Isa. xlv. 10), is able to design and frame in a few sentences of chosen words, a ritual some five hundred years before He gave David to speak of the spirit of a life which the type could suggest. And that again was a thousand years before Christ came ; He who fully experienced the circumstances figured by the type and expressed in the psalms, who in result fulfilled all, even to the very letter of the scriptures. (See Matt. v. 18 and John xix. 28.) The jot and tittle are both found in the first word of the Hebrew Bible.

One item remains to be touched—the frankincense mentioned in the general instruction.

(Vers. 2 and 16.) It was to be put upon the meat offering and with the handful of the fine flour and the oil which the priest took to burn as incense upon the altar, *all* the frankincense was burnt. The remainder of the meat offering then became the food of Aaron and his sons, but of the frankincense they had no portion; its fragrance was caused by the fire on the altar to ascend wholly to Jehovah. Also it was white, as the Hebrew name implies, and so spoke of a purity—an untainted spotlessness—as He passed through all the evil and the corruption here, with a fragrance arising which Jehovah alone could appreciate; a perfection of life in manhood, of thought, word and act upon which death could have no claim, a perfection which fitted Him to become the propitiatory sacrifice and the substitutionary victim.

The meat offering is to teach us how He moved a Man among men, so with every burnt offering and the "day by day continual burnt offering" there went up to God from the meat offering as well, a sweet savour or a savour of complacent rest. May what was typical then, but now has all been livingly expressed in our Lord Jesus Christ, be the daily food of our souls and the joy of our spirits.

*Ilford.*

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