

Apology XXIV

What a Sacrifice Is, and What Are the Species of Sacrifice.

[Now, lest we plunge blindly into this business, we must indicate, in the first place, a distinction as to what is, and what is not, a sacrifice. To know this is expedient and good for all Christians.] **16]** Socrates, in the *Phaedrus* of Plato, says that he is especially fond of divisions, because without these nothing can either be explained or understood in speaking, and if he discovers any one skilful in making divisions, he says that he attends and follows his footsteps as those of a god. And he instructs the one dividing to separate the members in their very joints, lest, like an unskilful cook, he break to pieces some member. But the adversaries wonderfully despise these precepts, and, according to Plato, are truly κακοὶ μάγειροι (poor butchers), since they break the members of “sacrifice,” as can be understood when we have enumerated the species of sacrifice. **17]** Theologians are rightly accustomed to distinguish between a **Sacrament** and a sacrifice. Therefore let the genus comprehending both of these be either **18]** a ceremony or a sacred work. A **Sacrament** is a ceremony or work in which God presents to us that which the promise annexed to the ceremony offers; as, Baptism is a work, not which we offer to God, but in which God baptizes us, *i.e.*, a minister in the place of God; and God here offers and presents the remission of sins, etc., according to the promise, Mark 16, 16: *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.* A **sacrifice**, on the contrary, is a ceremony or work which we render God in order to afford Him honor.

19] Moreover, the proximate species of sacrifice are two, and there are no more. **One is the propitiatory sacrifice**, *i.e.*, a work which makes satisfaction for guilt and punishment, *i.e.*, one that reconciles God, or appeases God’s wrath, or which merits the remission of sins for others. The other species is **the eucharistic sacrifice**, which does not merit the remission of sins or reconciliation, but is rendered by those who have been reconciled, in order that we may give thanks or return gratitude for the remission of sins that has been received, or for other benefits received.

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27] In short, **the worship of the New Testament is spiritual**, *i.e.*, it is the righteousness of faith in the heart and the fruits of faith. It accordingly abolishes the Levitical services. [In the New Testament no offering avails *ex opere operato, sine bono motu utentis, i.e.*, on account of the work, without a good thought in the heart.] And Christ says, John 4, 23. 24: *True worshippers shalt worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth* [that is, from the heart, with heartfelt fear and cordial faith]. This passage clearly condemns [as absolutely devilish, pharisaical, and antichristian] opinions concerning sacrifices which, they imagine, avail *ex opere operato*, and teaches that men ought to worship in spirit, *i.e.*, with the dispositions of the heart and by faith. [**The Jews also did not understand their ceremonies aright, and imagined that they were righteous before God when they had wrought works *ex opere operato*. Against this the prophets contend with the greatest earnestness.**] Accordingly, **28]** the prophets also in the Old Testament condemn the opinion of the people concerning the *opus operatum*, and teach the righteousness and sacrifices of the Spirit. Jer. 7, 22. 23: *For I spoke not unto your fathers, nor commanded them, in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices; but this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey My*

voice, and I will be your God, etc. How do we suppose that the Jews received this arraignment, which seems to conflict openly with Moses? **For it was evident that God had given the fathers commands concerning burnt offerings and victims.** But Jeremiah condemns the opinion concerning sacrifices which God had not delivered, namely, that these services should please Him *ex opere operato*. But he adds concerning faith that God had commanded this: *Hear Me, i.e., believe Me that I am your God; that I wish to become thus known when I pity and aid; neither have I need of your victims; believe that I wish to be God the Justifier and Savior, not on account of works, but on account of My word and promise; truly and from the heart seek and expect aid from Me.*

29] Ps. 50, 13. 15, which **rejects the victims** and requires prayer, also condemns the opinion concerning the *opus operatum*: *Will I eat the flesh of bulls?* etc. *Call upon He in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.* The Psalmist testifies that this is true service, that this is true honor, if we call upon Him from the heart.

Likewise Ps. 40, 6: *Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened, i.e., Thou hast offered to me Thy Word that I might hear it, and **Thou dost require that I believe Thy Word and Thy promises,** that Thou truly desirest to pity, to bring aid, etc.* Likewise Ps. 51, 16. 17: *Thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.* Likewise Ps. 4, 5: *Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust [hope, V.] in the Lord.* He bids us hope, and says that this is a righteous sacrifice, signifying that other sacrifices are not true and righteous sacrifices. And Ps. 116, 17: *I will offer to Thee the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.* They call invocation a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

30] But Scripture is full of such testimonies as teach that sacrifices *ex opere operato* do not reconcile God. Accordingly the New Testament, since **Levitical services have been abrogated,** teaches that new and pure sacrifices will be made, namely, faith, prayer, thanksgiving, confession, and the preaching of the Gospel, afflictions on account of the Gospel, and the like.

36] And the type aptly represents not only the ceremony, but also the preaching of the Gospel. In Num. 28, 4f. three parts of that daily sacrifice are represented, *the burning of the lamb, the libation, and the oblation of wheat flour*. The Law had pictures or shadows of future things. Accordingly, in this spectacle **Christ and the entire worship of the New Testament are portrayed.**

The *burning of the lamb* signifies the death of Christ.

The *libation* signifies that everywhere in the entire world, by the preaching of the Gospel, believers are sprinkled with the blood of that Lamb, *i.e.*, sanctified, as Peter says, 1 Pet. 1, 2: *Through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.*

The *oblation* of wheat flour signifies faith, prayer, and thanksgiving in hearts. 37]

As, therefore, in the Old Testament, the shadow is perceived, so in the New the thing signified should be sought, and not another type, as sufficient for a sacrifice.

38] Therefore, although a ceremony is a memorial of Christ's death, nevertheless it alone is not the daily sacrifice; but **the memory itself is the daily sacrifice, *i.e.*, preaching and faith, which truly believes that, by the death of Christ, God has been reconciled. A libation is required, *i.e.*, the effect of preaching**, in order that, being sprinkled by the Gospel with the blood of Christ, we may be sanctified, as those put to death and made alive. **Oblations** also are required, *i.e.*, **thanksgiving, confessions, and afflictions.**

Numbers 28:1-8

1Now the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Command the children of Israel, and say to them, 'My offering, My food for My offerings made by fire as a sweet aroma to Me, you shall be careful to offer to Me at their appointed time.'

3"And you shall say to them, 'This is the offering made by fire which you shall offer to the Lord:

{1. **Burnt Offering**} *two male lambs* in their first year without blemish, day by day, as a regular burnt offering. 4'The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, the other lamb you shall offer in the evening,

{2. **Grain Offering**} 5'and *one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering mixed with one-fourth of a hin of pressed oil*. 6'It is a regular burnt offering which was ordained at Mount Sinai for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the Lord.

{3. **Drink Offering**} 7'And *its drink offering* shall be one-fourth of a hin for each lamb; in a holy place you shall pour out the drink to the Lord as an offering.

8 'The {1} *other lamb* you shall offer in the evening; as the morning {2} *grain offering* and its {3} *drink offering*, you shall offer it as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord

1. Burnt Offering: Animal sacrifice for the atonement of sin.
2. Grain Offering: Finely ground, with oil and salt Lev 2:1,4,13. No yeast or honey Lev 2:11. Often after a burnt offering, freely no amount specified. Some went to the priest Lev. 2:10. Acknowledgement, worship,
3. Drink Offering: Libation of wine poured upon the foot of the altar.

Ap XXIV,52] They quote also from the Epistle to the Hebrews, 5, 1: *Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.* Hence they conclude that, since in the New Testament there are high priests and priests, it follows that there is also a sacrifice for sins. This passage particularly makes an impression on the unlearned, especially when the pomp of the priesthood [the garments of Aaron, since in the Old Testament there were many ornaments of gold, silver, and purple] and the sacrifices of the Old Testament are spread before the eyes. This resemblance deceives the ignorant, so that they judge that, according to the same manner, a ceremonial sacrifice ought to exist among us, which should be applied on behalf of the sins of others, just as in the Old Testament. **Neither is the service of the masses and the rest of the polity of the Pope anything else than false zeal in behalf of the misunderstood Levitical polity.** (They have not understood that the New Testament is occupied with other matters, and that, if such ceremonies are used for the training of the young, a limit must be fixed for them.)

53] And although our belief has its chief testimonies in the Epistle to the Hebrews, nevertheless the adversaries distort against us mutilated passages from this Epistle, as in this very passage, where it is said that every *high priest is ordained to offer sacrifices for sins.* **Scripture itself immediately adds that Christ is High Priest, Heb. 5, 5. 6. 10.** The preceding words speak of the Levitical priesthood, and signify that **the Levitical priesthood was an image of the priesthood of Christ. For the Levitical sacrifices for sins did not merit the remission of sins before God; they were only an image of the sacrifice of Christ, which was to be the one propitiatory sacrifice, as we have said above.** 54] Therefore the Epistle is occupied to a great extent with the topic that the ancient priesthood and the ancient sacrifices were instituted not for the purpose of meriting the remission of sins before God or reconciliation, but only to signify the future sacrifice of Christ alone. 55] For in the Old Testament it was necessary for saints to be justified by faith derived from the promise of the remission of sins that was to be granted for Christ's sake, just as saints are also justified in the New Testament. From the beginning of the world it was necessary for all saints to believe that **Christ would be the promised offering and satisfaction for sins, as Isaiah 53, 10 teaches: When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin.**

56] Since, therefore, in the Old Testament, **sacrifices did not merit reconciliation, unless by a figure (for they merited civil reconciliation), but signified the coming sacrifice, it follows that Christ is the only sacrifice applied on behalf of the sins of others.** Therefore, in the New Testament no sacrifice is left to be **applied for the sins of others, except the one sacrifice of Christ upon the cross.**

57] **They altogether err** who imagine that Levitical sacrifices merited the remission of sins before God, and, by this example in addition to the death of Christ, require in the New Testament sacrifices that are to be applied on behalf of others. This imagination absolutely destroys the merit of Christ's passion and the righteousness of faith, and corrupts the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, and instead of Christ makes for us other mediators and propitiators out of the priests and sacrificers, who daily sell their work in the churches.