

The Offering

Hebrews 10:12 NKJV **12** But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,

Online Etymology Dictionary, © 2010 Douglas Harper

Offer:

to present for acceptance or rejection; proffer

From Latin *offerre* "to present, bestow, bring before"

Easton's Bible Dictionary

Under the Levitical system different kinds of offerings are specified, and laws laid down as to their presentation.

Strong's Greek Dictionary

proserw prosphero, pros-fer'-o

Search for 4374 in KJV

from 4314 and 5342 (including its alternate); to bear towards, i.e. lead to, tender (especially to God), treat:--bring (to, unto), deal with, do, offer (unto, up), present unto, put to.

We can see from these definitions that an *offering* or the act of offering means to present something for approval or rejection.

I did find that even the most modern dictionary readily gave the definition as offering something to God or to the church.

This still implies that God has the option of accepting or rejecting that which is being offered.

As early as Genesis we see that offerings unto God are being performed.

Genesis 4:3-4 NKJV **3** And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. **4** Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering,

It is not stated but can be inferred that God had asked for these offerings. He had instructed Adam and Eve as to proper behavior. I do not think it is presumptuous to think He would have also asked from Cain and Abel something from their endeavors.

Whether He had asked for them or not the record of Moses says they both offered something from their work to God.

Another argument may say that Cain and Abel simply came up with this idea of offering something to God for His approval.

This, although plausible seems unlikely as God has revealed in scripture that man usually fails at coming up with acceptable behavior on his own.

Jeremiah 10:23 NKJV 23 O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.

We also know what God had to say about the rightness of the things offered by Abel and Cain.

Genesis 4:5 NKJV 5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

To further make the case that God had given instructions to the brothers we only need to look at the record again to see what God had to say to Cain after rejecting his offering.

Genesis 4:6-7 NKJV 6 So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? **7** "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."

God asks Cain" If you do well, will you not be accepted?"

I propose that God did not simply leave it to Cain or Abel to determine the right offering that would be accepted by God.

From the book of **Exodus** through **Deuteronomy** God instructs the children of Israel about sacrifices and how they are to be offered unto Himself.

Again we see in all of these accounts it is God who determines the rightness and appropriateness of the offering.

In the **Psalms** we learn that other forms of sacrifices can be offered unto God with His approval; sacrifices that are not bulls, rams, grain or drink.

Psalms 4:5 NKJV 5 Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, And put your trust in the LORD.

Psalms 27:6 NKJV 6 And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.

Psalms 50:14 NKJV 14 Offer to God thanksgiving, And pay your vows to the Most High.

Psalms 116:17 NKJV 17 I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD.

These offerings are from the heart. The other physical sacrifices of flesh and grain and drink are to be offered with the heart also, but thanksgiving and singing are more expressions of the focus of the heart and more personal.

All sacrifices are to be from the heart and the focus is to be that of giving something back to God the Father.

We see how the physical burnt offerings became an abomination to God and wholly unacceptable over time.

Isaiah 1:11 NKJV 11 "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats.

We see that the reason for God wearying of their incessant sacrificing was their refusal to give up their evil ways. They substituted their living right before God with a sacrifice.

Isaiah 1:15-17 NKJV 15 When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood. **16** "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, **17** Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.

What God desired, and still desires, is a clean heart and clean hands, spiritually speaking. The way for them to cleanse their hearts was to turn away from the evil ways, repent, and with an honest heart seek forgiveness from the Father.

Although the sacrifices were to be an atonement for sin, unless the heart was repentant, it had no effect.

Many of the prophets attest to God's refusal to accept the burnt offerings of the sinful people.

Jeremiah 6:20 NKJV 20 For what purpose to Me Comes frankincense from Sheba, And sweet cane from a far country? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable, Nor your sacrifices sweet to Me."

Jeremiah 19:5 NKJV 5 "(they have also built the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or speak, nor did it come into My mind),

Hosea 6:6 NKJV 6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Hosea 9:10 NKJV 10 "I found Israel Like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers As the firstfruits on the fig tree in its first season. But they went to Baal Peor, And separated themselves to that shame; They became an abomination like the thing they loved.

Amos 5:21-24 NKJV 21 "I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies. **22** Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them, Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings. **23** Take away from Me the noise of your songs, For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments. **24** But let justice run down like water, And righteousness like a mighty stream.

It is clear that God wants men's hearts to be in tune with His Word. It is through God's Word we learn what is acceptable and what is not.

So what is it, specifically, God requires of us?

God's Son has revealed to us these things. His disciples asked this very question and He gave them the answer.

John 6:28-29 NKJV 28 Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" **29** Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God that you believe in Him whom He sent."

Remember we said that to offer is to present something for approval or rejection.

Romans 6:13 NKJV 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

As the Lord has said to "believe in Him whom He sent." Believing implies doing. Christian belief is always demonstrated by doing something, in other words some action is taken to show belief.

The passage above from **Romans 6** indicates we are to do something by presenting our members, our bodies, to God.

Romans 12:1 NKJV 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

Our "reasonable service" is that which God sees and approves as righteousness or rejects as sin. How do we know, by comparing our lives to the mirror of God's Word to see if we are measuring up.

Christ gave His life as a sacrifice to God on our behalf.

Hebrews 9:13-14 NKJV 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, **14** how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

The offering of our lives as a “reasonable service” to God and that Christ offered Himself to God on our behalf are two sacrifices.

Ours is an ongoing offering until our departure from this life and Christ’s was done once to offer a way for us to gain the promise of eternal life.

Hebrews 9:27-28 NKJV **27** And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, **28** so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

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