

# Sacrifices: Symbols of Jesus's Atoning Sacrifice

The sacrifices—burnt, grain, peace, sin, and trespass offerings—that were part of the Mosaic law code were ordered as symbols of Jesus Christ's atoning sacrifice. The sacrifices focused on animals—sheep, goats, birds, bulls, and so forth—and the shedding of their blood. If the offerer's economic status did not permit the sacrifice of an animal, flour or grain served as acceptable substitutes.

Some offerings were voluntary, while others were mandatory; some dealt with the unintentional transgressions of the children of Israel, and others atoned for their willful or deliberate sins.

Biblical scholar Andrew Jukes wrote that in every sacrificial "offering there are at least three

distinct objects presented. . . . There is the offering, the priest, the offerer. By *offering* is meant the sacrificial victim, such as the lamb, the pigeon, the fowl, the bull, the ram, and so on. By *priest* is meant the temple officiant who performs the sacrifice. By *offerer* is meant the man or family of Israel who presents the offering to the priest. . . . What, then is the offering? what the priest? what the offerer? Christ is the offering, Christ is the priest, Christ is the offerer. . . . As offerer, we see Him man under the law, standing our substitute, for us to fulfil all righteousness. As priest, we have Him presented as the mediator, God's messenger between Himself and Israel. While in the offering He is seen the innocent victim, a sweet savour to God, yet bearing the sin and dying for it."<sup>45</sup>

Name	Offering	Purpose	Portion Burned and Eaten	Reference
<b>Burnt Offering</b>	Male without blemish—bull, lamb, he-goat, ram, turtledoves, young pigeons (depending on offerer's economic status)	A voluntary offering to make atonement for general inadvertent sins	Whole animal burned	Ex. 29:38–42; Lev. 1:3–17; 6:8–13; Num. 28:3–8
<b>Grain Offering</b>	Flour or grain, at times with oil, salt, or incense; no honey or leavening permitted; regularly offered with peace offerings and burnt offerings	A voluntary offering to recognize God's good will and gifts	Portion burned; remainder eaten by priests	Lev. 2:1–16

Name	Offering	Purpose	Portion Burned and Eaten	Reference
<b>Peace Offering</b>	Unblemished male or female—goats, sheep, cattle	To bring peace to offerer. Three varieties: 1. Offering of thanksgiving 2. Renewal of covenant or making a vow 3. Voluntary offering	Fat portions burned; remainder shared in a sacred meal by offerer(s) and priest(s)	Lev. 3:1–17; 7:11–34
<b>Sin Offering</b>	Congregation offered young bull; individual offered female goat or sheep; poor offered two birds or flour; priest offered a bull; ruler offered a male goat	A mandatory offering to make atonement for sins performed ignorantly or involuntarily or for uncleanness; focused on repentance and forgiveness	Fat portions burned; remainder eaten by priests	Lev. 4:1–5:13; 6:24–30
<b>Trespass (or Guilt) Offering</b>	Unblemished ram or lamb	A mandatory offering to make atonement for sinful acts against others; focused on repentance, restitution (full plus 20 percent), and forgiveness	Fat portions burned; remainder eaten by priests	Lev. 5:14–6:7; 7:1–7