# Types of Sacrifices in the Bible (Part 2)

After explaining the symbolic meaning of the animals in the Bible that were sacrificed in the temple, different types of sacrifices will now be explained, as well as the daily symbolic service in the temple that the antichrist will try to overthrow before the second coming of Christ.

## THE BURNT OFFERING - Reconciliation with God (Hebrew “olah” Leviticus 1)

The burnt offerings symbolize **reconciliation with God**, because of the symbolic meaning of **flour, wine and oil** offered with them.

Bread is made of flour, a symbol of Christ's body (Matthew 26:26), broken for us.

Wine or grape juice symbolizes Christ's blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:26-28).

The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit who testifies to us that we are sinners and calls us to repentance (Zechariah 4:2-6).

The whole animal was burned as a burnt offering, to symbolize the complete reconciliation with God, and complete surrender to God.

As a burnt offering completely burns out, God has called us to love him with all our heart, soul, and strength, not just partially.

Thus, a burnt offering describes the whole process of God’s call to repentance, forgiveness and character change.

The bearer chooses the type of animal to be offered, unlike the sin and trespass offerings, where God determined the type of animal to be offered.

The burnt offering was male gender (Leviticus 1:3,10).

When a burnt offering is a **sheep** (Leviticus 1: 10-13), it is a symbol of a believer who wants to be reconciled with God and chooses God to lead his life every day.

A burnt offering of **cattle** (Leviticus 1:3-9), which means an **ox**, symbolizes a believer in an organization that has rejected God, but seeks reconciliation with God.

For example, the apostle Paul „ministering the gospel of God, that the **offering** of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:16

A goat as a burnt offering shows that God also offers reconciliation to the ungodly, to His enemies, because He does not want anyone to perish, but to save all if possible.

For example, “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

"But **if a wicked man turns from all his sins** which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die… Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?” says the Lord God, “and not that he should turn from his ways and live?” Ezekiel 18: 21-23

A lamb as a burnt offering represents the Messiah, who takes upon Himself our death sentence for our sin, to reconcile us with God and re-create us as new beings, so we can be sinless as God's lamb.

A bird as a burnt offering represents a man who is convinced by the Holy Spirit that he needs reconciliation with God.

The blood of the burnt offerings was sprinkled on the sacrificial altar, where the daily sacrifice - a lamb representing Jesus Christ - was constantly burning, as a symbol of our reconciliation with God.

Note the fact that the blood of burnt offerings was NEVER brought into the tabernacle of meeting, it never entered the Sanctuary, it never went into the Holy of Holies.

People mistakenly believe that the blood of the lamb was brought into the Sanctuary, or to have a role in the Day of Atonement.

The lamb was not even offered on the Day of Atonement, and the blood of the burnt offerings was never brought into the Sanctuary.

The sprinkling of blood was a symbol of establishing a covenant with God and a symbol of sin cleansing. The apostle Paul said there is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood. („Moses… took the **blood** of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and **sprinkled** both the book itself and all the people, saying, “This is the **blood of the covenant** which God has commanded you. Then likewise he **sprinkled** with **blood** both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And according to the law almost all things are **purified** **with blood**, and **without shedding of blood there is no remission**.” Hebrews 9:19-21)

The sprinkling of the blood of the burnt offering indicated God will ensure the reconciliation of His people with Himself, just according to His covenent, and that He would cleanse us from sin.

When the burnt offering’s blood was sprinkled, it was a symbol of cleansing from sin and establishing a covenant with God, because God will fulfill in the future all details of His plan of salvation, as promised.

The burnt offering can also be offered as a prayer for other people, so God’s Spirit can call them to be reconciled with God. This way, Job offered the burnt offering for his children (Job 1:5). So,

**The burnt offering is a symbol of man's reconciliation with God.**

## DAILY Service in Sanctuary (Symbolic meaning)

## (Hebrew „tamid“)

The most important burnt offerings were a part of the daily service in the Holy of Holies on Earth. This daily service represents **Messiah's daily intermediary service in the heavenly sanctuary**, between God and repented sinners, and will be explained in the third part of this series.

## THE PEACE OFFERING - voluntary gratitude to God (Hebrew „šelem“ Leviticus 3)

The peace offering symbolizes gratitude to God for what He does for our salvation.

For example, the lamb as the peace offering represents thanksgiving to God for the salvation He has provided for us through Messiah’s sacrifice. (Leviticus 3:7)

The Apostle Paul describes the gratitude of believers as a sacrifice: "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the **sacrifice of praise to God**, that is, the fruit of our lips, **giving thanks** to His name." Hebrews 13:15

Someone’s gratitude to God can be expressed for every part of the plan of salvation, even for the execution of judgment, because God's righteousness can be recognized in everything.

God requested the animal which is offered as a peace offering, to be without flaws, because our gratitude should be from the heart, without coercion and obligation.

Priests were allowed to eat the flesh of the peace offering. If it is not eaten by the third day, it had to be burned, probably because Jesus rose from the grave on the third day. We are grateful to God because this way He enabled the resurrection of people who believe in him.

## Sin Offering - the execution of judgment (Hebrew „chattaah“ Leviticus 4)

Unlike with the burnt offering, *flour, oil, wine and incense* were **not** offered with the sin offering, which means, the symbols of Christ's body, blood and Holy Spirit – are not a part of any sin offering.

So, the symbols of reconciliation with God were not offered with the sin offering!

This is because the sin offerings do not symbolize reconciliation with God, but the execution of judgment on those who rejected God, or the execution of judgment on Christ who received the judgment we deserved.

By bringing the sin offering, a person publicly acknowledged that God would execute His just judgment on the rebels.

For example, on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:21-22), the goat taken to the wilderness is a symbol of Satan who will be condemned at the second coming of Christ to be bounded for 1,000 years on the planet he ravaged by sin (Revelation 20:1-3).

It is a very significant fact, that the sin offerings for a priest and God’s people, were not burned at the sacrificial altar, but they were **taken out of the camp, cut in pieces and burned** (Leviticus 4:11).

So, they were completely destroyed outside the Sanctuary, outside of God's presence.

This indicates the final destruction of the ungodly in the lake of fire, which is the second death from which there is no return.

Taking a sacrifice out of the sanctuary and out of the camp has another meaning.

Christ received punishment for our sins by suffering outside of Jerusalem, outside of Sanctuary!

"Therefore Jesus also, that He might *sanctify the people with His own blood*, **suffered outside the gate**. Therefore let us go forth to Him, **outside the camp**, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come." Hebrews 13: 12-14

There are some important differences between Christ and the sin offerings. For example, not a single bone of His body was broken, while these sacrifices were cut into pieces and burned.

The judgment for sin has been executed on Christ, but He, as sinless, will not be destroyed for eternity as the unrepentant, represented by the sin offerings.

The sin offerings are important in God's plan of salvation, because the blood of no other sacrifice was brought into the sanctuary, but only: 1) the blood of sin offering of the anointed priest, 2) the blood of the sin offering of God’s people as a whole, and 3) the blood of the sin offering for the Day of Atonement.

On the other hand, a priest does not bring the blood of other sin offerings into the sanctuary.

The priest sprinkles the blood of these offerings - 7 times in front of the curtain of the Sanctuary, and puts some blood on the horns of the altar of incense in the Sanctuary.

Also, instead of putting blood on the horns of the altar of incense in the sanctuary, blood goes to the horns of the altar of sacrifice in the front of the sanctuary.

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| **Sin offerings (unintentional sins!)** |
| Anointed priest (4.2-12) | The whole congregation of Israel (4.13-21) | **A ruler**(Leviticus 4:22-26) | **The common people** (4:27-31) | **The common people** (4:32-35) |
| Young bull  | Young bull | A kid of the goats, male | A kid of the goats, a female | Lamb, female |
| Bring blood into the tabernacle of meeting, the priest sprinkle some of the blood 7x before the Lord, in front of the veil of the sanctuary;  | 🡨 the same | *Does not bring into the Tabernacle!* | *🡨 the same* | *🡨 the same* |
| Priest put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense. | 🡨 the same | Priest put some of the blood on the horns of the *altar of burnt offering* | *🡨 the same* | *🡨 the same* |
| Pour the remaining blood at the base of the altar of the burnt offering | 🡨 the same | 🡨 the same | 🡨 the same | 🡨 the same |
| The fat shall bun on the altar of the burnt offering | 🡨 the same | 🡨 the same | 🡨 the same | 🡨 the same |
| Hide, flesh, head, legs take outside of the camp to a clean place, where the ashes are poured out, and burn it on wood with fire;  | 🡨 the same | ? | ? | ? |

Also, the bodies of the sin offerings whose blood was brought into the Sanctuary, those bodies were taken out of the camp and completely burned. Fire is the means by which God will remove sin from the universe, and cleanse his temple and his people.

It is interesting that of the sin offerings, the priests were allowed by God to eat only those whose blood was not taken into the Sanctuary, and those are the sin offerings for the sin of a ruler, and for the sin of the common people.

God did not allow them to eat the sin offerings for the sin of the anointed priest, or the sin offering for a sin of the whole nation. ("But no sin offering from which any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of meeting, to make atonement in the holy place, shall be eaten. It shall be burned in the fire.” (Leviticus 6:30))

Because the male lamb is a symbol of the Messiah, it is important to note out of the all sin offerings, no male lamb or ram was ever offered, but only a female lamb (Leviticus 4: 32-35).

The blood of the female lamb also was not taken into the sanctuary, and the priests were allowed to eat it.

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| **Sin offerings (unintentional sins!)** |
| Anointed priest (4.2-12) | The whole congregation of Israel (4.13-21) | **A ruler**(Leviticus 4:22-26) | **The common people** (4:27-31) | **The common people** (4:32-35) |
| Young bull  | Young bull | A kid of the goats, male | A kid of the goats, a female | Lamb, female |
| Bring blood into the tabernacle of meeting, the priest sprinkle some of the blood 7x before the Lord, in front of the veil of the sanctuary;  | 🡨 the same | *Does not bring into the Tabernacle!* | *🡨 the same* | *🡨 the same* |
| CANNOT eat | CANNOT eat | *Can eat* | *Can eat* | *Can eat* |

In the Bible, eating something has a symbolic meaning of understanding what God plans to happen, and believing that God will guide us through that event.

For example, "eating a book" means accepting its content, and believing that God will indeed do what He has promised. (Revelation 10:9-10; Ezekiel 3:1-3)

Unlike the sin offerings, which are forbidden to be eaten, Jesus symbolically says about his body: “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man… you have no life in you.” (John 6:53-56).

By saying this, Jesus made an allusion to the kinds of sacrifices that God allow priests to eat. Eating the body of Christ as a sacrifice, symbolically means accepting the forgiveness of sins, understanding and believing in God's plan of salvation.

The fact that God allowed people to eat a goat as a sin offering, and even for the Passover God allowed a lamb or a goat to be offered, points toward two parts of God's plan of salvation.

In the first part of the plan of salvation, the Messiah offered himself as a sacrifice to atone for our sins, to pay for our guilt, and to set us free from the death penalty.

Confessed sins are covered with the blood of Christ, but remain on the sacrificial altar and in the sanctuary until the Day of Atonement, when God will execute His judgment.

In the second part of the plan of salvation, the sins that God forgave to his people for the sake of the Messiah's sacrifice, are now passed on to the first originator of sin - Satan, who is symbolically represented by a goat.

So, the goat offered as a sin offering represents the final execution of judgment over Satan and sinners who have not repented.

The Lamb and the kid of a goat represent the two most important points in the plan of salvation: God's ransom paid for repentant sinners, and God's judgment for unrepentant sins.

**Examples of the fulfillment of the symbolism of sin offerings**

The fulfillment of the sin offerings is represented by the events related to the execution of the judgment on a person who made the final decision to reject God.

Taking someone out of the camp of God's people and his utter destruction, such as burning with fire, clearly is associated with the execution of God's judgment and sin offerings.

The first example is an Israelite who arrogantly opposed God's commandment and gathered wood on the Sabbath, after seeing all of God's miracles, including the deliverance from slavery (Numbers 15: 32-36).

God commanded them to take him out of the camp in a manner of the sin offerings, and stone him. Leviticus 24:10-16 Stoning was a symbol of the Messiah who executes his judgment.

This **execution** by **taking the convict out of the camp** was the same as it was done with the sin offerings.

Similarly, king Josiah ordered the priests to **break the idols** (2. Kings 23:4), burn them **outside Jerusalem**, and take the ashes to Bethel, the House of God.

The next example is a blasphemer who cursed God. The Lord ordered to take the blasphemer outside the camp - just as they took sin offerings outside the camp.

Then the witnesses of blasphemy laid their hands on his head, as they did with the sin offerings; and in the end the death penalty was carried out. ("Take outside the camp him who has cursed; then let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him." Leviticus 24:13-23)

Note that putting hands on a convict in this case **did not represent a confession of a personal sin, but the witnesses confirm that the convict committed a sin that deserves the execution of the verdict**.

In a similar way, sin offerings represent a testimony of believers that the ungodly transgressed against God to the level that they can no longer be forgiven.

When Korah rebelled, God demanded the whole congregation of the Israelites to be separated from the rebels, similar to taking out the bodies of sin offerings outside of the camp of the Israelites: “Get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.’” Numbers 16:24

Then God executed the judgment and completely destroyed sin by fire: "And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up… And a **fire came out from the Lord** and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense.” Numbers 16:32-35

An example of a guilt being transferred from a sinner to the one who is the inspirer of sin, we can find in Jesus’ trial.

Judge Pilate formally sentenced innocent Jesus to death, even though he did not find guilt in what Jesus said or did, and released the obvious culprit - Barabbas.

Then he symbolically, publicly washed his hands of the verdict, of the blood he will shed, which was a clear association with priests washing before and after the ritual of purification from sin, of the sin offering.

Leaders incited the people to say, "His blood be on us and on our children." Matthew 27:25

Guilt and responsibility have been passed on to those who inspired the sin, not just the perpetrator.

Those who motivated the crime and their descendants perished when Rome conquered Jerusalem, demolished the temple and displaced the population.

Unfortunately, many have misused these words for nationalism, fascism and anti-Semitism, which is completely unjustified.

God did not protect from pagan Rome those who rejected the Savior, but certainly did not send those who believed the Messiah to persecute those who rejected Him, but to preach and call them to repentance.

Since Satan inspired all committed sins, this principle shows that God will eventually transfer the responsibility and guilt for all the sins to Satan.

Jesus says that the unrepentant will go to the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and the demons ("Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:41), which means, they will die for eternity in the lake of fire outside the New Jerusalem as symbolized by the sin offerings. (Mark 9: 47-49 = Revelation 20: 10,15)

The prophet Daniel described the judgment upon the fourth beast (Daniel 7:11) in a similar way as sin offerings were described: the heavenly court made a decision, and the body of the beast was cut into pieces and burned.

Similarly, the way in which the symbolic 10 horns of the beast judge the ungodly religious organization, described as a harlot in Revelation, is **very similar to what was done with the sin offerings**: these will make the harlot desolate, eat her flesh and burn her with fire (Revelation 17: 1,16).

This punishment of the apostate religious system was not carried out by God, but by ungodly political power.

On the Day of Atonement, a goat and a bull were sin offerings (Leviticus 16:27), they were cut into pieces and burned outside the camp, just like the beast and the false prophet before the Second Coming of Christ. (Revelation 19:20; 20: 1-3)

God asked the animals for the sin offerings to be without blemish. This was to indicate that God created everyone perfect, but some chose to separate from their Creator and to do evil.

So, all this indicates that by sin offerings, people showed they trust God will execute a just punishment on those who did not repent of their sins.

## The Trespass Offering, confession of sin and repentance (Hebrew „asham“ Leviticus 5)

A person needs to bring the trespass offering for certain intentional or unintentional trespasses of God's regulations.

Whether the believer knew God’s instruction or he did not, he was held responsible, because he could have found out, or he had an opportunity to find out what is right to do.

Trespasses were not sins for which the death penalty was prescribed. The death penalty in theocratic society was intended for people who do not want to repent of their sins, but arrogantly, deliberately oppose God.

"‘But the person who does anything presumptuously, whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on the Lord, and he shall be cut off from among his people." Numbers 15:30)

For this reason, the trespass offering symbolizes personal **confession of sin and repentance**.

"... when he is guilty in any of these matters, that he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing." Leviticus 5: 5 The Hebrew word "asham" for trespass offering sometimes is confused with sin offerings.

Along with the trespass offering, a burnt offering was also brought from doves or pigeons, which symbolizes in addition to the confession of sin, it is necessary for the sinner to allow the Holy Spirit to lead him to sincere repentance.

Instead of cattle, poor people could offer doves or pigeons, as a symbol that the Holy Spirit leading them to repentance, or they offered one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour, without oil and incense.

The importance of a transgression in God's eyes can be seen when Jesus was on a trial, and He did not commit even the slightest transgression.

Because Jesus did not respond to false accusations on trial, the high priest found a way to force Jesus to speak: He knew Jesus will not transgress God’s commandment, and he swore Jesus to tell them under oath if He was the Messiah, the Son of God.

As one of the transgressions that needed a sacrifice, God said, "If a person sins in hearing the utterance of an oath, and is a witness, whether he has seen or known of the matter—if he does not tell it, he bears guilt." Leviticus 5:1

Since the high priest swore Jesus to say whether he was the Messiah, if Jesus had kept silent, it would have been a transgression, and Jesus' sacrifice would not have been perfect.

Knowing God’s commandment, Christ answered, because of the oath, although telling the truth to corrupt judges meant a death sentence for Him.

That is why Jesus answered: “It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” Matthew 26:63-64

Let's look at some examples of trespass offerings.

Ezra, as the priest, admitted transgressions of God’s people in Babylon, and asked for forgiveness from God. He said, "You, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities (asham - transgressions) deserve.” Ezra 9, 13 vidi 9:6,7

We can see a counterfeit of the trespass offering when the Philistines, motivated by fear of God who overthrew their idol, on the instructions of their sorcerers, offered 5 gold tumors and 5 gold rats. 1 Samuel 6: 3,4

For false repentance, they offered wrong symbolic sacrifice, because they were not moved by God's love but by the fear of punishment.

They did not use animals God requested, they did not understand repentance or accept God's plan of salvation, so God did not accept this false repentance.

Jesus says, "If your brother sins (asham - trespass) against you, go and confront him privately." Matthew 18:15 Such a rebuke is God's call to repentance. If your brother listens and repents, he will be saved.

"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." Matthew 6:14,15

***Laying hands***

The laying hands on a sacrifice can have two meanings:

1) passing the sin from a sinner to a being who will die for that sin, or

2) confessing personal sin and dying for an earlier sinful life.

On the head of almost all sacrifices, the person offering the sacrifice had to put **one hand**, which meant that he confessed a certain individual sin.

Only on the Day of Atonement, the high priest placed **two hands** on the goat "for Azazel", as a symbol that all sins are transferred to Satan.

This represented the final judgment for all the sins ever committed after Satan's rebellion in Heaven, till the end.

## HEAVE OFFERING - dedication (Hebrew “terumah”)

The Heave offering symbolizes **dedication**, **improving someone’s spiritual level**. Leviticus 7:32

The Hebrew noun teruma comes from a verb meaning "high, to raise." It is translated as a contribution or offering, for example,

while building the Sanctuary (Exodus 35:5: 21:24),

for the redemption of the firstborn sons saved before they left Egypt (Exodus 30: 12-16), or

with the tithe (Numbers 18: 26-29), and even

in Ezekiel’s future temple (Ezekiel 48: 8-12: 18-21).

The Israelites robbed God "in tithes and offerings." (Malachi 3:8) which can also mean they did not offer proper heave offerings, and did not make spiritual progress after receiving gifts from God.

The heave offerings went together with peace offerings (Leviticus 7:11,14), so they were offered by people who were on God's side, thankful to God. (Exodus 29:28)

Through the heave offerings, the person showed awareness that he cannot build his spirituality on his own, but is grateful to God for spiritual growth.

The heave offerings were offered during the consecration of the priest for the service. (Leviticus 8:22)

This ram for the consecration of the priest was a symbol of a leader of God's people who dedicates himself to serving the Lord.

Holiness is a set of God's attributes. When the Israelites bring the heave offering, they ask God to sanctify them, to change their sin-corrupted character. Leviticus 7:14

Only the high priest and the priests were allowed to eat the heave sacrifice. The high priest was a foreshadow of Jesus Christ, who intercedes for us, so the Holy Spirit can sanctify us.

Out of these offerings, the right thigh was raised. ("Also the right thigh you shall give to the priest as a heave offering from the sacrifices of your peace offerings." Leviticus 7:32 see 10:14-15)

The right hand is a symbol of God's favor ("Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool." Psalm 110:1).

This means that God loves His creatures, He is in favor with us, and therefore He sanctifies us.

The heave offering they ate in a **clean place** (“The breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering you shall eat in a clean place” Leviticus 10:14) In order to be sanctified, to be cleansed from sin, God wants us to come to a clean place, before God where there is no sin.

When a priest's daughter marries, she can no longer eat of the heave offerings (Leviticus 22:11-12; Numbers 18:8).

At the end of the Nazirite covenant (Numbers 6:20), he had to offer the heave offering. The Hebrew word nazir means “separate, consecrated”.

Thus, throughout the Bible, the heave offering was connected with sanctification, with the process of rebuilding of holiness God gave us in the beginning.

Simeon raised up Christ in the Temple and said, “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against" (Luke 2:34).

As a fulfillment of Simeon's prophecy, Jesus was first raised on the cross, and then He was raised from the grave, gaining the right to overthrow the ungodly at His judgment day and resurrect believers.

Jesus told the Pharisees they would understand who He is when they raised him to the cross:

"…Who are you? … Then Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He...” (John 8:25, 28).

Moses raised the copper serpent on a stick as a symbol of the raising of the Messiah on the cross, as well as the later condemnation of the "old serpent who is the Devil and Satan":

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:14).

The counterfeit of these offerings was seen in Revelation, after the murder of the two witnesses, when the ungodly people "will rejoice over them, make merry, and **send gifts (~teruma)** to one another…" Revelation 11:10

With these offerings, they thank the false deity for killing God's prophets, and they will believe it was for their spiritual uplifting.

Unlike these false gifts and offerings, for our sanctification, God has given us a priceless gift:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the **gift** of God.” Ephesians 2: 8 **(Greek “doron” – gift, offering)**

## THE WAVE OFFERING - resurrection (Hebrew „tenufah“)

The wave offering symbolizes the **resurrection**.

At the feast of the firstfruits, at the beginning of the barley harvest, God commanded them to wave the first sheaf of barley (Leviticus 23:10-14).

This sheaf was a symbol of the Messiah who, as the firstborn from the dead, was resurrected exactly at the time of this feast, when the turning of the sheaf of the first barley before God symbolized His transition from death to life.

When Jesus was resurrected, he said to Mary Magdalene, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father." John 20:17

After the resurrection, Jesus was in a hurry to come before the Father as the firstborn from the dead, just as predicted by the sheaf waved before God in the earthly sanctuary.

So, on the third day, Jesus rose from the grave and appeared before the Father, turned from death to life, and thus became the firstfruit of God’s righteous people who will be resurrected.

Jesus is the firstfruit, because the general resurrection of people who believed in God, is yet to come at the time of the second coming of Christ, symbolically represented as the harvest of barley.

**The wave offering is a part of the piece offering** as a gratitude to God, because God's resurrected people will also appear before the heavenly Father with gratitude.

“He who offers the sacrifice of his peace offering to the Lord… **His own hands shall bring the offerings** made by fire to the Lord. The fat with the breast he shall bring, that the breast may be **waved as a wave offering** before the Lord.” Leviticus 7:29-30

The Nazirites were to offer the wave offering, indicating that God would resurrect consecrated people (Numbers 6:20). Sanctification represents a new life with God.

In the Old Testament, people cleansed from leprosy were to bring the wave offering (Leviticus 14:12). Leprosy would lead a person to death, but by being healed he foreshadowed the resurrection to a new life.

Leprosy is a symbol of sin. Doctors at the time could not cure leprosy. The cleansing from leprosy represents the cleansing from sin, which means, the sinner will die to sin and will be resurrected to new life.

The only cases of healing from leprosy were when God healed Moses' sister Mary and the Syrian army commander Naaman, and in the New Testament multiple cases when Jesus healed lepers on several occasions, even ten at once.

This way Jesus showed the same power of healing from leprosy, representing cleansing from sin, and showing the power to resurrect to a new life a sinner who repents.

At Pentecost, the wave offering was commanded, with the exception that these were the firstfruits of the wheat harvest.

Unlike for the firstfruits of barley with which unleavened bread was offered, Pentecost was the only biblical feast for which God commanded yeast bread to be used.

In the Bible, yeast is a symbol of sin. Pentecost symbolized the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on God's people, in order to carry God's message of salvation around the world.

Since God used sinners to preach the gospel, this explains why leavened bread is offered at Pentecost, not unleavened bread.

## Sweet savour unto the Lord - God's acceptance and approval

Fat of all offerings was burned separately from the body, as „a sweet savor unto the God”. Fat was a symbol of excess and abundance.

The offering of a sweet savor symbolizes **God's acceptance and approval**.

If a believer surrendered all his sins to God, God accepts that as a pleasant fragrance.

For example, Noah offered a sacrifice, "And the LORD smelled a sweet savour." Genesis 8:21

When the apostle Paul interpreted the meaning of the sweet savor in the sacrificial system, he says "as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a **sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma**." Ephesians 5:2

Christ's sacrifice was a sweet savour offering unto the Lord, and God accepted it as a substitute for sinners who repented.

The apostle Paul says that the gift sent to him by other godly people as support was "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.” Philippians 4:17-18

## An Offering Made by Fire - the final destruction of sin (Hebrew „isha“)

In the Bible, fire represents the means by which God will destroy sin (Revelation 20: 9).

All sacrifices had to be burned – certain body parts, or the whole body.

All sacrifices are related to sin, one way or another, so the offering made by fire indicates the faith of the believer that God will justly execute His verdict, and destroy sin by fire.

“For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. (Mark 9:49) Jesus says that every sacrifice will be salted with fire, because all sacrifices indicate the destruction of sin when God executes His judgment.

Thus, an offering made by fire symbolizes the final destruction of sin, and the destruction of those who have chosen sin instead of God.

People who trust God will allow Him to destroy sin in us as soon as possible, so they will be without sin when the fire destroys all sin in the universe.

Jesus describes it this way: “And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.” Matthew 21:44; Luke 20:18

For this reason, the burnt offering, the peace offering, the trespass offering, and some sin offerings that are also burned by fire, symbolize the destruction of sin by fire.

Either people will separate themselves from sin, or they will be destroyed with the sin, which they refused to be separated from.

If people do not allow God to free them from sin and refuse God's help, at God's judgment "fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them." Revelation 20:9 The same is true with the sin offerings.

Ungodly people are symbolically depicted as offerings burned outside the camp, while people who repented were symbolized by offerings burned at the sacrificial altar.

God forbade the eating of sacrifices which represents the verdict of the ungodly: “But no sin offering from which any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of meeting, to make atonement in the holy place, shall be eaten. **It shall be burned in the fire**.” Leviticus 6:30

When only some body part was burned, it represented a confession of individual sin.

When the whole animal was burned, it was a symbol of surrendering all sins for destruction.

Through certain historical events, God has shown the meaning of some offerings made by fire.

For example, Sodom and Gomorrah were burned by a rain of sulfur and fire. "Then the Lord **rained brimstone and fire** on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens." Genesis 19:24

Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah represents the apocalyptic execution of God's judgment upon all sinners. ("Fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them" (Revelation 20:9)

In a similar manner, God also burned the rebellious Korah with 250 like-minded people ("And a fire came out from the Lord and consumed the 250 men who were offering incense." Numbers 16:35), which is again very similar to the future execution of God’s judgment for Satan's rebellion against God.

Of course, some offerings made by fire indicate, that God will first remove sin from repentant sinners, and then destroy those sins, while leaving repented people alive.

For example, God commanded them not to eat the Passover lamb “raw, nor boiled at all with water, but **roasted in fire**” (Exodus 12:9).

The fire that burned the lamb, indicates God would destroy the sins of Israel before He delivered them from Egypt.

God required the fire on the sacrificial altar to burn constantly, never to be extinguished (Leviticus 6:12), because God is always ready to free us from sin - all 24 hours a day, all seven days in a week.

When people built the sacrificial altar in the time of Moses according to God's instructions, the first sacrifice was burned by God’s fire from heaven:

“Then the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people, and fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.” Leviticus 9:23-24

The priests were to constantly maintain this fire that God kindled from Heaven, as a symbol that only God has the right to execute judgment and destroy sin.

This fire, lit by God, the priests had to use when they burned the incence before God, as for the day of Atonement. ("And he shall take a censer full of embers from before the altar which is before the LORD, and a handful full of sweet incense, and bring it in for the vail." Leviticus 16:12)

However, the sons of the high priest Aaron took “strange” fire and wanted to burn incense before the Lord, which God strictly prohibited. (--- “And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. ” Leviticus 10:1).

God's reaction was immediate and harsh: "And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD." Leviticus 10:2

However, God shows how every detail of the symbolic service is very important, and must be performed exactly as God said, for God's people to properly understand the plan of salvation.

False pagan gods, which means demons, have no right to execute judgment, but only God can remove sin from the universe.

The next example is disinfection. Until the Middle Ages, without the knowledge of the Bible, people did not know about disinfection.

However, in order to prevent the transmission of contagious diseases, if there is a disease on the clothes, God ordered people to burn the whole garment with fire (--- "He shall therefore burn that garment in which is the plague, whether warp or woof, in wool or in linen, or anything of leather, for it is an active leprosy; the garment shall be burned in the fire.” Leviticus 13:52).

In the Bible, leprosy is a symbol of sin, and clothing is a symbol of human character.

In Christ's parables, people need the garment of God's justice.

When God says that a garment infected with leprosy should be completely burned, He is saying that it is necessary to be completely separated from sin.

If a man leaves a part of his character tainted by evil, that weakness will spread like leprosy and infect the whole man, and lead him to death.

When God appeared to Moses in a bush burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed (Exodus 3: 2), he showed the fire burns sin, but has no effect on God, because God does not sin.

It is interesting that the pious and meek Moses remains alive in the presence of God's fire that burns sin, as a foreshadow of consecrated people for the time just before the second coming of Christ.

When the psalmist describes God's judgment, He says, "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent; a fire shall devour before Him. " Psalm 50:3

No matter how much people pretend, the apostle Paul says that the fire at the second coming of Christ will show the true state of everyone and everything:

"Each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is.” 1 Corinthians 3:13

The prophet Zechariah says that the saved people will be like “a brand plucked from the fire” (Zechariah 3:2).

Of course, Satan created another counterfeit here as well.

When the people in the desert asked to worship an idol instead of God, Aaron melted gold with fire and created a golden calf.

However, Moses broke the idol and burned it with fire, the same way as God will execute His judgment (Exodus 32: 24,19).

God said that Lucifer was perfect when he was created, and as a proof of this he states that the fire could not harm him: "You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones." Ezekiel 28:14

However, when Lucifer began the chain of evil in the universe, God announced that He would use fire to execute judgment on Satan, just as shown by the offering made by fire:

“And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the **fiery stones**… Therefore **I brought fire from your midst**; **It devoured you**, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you.” Ezekiel 28:16-18

So, in order to check whether we have correctly understood the symbolic meaning of a term in the Bible, we need to check whether that symbolic meaning can be applied to all texts in the Bible.

## The Grain Offering - spiritual food (Hebrew „minkah“ Leviticus 2)

In addition to the symbolism of the animals that were sacrificed, God required certain type of food be offered, which also has a symbolic meaning.

Just as flour, bread, oil, grape juice (called wine in some translations) are needed for physical health, so these symbols **show our need for spiritual food**, in order to maintain spiritual health.

The grain offering was offered with the burnt offering, the piece offering, and the trespass offering (but without incense), although it never went together with sin offerings.

The grain offering were to be eaten in the holy place in the porch of the tabernacle of meeting, except the priest's grain offering, which should not eaten at all:

“And the remainder of it Aaron and his sons shall eat; with unleavened bread it shall be eaten in a holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of meeting they shall eat it” Leviticus 6:16)

One meaning of the grain offering is to represent the recognition of **man's physical dependence on God**.

God gives our food to grow and bear fruit by providing rain, fertile land and sun.

As God provided the conditions for the fulfillment of our physical needs, so the salvation of man requires the recognition of man's dependence on God's intervention:

-God provided flour and bread that symbolically represent the body of Christ given instead of repentant sinners;

-God gives grape juice as a drink offering, to cleanse the sins of repented people with the blood of the Messiah;

-God gives oil which symbolizes God's Spirit who testifies and changes man's character.

So the prophet Joel said, "The grain offering and the drink offering have been **cut off** from the house of the Lord… The field is wasted, the land mourns; for the grain is ruined, the new wine is dried up, the oil fails… Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is at hand.” Joel 1: 9-10, 15

The prophet Joel describes a time when the great majority on this planet will reject the spiritual food God gives us, reject God's bread, wine and oil, which is, Christ's sacrifice and the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The time will come for Jesus to stop interceding for people, to come and carry out the judgment that each of us has chosen.

## Oil = Holy Spirit

It has already been said that oil symbolically represents God's Holy Spirit.

In a vision, the prophet Zacharias saw a golden lampstand with 7 lamps, and oil supply came from the two olive trees. The oil provided means for the light to shine.

Zechariah asked the angel what it that, and the angel told him the oil represents the Holy Spirit which enlightens the people: "Not by might nor by power, but **by My Spirit**,’ says the Lord of hosts." Zechariah 4:2-6

God does not force people to accept His principles of living, but quietly calls us through the Holy Spirit, and gives us the freedom to choose for ourselves.

The candlestick is a symbol of God's people. The Holy Spirit symbolically represented by oil, announces God's truth through God's people, just as oil illuminates a room through the candlestick.

This shows that the light of truth can be revealed and accepted only under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

## Bread - Christ’s body

„Bread … strengthens man’s heart.“ Psalm 104:15

The loaves of bread present at all times in the sanctuary represent the body of Christ, sacrificed for us:

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.”" Matthew 26:26; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11: 23,26

Jesus said that the manna in the wilderness symbolized him, and "the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." John 6:33

“**I am the living bread which came down from heaven**. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.” John 6: 51

As the grain offering, the bread was offered **without leaven**, because the leaven is a symbol of sin (---- “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.” Luke 12: 1; "the leaven of malice and wickedness" 1 Corinthians 5:8).

Unleavened bread indicates that the Messiah was without sin, and that it is God's intention to also cleanse everyone who repents from sin.

The prophet Ezekiel says that the righteous "has given his bread to the hungry" Ezekiel 18: 7,16

However, there are counterfeits here as well. The Israelites rebelled against God's leadership in the wilderness, and complained about the bread he fed them in the wilderness, which was a symbol of the Messiah, they said, "our soul loathes this worthless bread." Numbers 21:5

The prophet Isaiah described as an unacceptable, perverted formal religion, where people present themselves as God’s people, but do not eat God’s spiritual food:

“We will eat our own bread and provide our own clothes. Just let us be called by your name.” Isaiah 4: 1

Also, the sorceress gave Saul unleavened bread to trick him into thinking he was without sin, while sending him to the battle to die. 1 Samuel 28:24

## Drink offering: covering of sin

Drink offering was a certain amount of wine, that is, **grape juice**, which is a symbol of **Christ's blood**.

When he gave his disciples a glass of wine, which was actually grape juice, Jesus said, "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Matthew 26:28

"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you." John 6:53

Patriarch Jacob gave his pious son Judas this blessing: "He washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes." Genesis 49:11 Here we see that in the Bible, "wine" and grape juice are synonymous.

In the Bible, soiled clothes are a symbol of sinfulness. We would expect the wine to soil the clothes even more. However, God says that grape juice washes clothes.

For the people who will live during the great tribulation, before the second coming of Christ, the Bible says, "These are the ones who … washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Revelation 7:14

In one case, the Bible describes that the clothes are washed with grape juice, and in the second situation, the clothes are washed with the blood of the Lamb.

This parallel explains that the wine and the blood of the Lamb, as symbols represent the blood of the Messiah.

The amount of grape juice for a drink offering, depended on the type of sacrificed animal: with lambs 1/4 of a hin of wine; ram 1/3 of a hin of wine, bull ½ of a hin of wine. (Numbers 15: 5-11)

Along with goats, which symbolize God's enemies - wine was not offered.

The greatest amount of wine was offered with the cows, which represent religious people who have fallen away from God.

The least amount of the drink offering was required with lambs, which symbolize consecrated people similar to Christ’s character.

Also, the drink offering was NOT offered with sin offerings or trespass offerings, which represent God’s judgment for sin.

The drink offering was not poured out on the altar of incense, but on the sacrificial altar (Exodus 30:9), because it was offered with sacrifices, and not with the burning of incense.

This means that the pouring out has a role in the process of forgiveness of sins, not in Christ’s mediation.

Satan has counterfeits for the drink offerings too.

He led the Israelites to “pour out drink offerings on other gods” Jeremiah 7:18; as well to "the queen of heaven" (Jeremiah 44:18,19), they offered the drink offering to an altar that was not God's altar (2 Kings 16:13,15) and they even “drink offerings of blood” (Psalm 16:4).

## Blood - the cleansing of sin

God said through Moses, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul." Leviticus 17:11,14

There is no life without blood. In order for God to keep a man alive after the fall, God gave the prophecy that He would send a Savior - the Messiah, whose blood would cleanse everyone who believes in God, and bring people back to life.

God forbade eating blood. Noah also knew about the ban on eating blood, long before Moses.

"But **you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood**… Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.” Genesis 9:4-6

This is why it sounded blasphemous to the Israelites when Jesus said, "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:54

God forbade eating the blood of the sacrifices, so they carefully separated the flesh from the blood. That is why they were shocked when Jesus called people to drink his blood, even in a symbolic sense.

Of course, Jesus spoke symbolically about acceptance of His sacrifice for our salvation.

When people literally interpret figurative expressions, then they misunderstand the message, just as when a literal text is interpreted figuratively.

Let us look at the following symbolic image described by the prophet Zechariah: "As for you also**, because of the blood of your covenant**, **I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit**." Zechariah 9:11

Water is a symbol of life, and a place without water indicates a lifeless place. Zacharias calls this place of death a pit, which is often associated with the tomb in the Bible.

Slaves imprisoned in the place of death were set free because of the blood of God's covenant! This is a clear picture of the sacrificial blood of Christ that will ensure the resurrection of people who had firm faith in God.

That is why the apostle John says, "And have **redeemed us to God by Your blood** out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation." Revelation 5:9

The Bible distinguishes between premeditated murder and unintentional manslaughter.

If someone killed a man by accident, without a plan or intention, he has the right to flee to the city of refuge, where he was protected from vengeance. (Numbers 35: 22-28,33)

If on the trial he proves the murder was unintentional, the man who shed blood was protected from the death penalty. However, he was not unconditionally acquitted, because he shed blood, which was a serious crime.

The murderer’s sentence was suspended, under the condition that he stays inside the city of refuge until the death of the high priest.

Since the high priest was a type of the Messiah, this means that the death of Christ postponed the death of sinners to show whether our repentance was sincere.

While under probation, it is necessary for a person to trust God and remain within the city of refuge, which means within God's righteous principles, in order to be permanently set free after the death of the high priest.

The avengers, which means, people who sought justice for the murdered man, were not allowed to punish the unintentional murderer, unless he leaves the city of refuge.

Our fortress is our God, and the death of the high priest Jesus Christ will free us from condemnation if we repent.

On the other hand, God says many times in the Bible that those who sinned and did not sincerely repent will be convicted.

The traitor Judas said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." Matthew 27: 4 However, instead of repenting and returning to God, he committed suicide.

Sin has multiplied so much that God's people have been persecuted and killed throughout history, so we ask the question when will God revenge on the blood of the martyrs. (--- "How long, O Holy and True Lord! Do you not judge and repent our blood on those who live on earth?" Revelation 6:10)

Before the second coming of Christ, the book of Revelation symbolically describes a religious organization as a "harlot," “drunken with the blood of the saints,” persecuting God's people. ("I saw a woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus." Revelation 17:6)

A little later, God describes his judgment on this symbolic prostitute, because she had no right to take refuge in the city of refuge: "For true and righteous are His judgments, because He … has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her." Revelation 19:2

God cleanses from sin in three ways: 1) with blood he pays the penalty for the sin committed (Revelation 5:9); 2) washes sin away with water, removes it. (1 John 5:6); and 3) fire destroys sin (Malachi 3:2,3; Isaiah 4:4; Leviticus 9:24)

Blood is shed to cover sin, or it is sprinkled to establish a covenant between God and man. (Exodus 24:8; Numbers 19:13), or blood is helped to sanctify a person or object, that is, to determine or authorize for a purpose. Exodus 28:42; 30:26

Contrary to the popular belief, it is important to know that the blood of burnt offerings, peace offerings and trespass offerings, was never brought into the tent of the meeting, but was poured out on the sacrificial altar in the courtyard.

The only blood that the priest brings into the tabernacle, pours out or sprinkles on the altar of incense in the Holy of Holies or the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, is the blood of sin offering of the anointed priest and the congregation of the children of Israel, and the sin offering on the Day of Atonement.

This was to foreshadow the execution of the judgment on the unrepentant. (See Isaiah 34:2-10; Psalm 58:10; 68:23; Ezekiel 32:6)

## Firstfruits: the best individual or a group

The firstfruits, or first harvested plants of certain kind, in the Bible symbolize the best individuals or groups of people in a spiritual sense.

**Israel** is God’s firstborn of all nations. "Israel is My son, My firstborn." Exodus 4:22

The **Levites** are the firstborn of Israel - a substitute. "Now behold, I Myself have taken the **Levites** from among the children of Israel **instead of every firstborn** who opens the womb among the children of Israel. They are Mine; I am the LORD.” Numbers 3:12-13

**The high priest** is the firstborn of the Levites and the priests. Aaron was 3 years older than Moses (Exodus 7:7), so God appointed him to be the high priest. Later, the firstborn among Aaron's heirs inherited the role of high priest. "And strip Aaron of his garments and **put them on** Eleazar **his son**; for Aaron shall be gathered to his people and die there." Numbers 20:26

The Apostle Paul claims that the Messiah founded the church of the firstborns: "But you have come to … the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven…" Hebrews 12:22:23

Already at the beginning of the Bible, the offering of the firstfruits of plants instead of cattle was the reason why God accepted Abel and rejected Cain. Genesis 4.4

The prophet Zechariah prodicted the Messiah would be the firstborn, who would suffer: "…then they will look on Me whom they pierced… and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn." Zechariah 12:10

The firstfruit in the sacrificial system represents either Christ or the most faithful believers in the service of God.

The firstfruits may also be the firstborn children, for example the firstborn of the Israelites freed from slavery in Egypt, instead of whom the Levites served God in the sanctuary. (--- "that you shall set apart to the Lord all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males shall be the Lord’s. … And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem." Exodus 13:12-13)

Christ rose from the dead as the firstfruits to those who died (1 Corinthians 15:20).

Christ was not the first one in history to be resurrected. There were people whom God resurrected before Christ, but He is the only one without sin. 1 Corinthians 15:20:23

So, the firstfruits represent the best individuals, which can appear the first in a certain order, but they don't have to.

In the Bible, a harvest is a symbol of the end of the world.

The Bible mentions three feasts related to the harvest of the fruit, and on all three feasts God required all men to come to Jerusalem before Him (Exodus 23:16; 34:22):

1) the feast of Unleavened Bread (barley harvest);

2) Pentecost (wheat harvest); and

3) Tabernacles (general harvest).

A sheaf of barley as a wave offering, was the firstfruit of the harvest that followed, found fulfillment in Christ resurrection and showing His sacrifice in the heavenly sanctuary before God’s throne. (See Leviticus 23:20)

Christ’s blameless sacrifice, as the firstborn from the dead, secured the resurrection of repented sinners, symbolized as harvest.

A sheaf of wheat on a day of Pentecost, was the firstfruit of the wheat harvest, found fulfillment in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the 120 best Christ’s disciples as firstborns, followed by the harvest of others. (Exodus 23:16; Acts 2.1-3)

This wheat harvest was the sowing of the seeds of truth throughout the world by the preaching of Christ’s disciples.

A similar event we can expect before the second coming of Christ, when the Holy Spirit will be again poured out on God's people as later rain, so believers worldwide can mature spiritually and make firm decision for God, while majority will remain in opposition to God.

In the fall, the general harvest of all fruits followed on the Feast of Tabernacles, "the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in the fruit of your labors from the field.” (Exodus 23:16)

This was to foreshadow the general resurrection of the righteous, when God will take his people to Heaven, while He will renew the planet Earth only after 1000 years, to make it as the Garden of Eden again.

The firstfruits of oil, wine and grain, God gave to the high priest, who is the type of the Messiah. Numbers 18:12

God called us to be the firstfruits of his new creation. (“that we might be a kind of **firstfruits** of His creatures.” James 1:18)

That the firstborn was not always the oldest sons, but the one who trusts God more, we can see in the case of patriarch Jacob, who was the younger but more spiritual, so he took over the firstborn position from his carnal, older brother Esau.

Jacob also denied the firstborn right to his son Reuben because of his sin, and gave it to the second to youngest Joseph: (---“…Reuben the firstborn of Israel—he was indeed the firstborn, but because he defiled his father’s bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph.” (1 Chronicles 5:1)

The fourth son of Jacob, Judas, had the honor of being the ancestor of the Messiah, because he was ready to take his brother’s guilt and sentence upon himself, but "Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him came a ruler, although the birthright was Joseph’s." 1 Chronicles 5:2).

So, although Joseph was the eleventh by birth, as the most faithful to God, he received a double part of the inheritance in relation to his brothers, a part that belongs to the firstborn. In the Promised Land, Joseph received two parts of the land as his firstborn, which was given to his sons Ephraim and Manasseh.

So, both Joseph and Jacob received the firstborn right even though they were not the first to be born, but because they were ahead of the older brothers in terms of spirituality and fidelity to God.

Christ is literally the firstborn, the first son born to His mother Mary. (“She had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.” Matthew 1:25)

The apostle Paul says that Jesus is "the firstborn among many brethren." Romans 8:29

"And He is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning and **firstborn from among the dead**, so that in all things He may have preeminence." Colossians 1:18

Jesus was the firstborn physically, as well as the best individual, and the firstborn from the dead, the first in everything.

144,000 are “firstfruits to God and to the Lamb” (Revelation 14.4) the best of the harvest.

They will live before the second coming of Christ, just as the harvest symbolizes the gathering of God's people at the end of the world.

At the New Earth, 144,000 will go everywhere with Christ as the firstborn from the dead, and they will serve in God's temple in heaven, in a special way as the firstborn priests, different from all the other saved.

## SALT: The truth about the plan of salvation (God’s justice and mercy)

God repeated three times that every offering should be salted, and salt should not be lacking from the grain offering: (---“And every offering of your grain offering you shall season **with salt**; **you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking** from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall **offer salt**.” Leviticus 2:13)

When Jesus speaks of man's deviation from sin, He says, "For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.” Mark 9:49-50

Salt gives taste to food, and serves to save food from spoilage. For this reason, salt represents God's truth, a combination of God's justice and mercy, which keep man from being corrupted by sin.

God's truth can save us or condemn us.

Lot's wife became a salt rock, because she disobeyed God and turned around to see Sodom, which was destroyed by fire from heaven. Genesis 19:26

She did not believe what God told her was true. No matter how God was merciful to her, he had to show justice.

The prophet Elisha used salt to turned a bitter spring into a drinking water. (2 Kings 2: 20-22) In this symbolic image, salt, which is God’s truth, turned unhealthy water into water able to sustain life.

The prophet describes the "covenant of salt" by which God gave the kingdom to David. 2 Chronicles 13: 5 By His truth, mercy and justice, God will establish Messianic kingdom after Christ’s return.

God also invites people who believe Him to proclaim God's justice and mercy to other people: "You are the salt of the earth." Matthew 5:13; “Let your speech always be gracious, **seasoned with salt**, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” Colossians 4:6

## Continue to study the sacrificial system

When I first read the Bible, I came to the Leviticus, the book about sacrifices, and I stopped reading for a while.

Apart from the fact that everything is very complicated, I could not explain why the good God asked people to kill animals, and why modern man should even read the description of cruel animal sacrifices at all.

Only when a person understands the horror of sin, when he understands that we are all going to die, it become clear to us that we are lost if God does not perform a miracle to save us.

Through symbolic rituals, God showed the details of how He will forgive those who repent of sin, how He will sanctify us and cleanse us from sin. And not only that, God described how He would remove sin from the whole universe.

All sacrifices are connected with sin and the plan of salvation, but describe different aspects of God's plan for the removal of sin:

We have seen that a ram, sheep, and lambs represent God's people.

An ox, cow and calf represent pious people who do not keep God's principles as instructed.

He-goat, she-goat and kids of the goat represent people who openly oppose God.

The sacrifice may represent a person who offer the sacrifice, or his belief God will fulfill what He has promised.

Burnt offerings were a symbol of confession of sin and reconciliation with God, because they were offered with flour, wine and oil, as symbols of Christ's body, blood and Holy Spirit.

The piece sacrifice symbolizes gratitude to God for salvation and deliverance from sin.

Sin offerings represent the execution of judgment for unrepentant sins, over those who have rejected God, or the execution of judgment over Christ who received judgment instead of us.

Trespass offerings symbolize personal confession of sin and repentance.

Heave offerings symbolize consecration, raising the spiritual level.

Wave offerings symbolize the resurrection.

Sweet savor offering unto the Lord symbolizes God's acceptance and approval.

An offering made by Fire symbolizes the final destruction of sin, and the destruction of those who have chosen sin instead of God.

Of the grain offerings, flour represents the body of Christ, grape juice ("wine") represents the blood of Christ, and oil represents the Holy Spirit.

The daily service in the Sanctuary on earth represents Christ's service as our mediator in the heavenly sanctuary.

It is up to each of us to continue to explore the symbolic services of the Old Testament, to discover the essential details of what God is doing for us in His plan to save us, and the prophecies that will soon be fulfilled at the climax of the evil influence of sin.

The sacrificial system, which God described in detail in the Bible, represents the gospel of the Old Testament, and at the center of the sacrificial system is the Messiah - Jesus Christ.

Through Christ's sacrifice, God offered another chance to people who want to return to Him with all their hearts.

 “We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore, it is necessary that this One also have something to offer.” Hebrews 8:1-3

"And having been perfected, He became **the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him**." Hebrews 5:9