

THE LAW OF SACRIFICE: ANCIENT AND MODERN

by Brent L. Top

96
11/25/75

Victor L. Ludlow
Religion 301 #11
November 25, 1975

THE LAW OF SACRIFICE: ANCIENT AND MODERN

"Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven." Such was the profound statement penned by the pioneer poet, William W. Phelps. (Hymns, p. 147) Sacrifice has been viewed not only as a religious ritual, but also a source of divine power. Since civilization was first founded with Father Adam until the modern complex systems of civilization today, sacrifice in its many forms has been of great significance. Historians and anthropologists have discovered that various forms of religious sacrifice have existed in virtually all civilizations. There were fertility sacrifices in ancient Mesopotamia; the classical Greeks and Romans offered sacrifices to please the many dieties who dwelt atop Mount Olympus; and in the ancient civilizations of America humans were offered on the sacrificial altars. Each of these civilizations believed sacrifices would bring gifts from the gods. Like so many "plain and precious" doctrines that become corrupted and modified as they are exposed to the elements of time and apostasy, the eternal law of sacrifice has taken on many new forms. Nevertheless, the principle of sacrifice is of lasting importance to all religions and societies. The latter-day prophet, Joseph Smith, examined the importance of sacrifice in his Lectures on Faith. "A religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary [to lead] unto life and salvation. . ." ¹

¹Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1966), p.663.

The origin, purpose, and blessings of the law of sacrifice as executed anciently and in modern times are of utmost importance to the literal offspring of a Heavenly Father—saints of the Almighty God. The Latter-day Saint view of the law of sacrifice is that it is essential to salvation and is a trial of one's spiritual depth. Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Council of the Twelve Apostles defines the importance of sacrifice:

Sacrifice is the crowning test of the gospel. Men are tried and tested in this mortal probation to see if they will put first in their lives the things of the kingdom of God. To gain eternal life, they must be willing, if called upon, to sacrifice all things for the gospel.¹

Whether practiced in the days of ancient prophets or modern apostles, adherence to the pure and undefiled law of sacrifice, as revealed by God, brings forth blessings and is a step leading to ultimate salvation.

The law of sacrifice, with its binding importance on man, is eternal in nature. It was not a new decree from the Eternal Father. This principle had existed long before the earthly sphere was organized at God's command. The apostle Peter taught the eternal nature of sacrifice as illustrated by Christ's "infinite and eternal sacrifice:"

Forasmuch as ye know that ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world . . .²

In the Book of Mormon, a prophet named Alma also proclaimed this principle of an eternal law of sacrifice.

For it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice; yea, not a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of any manner of fowl; for it shall not be

¹McConkie, p.663.

²I Peter 1:18-19.

a human sacrifice; but must be an infinite and eternal sacrifice.¹

These prophets spoke of the eternal sacrifice of Jesus Christ that provided mankind with an atonement which freed man from everlasting death. Such was the plan before man populated the earth. Christ was the example and the eternal law of sacrifice, by necessity, must be lived by all who would become joint-heirs with Christ.

This principle was first introduced to mortal man through Adam. Heavenly Father issued divine commands and gave eternal laws that Adam and Eve and their posterity would be required to live so that they could ultimately return and dwell with God. It is recorded:

And he gave unto them commandments that they should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord. And Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord.²

The law of sacrifice originated on earth as a simple commandment from a loving Father and a simple response from an obedient son. Without any explanations or reasons given as to why he should be obedient, Adam, nevertheless built an altar and did as the Lord requested. It is interesting to note the event which followed.

And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me.

And then the angel spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth.

Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore.³

¹ Alma 34:10.

² Moses 5:5.

³ Moses 5:6-8.

As the angel of the Lord conversed with Adam, he emphasized the importance and meaning of this law of sacrifice. The angel's explanation of this law illustrated Heavenly Father's mercy and compassion. Understanding of this law was of basic importance to its fulfillment. This concept is better explained in the Babylonian Talmud:

Their [the sacrifices] aim is the highest perfection of man--intellectual and moral. They are designed to in-fuse right knowledge, inculcate truth and train man to righteous life and action. They cannot, however, produce these effects unless the ideals and principles they enshrine are properly understood. The explanation of them thus becomes an important religious need and duty; and in regard to sacrifices in particular the appreciation of their significances and meaning, as far as their general character is concerned, constitutes an integral part of their fulfillment.¹

With the importance of understanding the meaning of the law of sacrifice established, Adam was instructed concerning two basic purposes for his offering of sacrifice: (1) It was symbolic of the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and (2) It served as a form of worship whereby man could commune with God, offer thanksgiving unto the Lord, and seek for special blessings. Whether practiced anciently or in modern times, these two purposes remain inseparably connected to the law of simple sacrifice.

The primary purpose of sacrifice was to serve as a constant reminder of Christ's sacrifice. Adam was reminded, "Thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son." Christ is the hub of the gospel wheel and all other principles are subordinate to his atonement. Dr. James E. Talmage, in Jesus the Christ, spoke of this symbolic nature of the law of sacrifice:

¹Rabbi Dr. I. Epstein, ed., The Babylonian Talmud Seder Kodashim, trans. by Rabbi H. Freedman (London: The Soncino Press, 1948), pp. xxviii-xxix.

The blood of countless altar victims, slain by Israel's priests in the course of prescribed ritual, ran throughout the centuries from Moses to Christ as a prophetic flood in similitude of the blood of the Son of God appointed to be shed as an expiatory sacrifice for the redemption of the race

The paschal lamb, slain for every Israelitish household at the annually recurring feast of the Passover, was a particular type of the Lamb of God who in due time would be slain for the sins of the world. The crucifixion of Christ was effected at the Passover season; and the consummation of the supreme Sacrifice, of which the paschal lambs had been but lesser prototypes, led Paul the apostle to affirm in later times: "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."¹

President Joseph F. Smith, on February 9, 1873, then a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church, spoke to the Latter-day Saints about this symbolic meaning of the law of sacrifice.

And when man did fall by transgressing the law which was given him, the Lord gave to him the law of sacrifice, and made it clear to his understanding, that it was for the purpose of reminding him of the great event that should transpire in the meridian of time, whereby he and all his posterity might be brought forth by the power of redemption and the resurrection from the dead, and partake of eternal life with God in his kingdom.²

The Lord God set up certain restrictions and conditions for the law of sacrifice to serve as reminders of this ultimate purpose of the law. Through revelation to his prophet, the Lord said, ". . . let him offer a male [bullock] without blemish."³ There were specific instructions that required the people to offer the firstlings of their flocks and the first fruits of their fields. They were to offer the Lord the very best they possessed, "without spot or blemish."

¹James E. Talmage, Jesus the Christ, published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1915), pp. 45-46.

²Joseph F. Smith, "The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper," Vol. XV of Journal of Discourses (5th ed.; Salt Lake City: 1967), p. 324.

³Leviticus 1:3.

". . . the particular animal offered was to be always perfect in its kind. In this region of the animal life it was to be a fitting representative of what man should be--what its real and proper representative MUST be, in the region of the moral and spiritual life. Any palpable defect or blemish rendering it an imperfect specimen of the natural species it belonged to would have visibly marred the image it was intended to present of the holy beauty which was sought by God first in man, and now in man's substitute and ransom."¹

All of this care was taken to bring to man's remembrance the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, he that was "without spot or blemish." There is recorded in the scriptures a classic account of how the Lord greatly illustrated that the law of sacrifice was indeed "in similitude of the only Begotten of the Father."

And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. . . .

And they came to the place which God told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.²

Heavenly Father taught a valuable lesson to Abraham that day about the law of sacrifice and its symbolic meaning and purpose. Abraham stands as an excellent example to all. He was willing to sacrifice his most prized possession--his son. Because of that willingness and

¹Patrick Fairbairn, The typology of Scripture, Vol. II (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1870), p.311.

²Genesis 22:1-3,9-12.

obedience the windows of heaven were opened and great blessings were poured out upon Abraham and his posterity.

Not only was this foreshadowing of Christ's imminent sacrifice an important purpose of the law, but sacrifice as a form of worship also played a major role. After the first purpose was fulfilled, man's mind would be centered on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, thus leading him to the second major purpose—worship or communion with God. Theo E. McKean states:

In actual practice, sacrifice provided an approach for one who was drawing near to God in worship. Whether it was a condition of asking for help or an act of returning thanks for blessings already granted, sacrifice seemed to establish a basic rapport out of which communication ensued. . . .

As a means of worship, sacrifice kept the mind of man directed to Christ in whose name man was always to call upon God. Through this proper means of communication the gospel was taught and covenants were established between God and man.¹

Abundant in the scriptures are examples of the faithful followers of God who used sacrifices as a means to worship God, extend praise and thanksgiving, and communicate with Deity. After God had appeared to Jacob and promised him the blessings of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac, it is recorded that Jacob offered sacrifice to praise the Lord.

And Jacob set up a pillar [altar] in the place where he talked with him [God], even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon.²

Even the children of Lehi offered worshipful sacrifices to their God on the ancient American continent. It is related in the Book of

¹Theo E. McKean, "The Origin and Original Meaning of Sacrificial Blood Offerings as Revealed in the Bible and Modern Scripture" (unpublished Master of Arts thesis, Brigham Young University, 1964), pp. 34-36.

²Genesis 35:14.

Mormon. When Nephi and the other sons of Lehi safely returned from their dangerous, but successful mission to secure the brass plates of Laban, it is recorded:

And it came to pass that they did rejoice exceedingly, and did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto the Lord; and they gave thanks unto the God of Israel.¹

When the angel of the Lord explained the eternal law of sacrifice to Father Adam, two major purposes were emphasized—it symbolized the Supreme Sacrifice and it provided a means of spiritual expression. These purposes have extended far beyond the ancient altars; they permeate the hearts of the Latter-day Saints. Though different in execution, the eternal law of sacrifice must still be practiced "in similitude of the Only Begotten of the Father." Today, whether the law is being fulfilled by partaking of the Lord's sacrament or by offering monetary sacrifices to the Church, it is to be done in remembrance of the Son.

The Lord, in modern times, revealed that all his laws were spiritual in nature. He said, "Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; neither any man, nor the children of men; neither Adam your father, whom I created."² With spiritual purposes of the law serving as a foundation, the Lord required an essential condition of personal righteousness and pure motives in order that sacrifice might "bring forth the blessings of heaven."

The essential condition for the sanctification of a man who wished to offer sacrifice was that he should first

¹ I Nephi 5:9.

² Doctrine and Covenants 29:34.

purify himself. This meant that he freed himself from the tarnish of everyday life which sullied his soul. Of course this was only possible if his soul was not poisoned by greater sins; he who approached what was holy with a corrupt soul merely hastened on its complete destruction.¹

The law of sacrifice was to be held with utmost solemnity. Scriptural accounts record the results of men who offered sacrifices and failed to remember God's requirements of personal righteousness and obedience. Cain and Abel, both, brought offerings to the sacrificial altar. Cain brought the fruit of the ground and Abel brought a firstling of the flock. Cain's sacrifice was rejected of the Lord, while Abel received a witness of the Lord's acceptance of his offering and personal worthiness.² The Prophet Joseph Smith explained the reason why Cain's offering was not accepted by the Lord.

By faith in this atonement or plan of redemption, Abel offered to God a sacrifice that was accepted, which was the firstlings of the flock. Cain offered of the fruit of the ground, and was not accepted, because he could not do it in faith, he could have no faith, or could not exercise faith contrary to the plan of heaven.³

Thus, it is obvious that faith in Christ is a prerequisite to the offering of sacrifice.

The Lord also requires strict obedience to his law. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, neglected certain important restrictions of the law of sacrifice under the Law of Moses. As a result of their disobedience they suffered the wrath of God.

And Nadab and Abihu the sons of Aaron, took either of them

¹ Johs Pedersen, Israel, Its Life and Culture, Vol. III (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 359-360.

² Genesis 4:3-5.

³ Joseph Smith, History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Vol. II (published by the Church) (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973 ed.), p. 15.

his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not.

And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.¹

Later in Jewish history, King Saul of Israel offered an unauthorized sacrifice and was severely rebuked by the Prophet Samuel. Samuel later reminded Saul that obedience was what the Lord requires.

And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.²

These striking examples from the past can teach much to the modern Saints of God. Even as Abraham's righteous sacrifice was rewarded with bounteous blessings, the wicked sacrifices of Cain, Nadab and Abihu, and King Saul received the condemnation of God. Today, as one attempts to live the modern law of sacrifice, it is important to note the words of Solomon: "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord."³ As one lives the law of sacrifice today, let him do it in righteousness. As one partakes of the sacrament let him do it in cleanliness and with faith in Christ. As one sacrifices time to serve in the church, let his motives be pure. Let it be as President Harold B. Lee said—"doing the right things for the right reasons." As a modern saint offers monetary offerings to the Church, let him remember to do it willingly and with love in his heart, for even as Mormon taught, ". . . if a man being evil giveth a gift, he doeth it grudgingly; wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had retained the gift, wherefore he is counted evil before

¹Leviticus 10:1-2.

²I Samuel 15:22.

³Proverbs 15:8.

God."¹

From Adam's day until after Moses had led the children of Israel out of Egypt, the law of sacrifice consisted of basically two forms of simple sacrifice—the burnt offering and the peace offering.² As the people began to neglect the requirements of personal worthiness and rebelled against the commandments of God, the Lord was forced to take away the higher law and provide a stricter, more structured law of carnal commandments. Bruce R. McConkie states:

To Moses the Lord first gave the higher priesthood and revealed the fullness of the gospel. But Israel rebelled and manifested such gross unworthiness that their God took from them the power whereby they could have become a kingdom of priests and of kings and gave them instead a lesser law, a law of carnal commandments, a preparatory gospel, a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ and the fulness of the gospel.³

From Mount Sinai resounded a new law from the voice of Jehovah. Under the new title of the "Law of Moses" sacrifices took on a new dimension. There were extensive procedures and rituals to be performed in the sacrificial rites, and the simple laws of sacrifice given to Adam were replaced by seven detailed sacrificial rites. All of this was designed to return the minds of a "stiffnecked" and rebellious people to their Lord, Jesus Christ.

1. THE BURNT OFFERING

Sometimes called the Whole Burnt Offering, this sacrificial rite was an extension of the law of simple sacrifice given to Adam. The method in which the Burnt Offering was to be performed under the Law of Moses was prescribed by the Lord in revelation and recorded in the first chapter

¹Moroni 7:8.

²Fairbairn, The typology of Scripture, p. 21.

³McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p.434.

of Leviticus. The contemporary Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, described the procedure of the Burnt Offering in his Complete Works.

Suppose a private man offer a burnt-offering, he must slay either a bull, a lamb, or a kid of the goats, and the two latter of the first year, though of bulls he is permitted to sacrifice those of a greater age; but all burnt-offerings are to be of males. When they are slain, the priests sprinkle the blood round about the altar: they then cleanse the bodies and divide them into parts, and salt them with salt, and lay them upon the altar, while the pieces of wood are piled one upon another, and the fire is burning; they next cleanse the feet of the sacrifices and the inwards in an accurate manner, and so lay them to the rest to be purged by the fire, while the priests receive the hides. This is the way of offering a burnt-offering.¹

Dr. W. Cleon Skousen also speaks of the Burnt Offering and its importance.

He states:

The Burnt Offering, completely consumed by fire, represented a complete surrender of the individual to the will and purposes of God. This is the sacrifice inaugurated in the days of Adam (Moses 5:4-8) and which was always a part of the Priesthood ritual. Under the Law of Moses there was a Burnt Offering of lamb each morning and each night on behalf of all Israel. (Exodus 29:38-42).²

A modern Latter-day Saint can gain great insight from the Burnt Offerings of ancient Israel. Even as their offering represented total submission to God, it is important for one today to surrender his life to God and become a "sweet savour" to the Lord through righteous living and Christ-like service.

2. THE MEAL OFFERING

The second chapter of Leviticus describes a "meat offering" which is commonly known as the Meal Offering. It implies the offering of the fruits

¹Flavius Josephus, Josephus, Complete Works, trans. by William Whiston (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1973 edition), p. 78.

²W. Cleon Skousen, The Third Thousand Years (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1964), p. 339.

of the fields. Skousen again describes this ritual.

This offering took several forms. Usually it consisted of fine flour which could be presented raw (Leviticus 2:1-3), or baked into cakes in an oven (v. 14) and/or in a pan (v.15). The meal was mixed with oil (v. 4) and salt (v. 13). However, it was not to contain any leaven or honey (v. 11). A "memorial" or portion of the meal was burned on the altar of sacrifice (v. 9), but the remainder of the offering was eaten by the High Priest and those officiating with him. . . A "memorial" or small portion of it was then mixed with oil and frankincense and burned on the altar. The remainder (with oil but no frankincense) was presented to the priest (v. 16). The priest was required to make a Meat (Meal) Offering for the whole congregation each morning and each night right along with the Burnt Offering (Exodus 29:41-42). Since this offering was by a priest, it was fully burned and none of it was eaten (Leviticus 6:23).¹

3. THE PEACE OFFERING

This offering was sometimes referred to as a "Thank Offering." As recorded in Leviticus, chapter three, this offering could be an animal of either sex.

As the animal was brought to the door of the Tabernacle, the owner laid his hands upon its head and offered a prayer of thanksgiving. Therefore this offering is sometimes called a "Thank Offering." After the animal was killed at the altar, the kidneys and internal fat (and in the case of Syrian sheep, the fat tail) were burned on the altar. The breast and the right thigh were given to the priest after they had been waved in the direction of the Tabernacle, thereby signifying that it had been given to God and was now conferred upon the servants (Leviticus 7:28-34). The rest of the meat was eaten by the offerer and his family at a so-called "sacrificial" meal, or meal of "Thanksgiving." (Leviticus 7:15-16)²

4. THE SIN OFFERING

This offering was to be made for sins which had been committed in ignorance and later discovered. Dr. Victor L. Ludlow of Brigham Young University describes the Sin Offering and draws a parallel between its

¹ Skousen, p. 341.

² Skousen, p. 340.

ancient and modern importance.

The ritual for a Sin Offering varied according to the rank of the offender. One distinction of the Sin Offering over the regular Burnt Offering was the disposition of the blood. The priest smeared the blood of the victim on the horns of the altar of incense inside the Tabernacle and then poured out the rest at the base of the brazen altar of sacrifice outside. On the annual Day of Atonement the distinctive aspect of the Sin Offering was the fact that the priest took some of the blood clear into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled it before the Mercy Seat. (Leviticus 16:14).

A portion of the animal (the internal fat and the kidneys) were burnt upon the altar and the rest of the animal was taken outside the camp to be burned in the area where the ashes of the altar were poured out.

We today can relate to this offering in that we take our sinful lives outside the camp or community of the faithful and dispose of the wicked within us as we attempt to again become a "sweet savour" to the Lord.¹

5. THE TRESPASS OFFERING

The Trespass Offering, sometimes called the "Guilt Offering," was an offering of a ram or male lamb. (Leviticus 6:4-7) This offering differed from the Sin Offering in that it was an offering made for sins committed knowingly. The real significance of this sacrificial rite was that it emphasized the necessity of restitution for sins. They were to restore what had been taken (either from the Lord or from others) plus one-fifth. (Leviticus 5:16) It is interesting to note Dr. Ludlow's parallel.

Likewise, we today must attempt to make full restitution (plus a fifth?!) before we can be forgiven and Christ will pay the debt of our sins.²

6. THE DRINK OFFERING

The Drink Offering was used to express thanksgiving to the Lord. Wine was poured out before the Lord, and like the Burnt and Meat Offerings,

¹Victor L. Ludlow, "The Offerings of the Israelites," Brigham Young University, 1975, p. 2. (Mimeographed)

²Ludlow, p.3.

this Drink Offering was performed twice daily, morning and evening.

7. THE WAVE OFFERING

Sometimes called the "Heave Offering." This ceremony was performed in connection with a peace offering (Leviticus 8:29), the first fruits of the harvest (Leviticus 23:11-12), and of the two loaves at the Feast of Weeks (Leviticus 23:20). It was also used in connection with the cleansing of a leper (Leviticus 14:12, 24). The "waving" or "heaving" consisted of taking the breast and the right shoulder of a sacrificial animal or the first fruits of the harvest and moving them horizontally in the direction of the sanctuary. It was to signify that these choice parts of the sacrifice were first presented to God and then returned by Him to the officiating priests for their use.¹

These seven forms of offerings under the Law of Moses were strictly adhered to by the children of Israel from Moses' day until after the death of Jesus Christ. For four milleniums, sacrifices had been offered in symbolic reverence of the coming Messiah. In the meridian of time the Messiah that had been long awaited gave his life and fulfilled the law. Nevertheless, many failed to recognize that the scriptures had been fulfilled, and the higher law and fulness of the gospel restored. This Messiah himself told his faithful followers:

And as many as have received me, to them have I given to become the sons of God; and even so will I to as many as shall believe on my name, for behold, by me redemption cometh, and in me is the law of Moses fulfilled.

I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings.

And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. . . .²

Although blood sacrifice was ceased at the Savior's command, the eternal law of sacrifice has taken on new aspects for modern man. No

¹Skousen, p. 340.

²III Nephi 9:17-20.

longer are the Saints required to shed blood and offer burnt offerings. Nevertheless, one could ask, "Is blood sacrifice completely fulfilled and done away?"

The prophets have often spoken of a restoration of all things in the last days. (Acts 3:21) In modern revelation the Lord told Josph Smith that when the gathering of the tribes of Israel is completed the sons of Levi would be purified and once again offer up their offerings (D&C 128:24) Why is this so? The Prophet Joseph Smith explained:

These sacrifices, as well as every ordinance belonging to the Priesthood, will, when the Temple of the Lord shall be built, and the sons of Levi be purified, be fully restored and attended to in all their powers, ramifications, and blessings. This ever did and ever will exist when the powers of the Melchisedic [sic.] Priesthood are sufficiently manifest; else how can the restitution of all things spoken of by the holy Prophets be brought to pass.¹

President Joseph Fielding Smith adds:

We are living in the dispensation of the fulness of times into which all things are to be gathered, and all things are to be restored since the beginning. Even this earth is to be restored to the condition which prevailed before Adam's transgression. Now in the nature of things, the law of sacrifice will have to be restored, or all things which were decreed by the Lord would not be restored. It will be necessary, therefore, for the sons of Levi, who offered the blood sacrifices anciently in Israel, to offer such a sacrifice again to round out and complete this ordinance in this dispensation. Sacrifice by the shedding of blood was instituted in the days of Adam and of necessity will have to be restored.

The sacrifice of animals will be done to complete the restoration when the temple spoken of is built; at the beginning of the millennium, or in the restoration, blood sacrifices will be performed long enough to complete the fulness of the restoration in this dispensation. Afterwards sacrifice will be of some other character.²

Even as Adam offered blood sacrifices, so shall these laws of sacrifice

¹ Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol. IV, pp. 211-212.

² Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. III, ed. by Bruce R. McConkie (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1956), p. 94.

be restored. But as the Savior said, "And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood . . . And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and contrite spirit." (III Nephi 9:19-20) The Savior did not destroy the law of sacrifice. It is eternal. He merely gave a modern law of sacrifice to be followed by his Latter-day Saints. "Behold, now it is called today until the coming of the Son of Man, and verily it is a day of sacrifice. . ." ¹

The Lord himself declared that today was a day of sacrifice. Although different in that the modern law of sacrifice lacks the structured rituals that were prevalent in ancient Israel, it continues to be of great importance. This willingness to sacrifice, even as the Lamb of God has done, is essential to salvation. Elder George Q. Cannon declared:

We must be willing to obey the Holy Priesthood, which He has placed in our midst, at the cost of everything, if it be required, and not allow any sordid or self-aggrandizing feeling to enter into our hearts or to have place therein. I cannot conceive of any man being able to attain unto celestial glory who is not willing to sacrifice everything that he has for the cause of God. If I have a piece of land, house, cattle, horses, carriages or powers of mind and body and am not willing to devote any or all of these to the rolling forth of the work of God, as they may be required by Him, I cannot conceive that it will be possible for me to enter into the Celestial Kingdom of God our Heavenly Father.

Do you understand, do you comprehend that everything we have is required by God our Father, to be laid upon the altar? ²

The purposes of the modern law of sacrifice do not differ from those purposes of ancient times. Even as the Lord gave seven ways to fulfill the ancient law of sacrifice, there are three main ways modern man can offer sacrifice to the Lord. These three modern offerings are: (1) offering a "broken heart and contrite spirit, (2) sacrificing time, talents,

¹ Doctrine and Covenants 64:23.

² George Q. Cannon, Gospel Truth, ed. by Jerreld L. Newquist (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974), pp. 102-103.

and energies for the Lord's cause, and (3) sacrificing monetary substance and earthly possessions for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

When the Master said that the offering modern man should give is "a broken heart and contrite spirit" he must have surely meant that righteous lives and repentant souls were the best offerings man can render. A broken heart and contrite spirit truly involve a repentant attitude. To ancient Israel the Sin Offering emphasized restitution. To the modern saints, restitution is necessary for repentance and leads to a broken heart and contrite spirit.

A broken heart and contrite spirit also involve commitment and total submission to the Father. "Even as the Burnt Offering was completely consumed by fire, we should surrender our will to the will and purposes of the Father. We should be a 'sweet savour' to Him through our actions . . .¹ Through total submission to the Father, one's eye becomes single to the glory of God. One strives to keep all of the commandments of God. Impure motives, pride, and personal gain are purged from one's mind when he becomes contrite in spirit. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper provides man with a means to remind him of his sacrifice of a broken heart and contrite spirit. It provides one with the opportunity to re-commit one's self to righteous living.

As the ordinance of sacrifice aided the covenant people in looking forward to Christ's mission, so the ordinance of the sacrament assists the true Saints to look back, and remember the most important event in the history of mankind, the atonement of Christ.²

¹Ludlow, "The Offerings of the Israelites," p. 1.

²Edward J. Brandt, "The Priesthood Ordinance of Sacrifice," The Ensign, December, 1973, p. 53.

Offering a "broken heart and contrite spirit" is more than eating broken bread and drinking water. It is more than confessing sins and just "promising" to do better. It involves deep repentance and restitution. It involves commitment to keep the commands of God. It requires submission and change. It requires remembrance of the Savior, taking upon his name and following in his path.

The second way a modern Saint can live the law of sacrifice is to give of his time to the Church. The Lord established his church with the common members to lead it. It was a wise purpose. It takes valuable time to serve in his church, but it takes sacrifice to reap the blessings of service.

It is our privilege to raise the warning voice to our neighbors, and to go on missions . . . We can respond to calls to serve as Bishops, Relief Society presidents, as home teachers, and in any of hundreds of positions of responsibility in our various church organizations. We can labor on welfare projects, engage in genealogical research, perform vicarious ordinances in the temples . . .

We can consecrate a portion of our time to systematic study, to becoming gospel scholars, to treasuring up the revealed truths which guide us in paths of truth and righteousness.¹

The third modern method of sacrifice is perhaps the most trying to some. It is offering monetary resources. The Lord has provided opportunities for his modern saints to share their means with others. This is a form of sacrifice just like the ancient Jews were required to give of their flocks and harvests. There are offerings to be observed that bring blessings to the giver as well as those others in need, such as tithing, fast offerings, missionary funds, welfare, and countless other ways in which one can give of his material blessings.

¹Bruce R. McConkie, "Obedience, Consecration, and Sacrifice," The Ensign, May, 1975, p.51.

An example in the scriptures teaches the importance of being willing to impart of one's earthly possessions. A rich young man approached Jesus and asked what was required to gain eternal life. Christ stated that the commandments must be lived in order to gain that great reward. The young man assured the Master that he had kept the commandments. The Lord then issued the ultimate challenge. He was to sell all his possessions and follow Jesus. This he could not do, because he loved his wealth more than he loved the Lord. (Matthew 19:16-22)

This form of sacrifice is a test of man's heart. If one's heart is broken and his spirit contrite, he will follow the Savior and willingly give that others might receive. It is in similitude of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who gave his time in service, his heart in love, and his life for an atonement for all. President Harold B. Lee bore testimony of living the law of sacrifice in modern times.

I bear witness that not until a person has been willing to sacrifice all he possessed in the world, not even withholding his own life if it were necessary for the upbuilding of the Kingdom, can he claim kinship to Him who gave his life that men might be.¹

Whether practiced anciently or in modern times, as one's mind is returned to Christ, as one's heart is submitted to the Lord, the law of sacrifice is fulfilled and the blessings of heaven are poured out abundantly upon the children of God.

¹Harold B. Lee, The Ensign, February, 1974, p. 79.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Scriptures

- The Book of Mormon. Translated by Joseph Smith, Jr. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1969.
- The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1969.
- The Holy Bible. King James Version. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1969.
- The Pearl of Great Price. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1969.

Other Sources

- Brandt, Edward J. "The Priesthood Ordinance of Sacrifice." The Ensign, December 1973.
- Cannon, George Q. Gospel Truth. Edited by Jerreld L. Newquist. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1974.
- Epstein, Dr. Rabbi I. The Babylonian Talmud Seder Kodashim. Translated by Rabbi H. Freedman. London: The Soncino Press, 1948.
- Fairbairn, Patrick. The Typology of Scripture. Vol. II. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1870.
- Josephus, Flavius. Josephus, Complete Works. Translated by William Whiston. Grand Rapids, Mich: Kregel Publications, 1973 edition.
- Lee, Harold B. The Ensign, February, 1974.
- Ludlow, Victor L. "The Offerings of the Israelites." Brigham Young University, 1975. (Mimeographed.)
- McConkie, Bruce R. Mormon Doctrine. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1966.
- McKean, Theo E. "The Origin and Original Meaning of Sacrificial Blood Offerings as Revealed in the Bible and Modern Scriptures." Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1964.
- Pedersen, Johs. Israel, Its Life and Culture. Vol. III. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1947.
- Skousen, W. Cleon. The Third Thousand Years. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1964.

Bibliography (cont'd)

Smith, Joseph. History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Vols. II and IV. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973 edition.

Smith, Joseph Fielding. Doctrines of Salvation. Vol. III. Edited by Bruce R. McConkie. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1956.

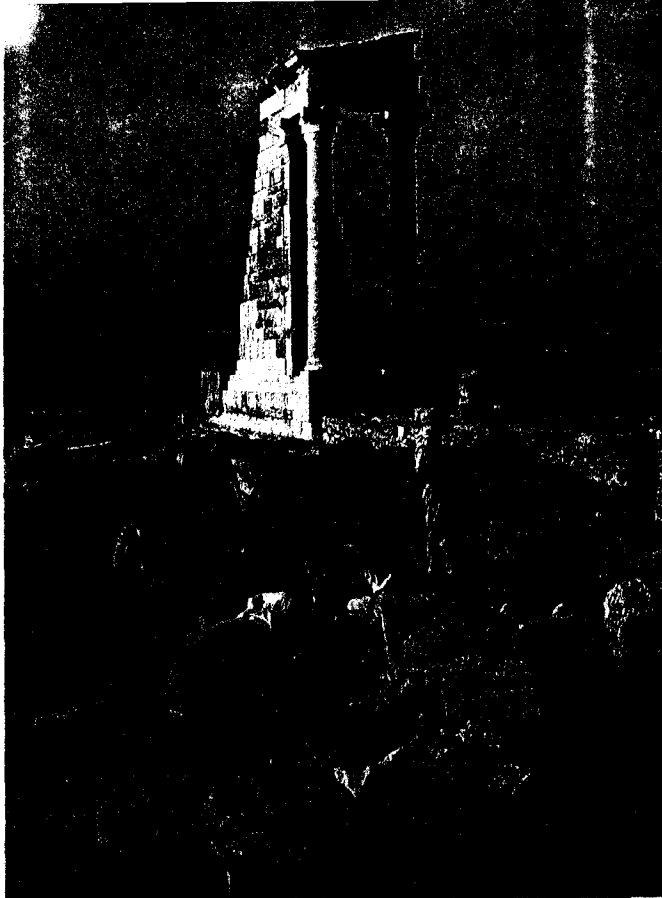
Talmage, James E. Jesus the Christ. Published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1915.

the University of Arizona classics department couldn't begin to sustain this Kourion dig (which is budgeted this year for \$100,000). But one of Soren's great assets is a talent for stimulating broad interest in what he's doing. Fund-raising on his behalf, sponsored for the most part by the Greek-American citizens of Tucson, has been spectacularly successful. In fact, Greeks from all over the western U.S. now bear him gifts. One big supporter of the Kourion dig is Alex Spanos, the owner of the San Diego Chargers.

Soren has occasionally inspired the kind of boosterism usually reserved for Arizona's football and basketball teams. "While I was on the dig in Cyprus last summer," he says, "I was called away to the telephone, and the voice on the other end said in a British accent, 'Where do you want the car delivered?' So I said, 'What car?' And he said, 'A car dealer in Tucson, Arizona has arranged for you to have a Ford Escort for the summer. Where do you want to have it delivered?' It was a man named Jim Click, a Greek car dealer in Tucson whom I didn't know, and he'd just done this. It was wonderful. Things like that are always happening."

With characteristic flair, Soren calls the tremor that destroyed Kourion "the earthquake that ended antiquity." It occurred around the time that worship of the ancient gods was outlawed in an empire that had become officially Christian under Constantine. The spiritual center of Kourion before the great quake was the sanctuary of Apollo Hylates (meaning "of the woodlands"); and after its very literal fall, no more pagan temples were built on Cyprus under the empire.

The sanctuary sat on the brow of a little hill two miles



VITTORIANO RASTELLI

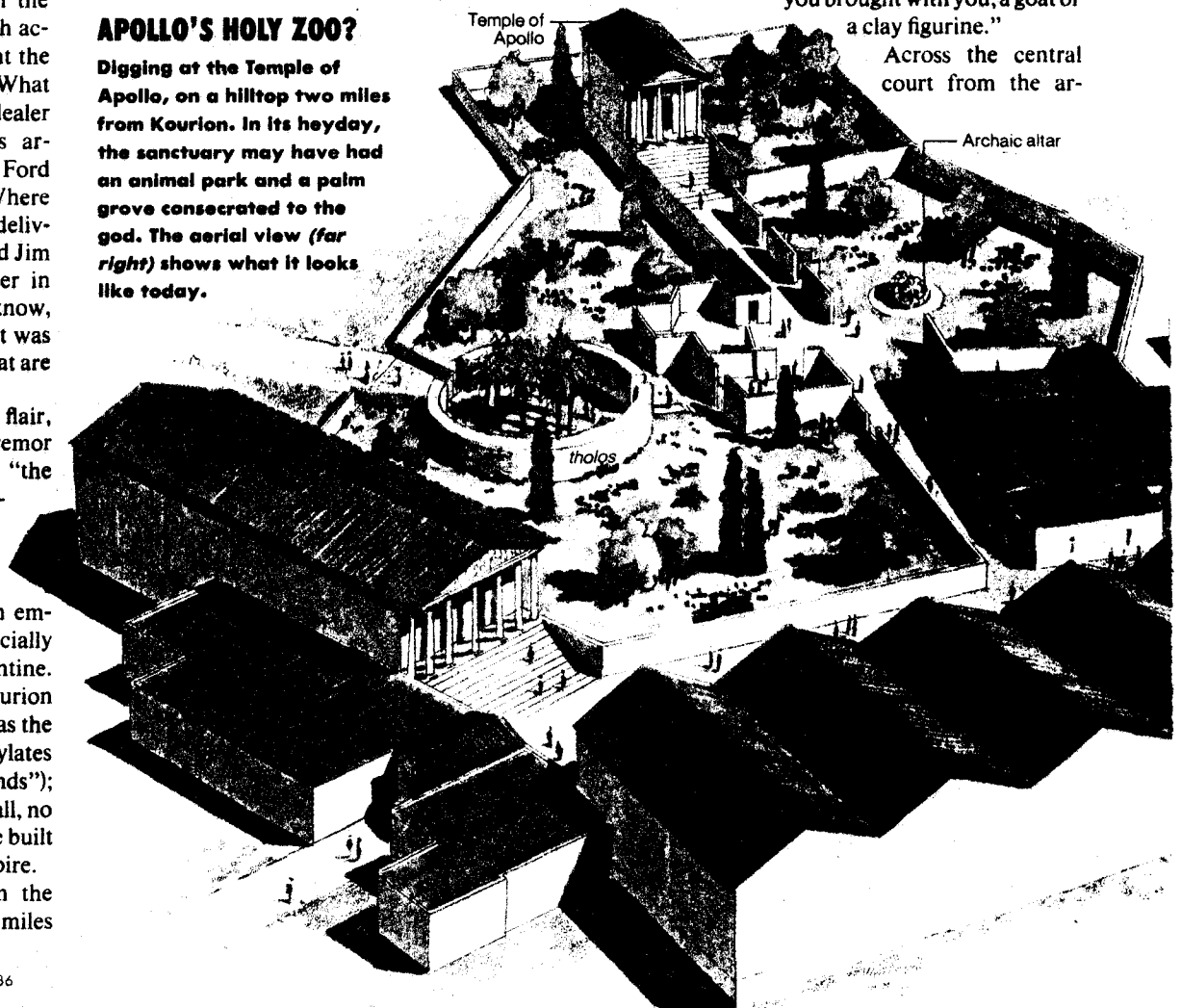
above the town. It was here that Soren's work on Kourion began eight years ago; while he now digs entirely in the town proper, he continues to reflect on how the ancient sanctuary must have looked and functioned. As is his custom, he recreates the scene in almost guidebook fashion:

"After you've washed and made an offering to the gods at the edge of the sanctuary, you set off along a street lined with stoas and a public kitchen, where you might stop for a ritual meal. This road leads you into the central court of the sanctuary. Straight ahead is the Temple of Apollo, a formal cult building designed under Greek influence. To the right is an open-air altar, which was archaic even then; here you would make whatever sacrifice you brought with you, a goat or a clay figurine."

Across the central court from the ar-

APOLLO'S HOLY ZOO?

Digging at the Temple of Apollo, on a hilltop two miles from Kourion. In its heyday, the sanctuary may have had an animal park and a palm grove consecrated to the god. The aerial view (far right) shows what it looks like today.



chaic altar stood the *tholos*, a small round building that has turned out to be one of the most controversial finds at Kourion. The ancient site had many man-made pits cut in the bedrock in its open central area ("The Mysterious Rock-Cut Channels of Kourion" is the title of Soren's scholarly article about them). Archaeologists haven't seen anything quite like them before, and they disagree about their purpose. It has been suggested that they were little ritual caves or snake pits. Soren dismisses these theories. The pits, he says, were planters for trees holy to Apollo. He believes that cultivated trees, perhaps date palms, were incorporated into the design of the building—which was after all consecrated to Apollo of the woodlands.

He cites literary evidence, such as a passage in Xenophon's *Anabasis* that describes a sanctuary consecrated to Artemis that comprised a temple, an altar, and a grove-cum-animal refuge. Soren thinks that the Kourion sanctuary, like the one described by Xenophon, was landscaped to be a pre-

Soren talks about getting into television, about writing a popular book, about making Kourion a tourist attraction, à la Pompeii

serve for animals: "We've also found statuettes of deer in the area. This might have been a deer park, a little holy zoo dedicated to Apollo."

The *tholos* was missed by the last major excavation at Kourion, the one carried out by the team from the University of Pennsylvania in the '30s. The director of that expedition forbade any digging there, because the meadow over the collapsed temple made a good croquet field.

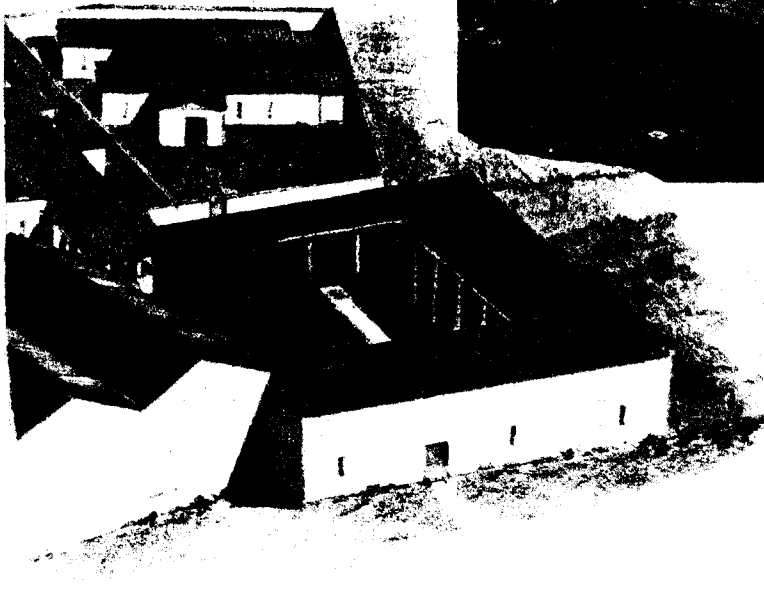
My reputation is finished," says Soren cheerfully. That's a modest way of saying that, as he approaches 40, he's at the top of the heap. Kourion

Soren is hoping this will be his most successful season of digging yet. For one thing, he has more money: not only have the Greeks and other philanthropic Tucsonians come through, but he has also made a deal with the National Geographic Society, which did a TV special on the dig. Soren loves the idea of a movie about Kourion; while at Missouri he made one himself—about the excavation of the sanctuary—that won two awards.

Soren is also the curator of an exhibition of ancient Tunisian art that will open next year at the American Museum of Natural History in New York



HELICOPTER BY SORN R.A.F.



JIM BRYANT

will keep him busy as long as he cares to wield a spade; the town goes on for miles. "I can see ten years of work right now," he says. While he would love to dig up something spectacular this season, at this point in his career the greatest finds he can make are good young archaeologists. He co-authors articles with his students whenever he can, which gives them a boost in their careers and at the same time enhances his reputation as an educator.

and then tour throughout North America. And he talks about getting into television, of writing a popular book about the earthquake at Kourion, of transforming the site into a fully restored tourist attraction, à la Pompeii. Clearly, he hasn't lost the show biz touch, though it's hard to imagine Soren ever getting too far from a place where he can dig. He says wistfully, "There's just something about being in a trench." □