

## Blood Sacrifices

### Divine or Demonic?



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### What Saved Humanity - the Death or the Life of Christ?

Jesus “shed His blood.” “Shed His blood” means that He died. Many people have “shed their blood” also and died, some in heroic circumstances, but their deaths did not affect the rest of humanity to any great degree, but Christ's death spanned the chasm that sin had caused between God and the human race. How did this occur?

### **Sin Caused a Spiritual Separation**

Isaiah 59:2

“But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”

In the Garden of Gethsemane and again at His death, Christ endured this separation. Ellen White terms it “His Father's frown.”

Signs of the Times, 14 August, 1879 p 3

“Could mortals view the amazement and sorrow of the angels as they watched in silent grief **the Father separating His beams of light, love and glory, from his Son**, they would better understand how offensive is sin in His sight. As the Son of God in the Garden of Gethsemane bowed in the attitude of prayer, **the agony of his spirit** forced from His pores sweat like great drops of blood. It was here that **the horror of great darkness surrounded Him. The sins of the world were upon Him. He was suffering in man's stead, as a transgressor of His Father's law.** Here was the scene of temptation. **The divine light of God was receding from His vision, and He was passing into the hands of the powers of darkness.** In the agony of His soul He lay prostrate on the cold earth. **He was realizing His Father's frown.** The cup of suffering Christ had taken from the lips of guilty man, and proposed to drink it Himself, and, in its place, give to man the cup of blessing. **The wrath that would have fallen upon man, was now falling upon Christ.**...204 The sins of a lost world were upon Him and overwhelming Him. **It was a sense of His Father's frown, in consequence of sin, which rent His heart with such piercing agony** and forced from His brow great drops of blood, which, rolling down His pale cheeks, fell to the ground, moistening the earth.”

Ellen White demonstrated the Father's wrath or His frown, was the act of turning away.

Why did the Father turn away from His sinless Son? Because the Father had pledged to accept Christ as the representative of the human race - the representative of all the vile and unrepentant human sinners that ever existed.

When the Father “turned His face away” from His Son, divine protection was removed from Christ, leaving Him exposed and vulnerable to the attacks of Satan and his agents.

While Satan's abuse was foreseen, such violent treatment was not designed as part of the plan of salvation.

Both Father and Son agreed that Christ would die to redeem (justify) the human race and this would require a spiritual separation, but the torture that Satan originated was not an extra requirement of the plan of salvation.

Desire of Ages, p 753

“The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt.”

2 Testimonies for the Church, p .206, 207

“**The sword of justice** was now to awake against His (the Father's) dear Son. He was betrayed by a kiss into the hands of His enemies, and hurried to the judgment hall of an earthly court, there to be derided and condemned to death by sinful mortals. There the glorious Son of God was "wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." He bore insult, mockery, and shameful abuse, until "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men." (207) Who can comprehend the love here displayed! The angelic host beheld with wonder and with grief Him who had been the Majesty of heaven, and who had worn the crown of glory, now wearing the crown of thorns, a bleeding victim to the rage of an infuriated mob, fired to insane madness by the wrath of Satan. Behold the patient Sufferer! Upon His head is the thorny crown. His lifeblood flows from every lacerated vein. All this in consequence of sin!”

Notice that Ellen White qualifies “the sword of justice” as the suffering inflicted on Christ by Satan and the demon-possessed mob. God was not directing Satan to attack His Son. From her description, it is abundantly obvious that torturous 'justice' does not proceed from the Father. The prophet's account also accurately depicts **justice** as the consequences of sin, which inevitably occur in the absence of divine protection.

Why is this suffering called justice? It is justice because the wicked have freely chosen to give their allegiance to Satan, and it is justice that they must thereafter

serve their chosen god and endure his satanic wrath- unprotected and without hope of deliverance.

In this sense, Christ suffered the justice of God. God permitted His Son to be treated as sinners deserve, in order that we might be treated as His Son deserved.

Review and Herald 21 March, 1893 p 6

“The world's Redeemer was treated as we deserve to be treated, in order that we might be treated as he deserved to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins upon his own divine soul, that we might receive his imputed righteousness. He was condemned for our sins, in which he had no share, that we might be justified by his righteousness, in which we had no share. The world's Redeemer gave himself for us. Who was he?--The Majesty of heaven, **pouring out his blood upon the altar of justice for the sins of guilty man.**”

Ellen White stated in Desire of Ages, p 693, that when the Father's “turned away” from His Son in the Garden of Gethsemane, Christ began to die. Blood began to ooze from His skin because of His spiritual despair.

When the wicked bear the consequences of their own sins in the judgment, they will suffer similar physical and spiritual atrocities also inflicted by demon-possessed mobs - but not to the extent to which Christ suffered for the wicked will be suffering the consequences of their own sins, while Christ suffered for all humanity.

When Jesus “shed His blood” (died) “for the remission of our sins,” He gave humanity the benefit of His pure, holy Life - His unselfish character. Christ represented the human race in both His life and His death.

Without the perfect, sinless LIFE (character) of Christ, humanity could not be sanctified. Without His DEATH, humanity could not have been justified. The manner of Christ's death - as a human sacrifice/ritualistic murder - did not achieve salvation, but it did signal the end of the test - “it is finished” (John 19:30).

Christ was faithful to His Father's loving law - unto death. The “redeemed” will also pass through the same test and will prove “faithful unto death” (James 1:12; Rev 2:10).

### **Christ's Blood Shed for the Remission of Sins**

If there is really no remission of sins without the ritualistic shedding of blood (Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22), why did Jesus state something similar?

Matthew 26:28

“For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

In making this statement, Jesus made a **covenant of agreement**. Christ employed the language and culture familiar to the Hebrews – and to the Gentiles/pagans also.

#### **Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible - Matthew 26:28**

“It answers to the Hebrew berith, which often signifies, not only the covenant or agreement, but also the sacrifice which was slain on the occasion, by the blood of which the covenant was ratified; and the contracting parties professed to subject themselves to such a death as that of the victim, in case of violating their engagements. ***An oath of this kind, on slaying the covenant sacrifice, was usual in ancient times: so in Homer, when a covenant was made between the Greeks and the Trojans, and the throats of lambs were cut, and their blood poured out, the following form of adjuration was used by the contracting parties.***”

#### **Barnes' New Testament Notes**

*“Anciently, covenants or contracts were ratified by slaying an animal; by the shedding of its blood; imprecating similar vengeance if either party failed in the compact. So Jesus says the covenant which God is about to form with men, the new covenant, or the gospel economy, is sealed or ratified with his blood.”*

Christ announced His **will and testament**. He made a promise that He would indeed be the human race's Saviour. Christ demonstrated that the grape juice (wine) symbolised His blood - the value of His entire human existence - His life/character, not just the moment of His death.

In making the new covenant/testament, Christ gave His word that He would continue to remain true to His Father's commandments, so that when His life ended, the merits of His life - His perfect character - would redeem the human race. Christ guaranteed that He would indeed remain the New Representative of the sinful race regardless of the cost to Himself. This was His testament. He would not break His covenant – even in the face of torture and a slow agonising death. He would lay down His life as the Representative of the human race before He would consent to sin. He would refuse to sin, even in the face of torture and death, just as He admonishes His followers to do also.

Revelation 2:10

... “be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

Christ would not have achieved salvation for sinners, if He sinned prior to His death. It was the character of Jesus - His faithfulness unto death - that purchased our salvation.

### **Questions**

- IF Christ was only required to be an appeasing blood-letting sacrifice, why did He come to earth and live as a human baby? Surely, He could have appeased His Father's wrath in heaven.
- Why didn't Christ organise a plan that permitted Him to be "born of a woman" (incarnated), then return to heaven, away from temptation and ***then*** at the prescribed time, return to earth as a human sacrifice?
- Why did Christ have to live His life as a human being and develop a righteous character on earth, if His ***death*** was the sole event which brought salvation?

### **Consider a Scenario**

If a bleeding victim was required to appease ***a murderous, wrathful god***, then Christ could have simply lain down on the altar and directed the temple priests to slaughter Him in the most blood-letting method possible. Perhaps He could recommend they scourge Him twice because scourging causes voluminous blood loss. Perhaps He could recommend a crown of thorns be pounded onto His head - that would certainly ensure that blood poured down His face. Perhaps nails driven through His hands and feet and a sword in His side - all these wounds would surely supply enough blood to satiate the blood-lust of any PAGAN god!

But was the Father's character identical with that of a pagan god - Satan?

Did the Father require appeasing? Did the Father delight in the murder, torture and blood-letting of His own Son?

Hardly! The plan of salvation was designed in the "counsel of peace" not the counsel of torture! (Zechariah 6:13)

Jesus said His Father did not require sacrifices, but that He, Christ came to do His Father's will.

Hebrews 10:5

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: (6) In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. (7) Then said I, ***Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God.***"

The Father's will did not include a desire to see His Son to be massacred by demon-possessed men and satanic agents. His will was for His Son to live a holy life - to develop a pure righteous character. The Father realised however, that

since Christ became the representative of the sinful human race, He took upon Himself its mortality.

Bible Echo, 15 September, 1892 p 6

“As a member of the human family, He was mortal; but as God, He was the fountain of life to the world. He could, in his divine person, ever have withstood the advances of death...”

Sin causes separation from God and complete separation from God causes death (mortality). This is the death that Christ chose to experience so that humanity might live eternally.

As Paul stated, a human body was prepared for Christ so that He could die for the justification of the sinful race as its representative. Spiritual separation from His Father caused Christ's life to finally expire, but in the closing minutes of His mortal life, it was His faith in His Father's character which enabled Christ to accept for humanity, the ultimate consequence of sin and separation - death; and even perhaps His own eternal death.

Christ suffered. He was tortured and murdered in a typically pagan, sacrificial ritual. Sacrificial deaths required the shedding of copious amounts of blood. Christ's blood flowed from His veins as Satan poured temptations upon Him to defend Himself and “come down from the cross.” Despite all the Victim's intense agonies, suffering, blood-loss and death, - all these agonies did not - could not - redeem humanity or supply humanity with eternal life.

The Father never required His Son to be tortured to appease His “wrath” toward sin, but by becoming a mortal human being, Christ accepted a death sentence. He laid down His life and voluntarily came under the power of death as the result of becoming human. The human race all inherited a death sentence from Adam - and were made sinners.

Romans 5:19

“For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

All Adam's off-spring were born “under the law” and so was Christ (Gal 4:4). In this way, Christ **was made** to be “sin” for us (2 Cor 5:21). Christ took on Himself, the fatal consequences of being part of a sinful race. He set aside His divinity and became mortal. He became the second Adam, representing the human race. In this way, it was possible for Christ to pay the “penalty of sin,” when He risked His eternal life to save humanity.

Christ's death was valuable sacrifice not because His blood flowed out of His veins as a pagan sacrifice, but because as the representative of the sinful, human race, He accepted the consequences of separation from His Father on our behalf..

What paid for the salvation of the entire human race?

Christ's entire existence paid the price. It was - the faithful, obedient life - of Christ - His obedience to the law of unselfish love, in the face of death. It was the persistent Love which was revealed stronger than death that declared, "greater love hath no man than this, that a Man lay down His life for His friends (John 15:13) and His enemies (Matt 5:44).

As with all holy and perfect truth, Satan has revealed his true **murderous** character. The doctrine that required an angry god to be appeased by seeing suffering, agony, torture and death against an innocent victim is demonic. Such a heinous doctrine has its origin in the counsels of darkness and it has assassinated the characters of both Father and Son for thousands of years.

## **Summary**

Two basic facts are relevant when investigating this subject:

- Sin caused a spiritual separation from God; and
- Christ's life and death caused a reunion between God and humanity.

Christ's victory for the human race was won by His refusal to behave selfishly (i.e. break His Father's law) under ANY circumstances. Satan made the circumstances of Christ's experiences extremely difficult. Satan arranged that the Son of God was faced with the situation that to obey His Father's law would mean He would have to lay down His mortal life before the normal mortal life span demanded it of Him and in torturous conditions.

Satan's persecution hastened the time when the Son was to lay down His life. It was prophesied that Satan would do this, but if Satan hadn't done this, Christ would have been able to live His perfect life as a human being and then at the end of His mortal life, He would have died as a mortal human being of old age. Christ would still have endured the separation from His Father and suffered that agony, but torture from demonic agencies was not build into the holy plan of salvation.

Christ's **life** qualified Him to sanctify humanity. His **death** justified humanity. Both Christ's life and death - which are aspects of sinful humanity - were necessary to deliver a sinful race from the penalty and power of sin. When Christ took on the responsibility of representing the sinful human race, He took upon Himself mortality - human life and death.

Satan claimed Christ's premature death as his greatest victory, but of course it was his own death sentence. Good triumphed over evil - Christ over Satan.



Psalm 80:3 "Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved."

## **Questions**

Is it possible that Satan has deceived the entire world into believing that God required blood-letting, torturous, agonising sacrifices to save humanity? Do God's professed followers and supporters consider that God's character is on the same level as Satan's? May God speedily help His poor people to cast off the "traditions of men" and to look to Jesus to see the Father's character as it really is.

Isaiah 5:20

**"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"**

Because some believe that "the life is in the blood," they accepted therefore that blood possesses some "magical" powers – the powers of life. It is reasoned that the power of life that resides in blood, will infuse life and strength into a person who drinks it or wears it. The gift of life (by shedding a victim's blood) is so precious and valuable that, when given as a sacrificial offering, it is a capable of appeasing angry gods.

By seeking to acquire the "magical powers" in blood, in order to appease the wrathful gods, humanity has committed hideous crimes against their fellow human beings - including the ultimate crime of murder, in order to secure human sacrifices.

## **Human Sacrifice**

### **Child Sacrifice - an Ancient and Extensive Ritual**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child\\_sacrifice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_sacrifice)

References to child sacrifices have been found since the beginning of human history in many cultures. (quoting from Wikipedia Encyclopedia)

- *In Greek mythology, King Agamemnon sacrifices his daughter Iphigeneia in order to gain favorable weather for an invasion.*

*In the Bible, Abraham is told to sacrifice his son Isaac for the glory of God, though angelic intervention prevents it; the binding of Isaac is one of the most challenging, and perhaps ethically troublesome, parts of the Bible, and has its own entry.*

*The Bible implies that the Ammonites offered child sacrifices to Moloch.*

*Yoruba myths refer to "twin infanticide" as an ancient practice stopped by divine intervention of Shango.*

Archaeology has uncovered physical evidence of child sacrifice at several locations. Some examples include:

- A young child was buried with its skull split by a weapon at Woodhenge. This was interpreted by the excavators as a child sacrifice. Sites within Carthage and other Phoenician centers revealed the remains of infants and children in large numbers; initially this was interpreted as evidence for frequent and prominent child sacrifice to the god Ba'al Hammon. However, many historians have disputed this interpretation, suggesting instead that these were resting places for children miscarried or who died in infancy. The Incan culture sacrificed children, an excellent pretext for the Spanish to annihilate their culture. The frozen corpses are still being discovered in the South American mountains. The first of these corpses, a female child who had died from a blow to the skull, was discovered in 1995 by Johan Reinhard. Other methods of sacrifice included wrapping living children in their burial clothes tightly enough to cause asphyxiation. These findings corroborated the documented stories by Spanish colonizers in the 16th century. The practice itself was called *capacocha* by the Incans. One theory of why the Incans sacrificed children was that the children were to be emissaries to their deities. Archaeologists corroborated this theory with their own, that the child to be sacrificed met the Emperor and was the guest of honor at a feast before being sacrificed;
- The Moche of northern Peru practiced mass sacrifices of men and boys. In Knossos and dating to Minoan Crete, the bones of at least four children (who had been in good health) were found which bore signs that they were butchered in the same way the Minoans slaughtered their sheep and goats, suggesting that they had been sacrificed and eaten.
- There is some evidence that such practices extend even to modern times.
- The bodies of some young children discovered in remote regions of South America, are alleged to have been killed by drug dealers in rituals intended to ward off revenge for their successful cocaine runs.
- In Africa there have been several allegations of children sacrificed in *muti* rituals:- attempts at witchcraft intended to bring prosperity to those performing the sacrifice. In modern times, child sacrifice is a term that has also been applied to the military use of children (end Wikipedia Encyclopedia entry).

**Many pagan religions consecrated (purified) their children -by passing them "through the fire." Children were not considered to be completely purified unless they were completely burned to death.**

**According to Alexander Hyslop, the Two Babylons ch 7 sec 1, burning a person with fire for purification purposes is directly linked with the fire-serpent religion practised in Egypt.** <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>And this also, no doubt, reconciled the parents who actually sacrificed their children to Moloch, to the cruel sacrifice, the belief being cherished that the fire that consumed them also "perfected" them, and

**It was thought that the ritual of burning, purified the soul.<sup>2</sup> The Roman Catholic religion also teaches that burning a heretic might save his/her soul. The religion advocates that to “destroy the body, might save the soul.”<sup>3</sup> The Indian custom of a widow burning on her husband's funeral pyre stems from this false and cruel doctrine also.<sup>4</sup>**

(Egyptian Mythology (Hamlyn:1965:58).

- “There (in Phoenicia), the queen Astarte, entrusted to her (the goddess Isis) the care of her newly born son. **Isis adopted the baby and would have conferred immortality upon it had its mother not broken the charm by her cries of terror upon seeing the goddess bathe the baby in purificatory (purifying) flames.**”

## **Child Sacrifices in the Israelite Religion**

**Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible**

**2 Kings 21:6:**

“Made his son pass through the fire - Consecrated him to Moloch.”

**Who commanded and delighted in receiving blood sacrifices?**

**Answer:**

- **(God - Exo 5:3; Exo 20:24; Deut 15:15);  
(Not God - Jer 7:21-23);**

made them meet for eternal happiness. As both the passing through the fire, and the burning in the fire, were essential rites in the worship of Moloch or Nimrod, this is an argument that Nimrod was Tammuz. As the priest and representative of the perfecting or purifying fire, it was he that carried on the work of perfecting or purifying by fire, and so he was called by its name.

2IT IS EVIDENT, HOWEVER, FROM THE ZOROASTRIAN VERSE, ELSEWHERE QUOTED, THAT FIRE ITSELF WAS WORSHIPPED AS TAMMUZ, FOR IT IS CALLED THE "FATHER THAT PERFECTED ALL THINGS." IN ONE RESPECT THIS REPRESENTED FIRE AS THE CREATIVE GOD; BUT IN ANOTHER, THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT IT HAD REFERENCE TO THE "PERFECTING" OF MEN BY 'PURIFYING' THEM. AND ESPECIALLY IT PERFECTED THOSE WHOM IT CONSUMED.

3(ALBERTO RIVERA, EX-JESUIT PRIEST, IN **THE FOUR HORSEMEN** P 4; 5; PUBLISHED BY CHICK PUBLICATIONS INC; ONTARIO: 1985). VATICAN 2 COUNCIL – “PEDRO ARRUIPE, THE SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS STATED, “IT IS TIME FOR THE NEW AND FINAL PURIFICATION OF THE CHURCH IN PREPARATION FOR THE NEW AGE KINGDOM.” RIVERA NOTES THAT ARRUIPE USED 'PURIFICATION' AS A KEY WORD TO DESCRIBE PURGING (OR EXTERMINATION) OF ALL THOSE WHO ARE UNFAITHFUL TO THE POPE.

4MANY WIDOWS IN INDIA TO IMMOLATE THEMSELVES ON THE FUNERAL PILES OF THEIR HUSBANDS, THE WOMAN WHO THUS BURNED HERSELF BEING COUNTED BLESSED, BECAUSE SHE BECAME SUTTEE \*-- I.E., "PURE BY FIRE.”

## **(Molech, Chemosh - 1 Kings 11:6-8)**

In Exodus 34:10 - 16, Moses relates God's instructions to the Israelites just prior to their entrance into the Promised Land.

God states that He will “drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.” Then He instructs the Israelites to “destroy their altars, break their images and cut down their groves.” so that the Israelites would not “go a whoring after their gods.”

However, the Israelites were *already* highly educated in the practice of human sacrifice and in pagan worship rituals. They had *already* “gone a whoring” by “offering their sacrifices unto devils” and sadly, they continued their pagan practice of child sacrifice through the centuries.

Exodus 22:29

“Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.”

The firstborn Israelite sons were to be dedicated to God, not sacrificed to Him, but the firstborn Egyptians were apparently sacrificed to God.

Exodus 13:15 (Moses said)

“And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both **the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I (Moses) sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem.**”

**Leviticus 17:7,**

**“And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring.”**

**2 Kings 16:3:**

Ahaz, king of Judah, **murdered his son as a human sacrifice.**

**2 Kings 17:17:**

“And they caused their **sons and their daughters to pass through the fire**, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.” The tribe of Judah abandoned worship of Yahweh at the temple in Jerusalem, and burned their children as human sacrifices to Baal.

**2 Kings 21:6:**

“And he (Manasseh) **made his son pass through the fire**, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought

much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.”(Manasseh burned his son as a human sacrifice to Baal).

Isaiah 57:5:

“Enflaming yourselves with idols under every green tree, **slaying the children** in the valleys under the cliffs of the rocks?”

Isaiah was given a message of divine rebuke to the Israelites for sacrificing their children.

Ezekiel 20:31

“For when ye offer your gifts, when **ye make your sons to pass through the fire**, ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day: and shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be inquired of by you.”

Where did the Israelites originally learn these demonic practices? From whom did they learn how to pacify wrathful, angry gods with human sacrifice? In Egypt. (Lev 18:2) The Hebrews were exposed to demonic pagan rituals from their close contact with the Egyptians over the 270 year period of their enslavement.

Not long after God spoke the 10 commandments from Mt Sinai, the Israelites “danced naked” (i.e. performed sexual rituals) around a golden calf. They had reverted to the familiar pagan fertility rituals which they had learned in Egypt where Bol-Kahn, the fire-serpent god was worshipped in various forms. 1 Kings 11:33

“Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom (Moloch) the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father.”

The *trinity of gods* mentioned in 1 Kings 11:33 are all the same “deity.” The god whom the Moabites called Chemosh, was also worshipped as Baal by the Zidonians and as Moloch/Milcom by the Ammonites. This religion required human and child sacrifices and was practised in Egypt as the fire-serpent religion (Hyslop, the Two Babylons, ch 7 sec 1).

*When considering the Israelites' history as given in the Bible, it is difficult not to see similarities and make comparisons with the history of the Moabites as recorded on the Mesha Stele – the Moabite Stone.*<sup>5</sup>

##### **5 DESCRIPTION of the MESH A STELE (the Moabite Stone)**

**LANGUAGE:**

**MOABITE (A WEST SEMITIC LANGUAGE)**

**MEDIUM:**

**BASALT STONE STELE**

Commentary on the Mesha Stele is made in *The Bible in History - How Writers Create a Past* by Thomas L Thompson (Johnathon Cape, Random House, London 1999:12)

*"In a description of a battle against Israel for the town of Nebo, the Mesha Stele presents the enemy as dedicated to total destruction as a sacred offering to the god Chemosh in a manner that is very familiar to us from the books of Joshua" (10, 11) "and 1 Samuel" (15).*

A extract from the Mesha Stele (translation by K. C. Hanson, adapted from Albright 1969:320-21) reveals a similar "divine" battle plan was given to the pagan king by the god of the Moabites named Kemosh (or Chemosh - same worship as Molech or Baal), as was supposedly given to Joshua and Samuel by the One True God - Yahweh.

The translation reads:

*"I am Mesha, son of Kemosh[-yatti], the king of Moab, the Dibonite. My father was king over Moab for thirty years, and I became king after my father. And I made this high-place for Kemosh in Qarcho . . . **because he has delivered me from all kings**, and because he has made me look down on all my enemies. Omri was the king of Israel, and he oppressed Moab for many days, for **Kemosh was angry with his land**. And his son reigned in his place; and he also said, "I will oppress Moab!" In my days he said so. But I looked down on him and on his house, and Israel has been defeated; it has been defeated forever! And Omri took possession of the whole land of Medeba, and he lived there in his days and half the days of his son: forty years. **But Kemosh restored it in my days. And I built Baal Meon**, and I built a water reservoir in it. And I built Qiryaten. And the men of Gad lived in the land of Atarot from ancient times; and the king of Israel built Atarot for himself, and I fought against the city and captured it. **And I killed all the people of the city as a sacrifice for Kemosh and for Moab. And I brought back***

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SIZE:	1.15 METERS HIGH, WIDTH: 60-68 CM
LENGTH:	35 (LINES OF WRITING)
HONOREE:	MESHA, KING OF MOAB (LATE 9TH CENTURY BC)
DATE:	830 BC (APPROX)
PLACE OF DISCOVERY:	DHIBAN [IN MODERN JORDAN]
DATE OF DISCOVERY:	1868
CURRENT LOCATION:	LOUVRE MUSEUM, (PARIS, FRANCE)
INVENTORY NUMBER:	AO 5066

***the fire-hearth of his uncle from there; and I brought it before the face of Kemosh in Qerioit, and I made the men of Sharon live there, as well as the men of Maharit. And Kemosh said to me, "Go, take Nebo from Israel." And I went in the night and fought against it from the daybreak until midday, and I took it and I killed the whole population: seven thousand male subjects and aliens, and female subjects, aliens, and servant girls. For I had put it to the ban for Ashtar Kemosh. And from there I took the vessels of Yahweh, and I presented them before the face of Kemosh. And the king of Israel had built Yahaz, and he stayed there throughout his campaign against me; and Kemosh drove him away before my face. ...."***  
*And I cut the moat for Qarcho by **using Israelite prisoners.** ... Kemosh said to me, "Go down, fight against Hauranen!" I went down . . . and Kemosh restored it in my days."*

<http://www.kchanson.com/ANCDOCS/westsem/mesha.html>

The Moabite practices and religious beliefs mirror those recorded in Joshua 10 & 11 or 1 Samuel 15. The table compares the Israelite and the Mesha Stele Moabite records:

<b><i>Characteristic</i></b>	<b><i>Moabite Mesha Stele</i></b>	<b><i>The Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament Bible)</i></b>
<b>God commanded them to attack certain towns and countries</b>	Yes	Yes - Exo 32:37; 1 Sam 15:3
<b>God commanded them to completely destroy all men, women, children and infants</b>	Yes	Yes Joshua 10:8; 1 Sam 15:3

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Moabite Mesha Stele</b>	<b>The Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament Bible)</b>
<b>Human captives were sacrificed to their gods</b>	Yes  When describing the action of “vowing a sacrifice,” the Moabites used the expression “put it to the ban.”	Yes  When describing the action of vowing a sacrifice, the Israelites used the expressions “consecrated to death;” “devoted to death” or “vowed to the Lord” (Lev 27:29 margin; Judges 11:31);
<b>God is angry and must be appeased</b>	Yes	Yes  (1 Chronicles 21:12)
<b>God punishes nations by sending enemies to destroy them</b>	Yes	Yes  (Lev 26:37; Jer 19:7)
<b>God gives armies power to destroy enemies</b>	Yes	Yes  (Exo 23:27; Num 14:43 )
<b>God rewards by giving land</b>	Yes	Yes  (Exodus 3:8)
<b>God punishes nations by taking away land</b>	Yes	Yes  (Jer 20:4)
<b>Made “high places” to worship their gods</b>	Yes	Yes  (Abraham was instructed to sacrifice kill his son to Yahweh on a high place - Gen 22:2)
<b>God was worshipped with special “fire”</b>	Yes	Yes  (Lev 9:24;10:1)

The Creator's character is 180 degrees different from any pagan 'deity.' The One True God is loving all time time, in every situation but the sure result of selfishness is homicide and



suicide. The Creator does not have to inflict artificial consequences to 'control' the effects of sin. Love is sufficient in every situation just as Jesus showed in the Garden of Gethsemane. Perfect Love casts out fear. Fear is the stimulant of all selfish actions.

### **Did the Israelite's God Require Human Sacrifices?**

**The Biblical evidence appears contradictory.**

**Leviticus 27:28, 29**

**“Notwithstanding no devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the LORD of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy unto the LORD. 29 None devoted (consecrated), which shall be devoted (consecrated) of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death.”**

**Leviticus 27:28, 29**

**29** None devoted<02764>, which shall be<03808> devoted<02763>(8714) of men<0120>, shall be redeemed<06299>(8735); but shall surely<04191>(8800) be put to death<04191>(8714).

**Two instances of the word “devoted” are used by the King James Version as a translation of the Hebrew word charam. It means devoted to death, dedicated to death, or consecrated to death, but some commentators consider that it refers to a person being dedicated to the service of God until the person's death. In reading from the Strong's Hebrew concordance, the Hebrew definition does not tend to support the latter view.**

**Strong's Hebrew Concordance devoted: # 02763 חרם charam khaw-ram'** “to seclude; specifically (by a ban) to devote to religious uses (especially destruction); physical and reflexive, to be blunt as to the nose:--make accursed, consecrate, (utterly) destroy, devote, forfeit, have a flat nose, utterly (slay, make away).“

**Brown Driver Briggs Hebrew Lexicon**

**# 02763 חרם charam khaw-ram'** a primitive root; ; AV -destroy 34, utterly 10, devote 2, accursed 1, consecrate 1, forfeited 1, flat nose 1, utterly to make away 1, slay 1; 52.

The Hebrew meaning is:

1) to ban, devote, destroy utterly, completely destroy, dedicate for destruction, exterminate 1a) (Hiphil) 1a1) to prohibit (for common use), ban

1a2) to consecrate, devote, dedicate for destruction

1a3) to exterminate, completely destroy

1b) (Hophal)

1b1) to be put under the ban, be devoted to destruction

1b2) to be devoted, be forfeited

1b3) to be completely destroyed

2) to split, slit, mutilate (a part of the body) 2a) (Qal) to mutilate 2b) (Hiphil) to divide

The Moabite expression for “devoted to death” was “to put under the ban.” This expression is used by the King of the Moabites in approx 830 BC and it was recorded in the Mesha Stele found in 1868 AD. King Mesha put captives “under the ban” and sacrificed the entire town's inhabitants to his god, Chemosh.

<http://www.kchanson.com/ANCDPCS/westsem/mesha.html>

- Didn't “God” ask Abraham to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering on a high place - Mt Moriah? (Genesis 22:2);
- Didn't ‘God’ order the Israelites to murder of thousands and men, women and children? (Duet 21; Num 31; 1 Sam 15:18; Deut 2:33-35);
- Didn't ‘God’ consent for Jephthah to offer his daughter up as a burnt offering? If He hadn't wanted the daughter sacrificed, why would God actively assist Jephthah to win the battle against the Ammonites?<sup>6</sup>

The answers to these two questions is ‘apparently not,’ because God states twice that asking for a human/child sacrifice is a thought that never came into **His** mind.

Jeremiah 7:30, 31 & Jeremiah 32:34, 35

“For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. (31) And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, **to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.** (ch32/v34) But they set their abominations in the house, which is called by my name, to defile it. (35) And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, **to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination,** to cause Judah to sin.”

But while the thought of asking the Israelites to offer children as burnt offerings never came into the One True God's mind, it certainly was obvious that many Israelites *thought* that God would be pleased with these offerings. This assumption on the part of the Israelites confirms

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<sup>6</sup> God was NOT involved in the battle, but He was given credit for being involved by Jephthah.

**how deeply pagan worship concepts were implanted into their minds. Associations with Egyptian worship during their captivity and intermarriage with pagan nations led to apostasy and a reversion to the fire-serpent religion which dominated Egypt and Canaan.**

The following columns compare the traits of the Father, Jesus and Satan - and the blend - in regard to the treatment of children. Clearly child sacrifice is not divinely inspired.

<p><b><u>The Father's character displayed in Jesus</u></b></p> <p>Protects and values children</p> <p>Matthew 18:6; 19:14          “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.... Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not.”</p>	<p><b><u>Blended Character (good/evil)</u></b></p> <p><b>It never came into the heart of God to ask for burnt sacrificing of children on high places (Jeremiah 7:31; 32:35)</b></p> <p><b>“And he (God) said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac...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.” Genesis 22:2</b></p>	<p><b><u>Satan's character</u></b></p> <p>Child sacrifices part of worship ceremonies</p> <p>Matt.17:15; 2 Chr 33:6; Eze 16:20, 21</p> <p>“And he caused his children to pass through the fire ... also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.”</p>
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**Child Sacrifice in Tribal Cultures**

**“No Devil Strings” part 5**

**(as it appears in *Temkit for Children* by Mary Hunter Moore)**

*Kata Rangoso once told of habits of his people prior to the coming of the missionary: “The warriors would assemble; then the message would come from the spirits through the devil priest, ‘It is my desire that you go forth in your canoes to some island where you will find people living in their villages. When you find them, take their heads.’ “The warriors would get their spears, their shields, and their large clubs, and away they would go. They would go with murderous thoughts in their minds.*

*On arrival at the shore of an island they would wait to be first guided by the spirits as to which village to attack. "Then the warriors would rush forward and kill all with whom they came in contact. As soon as they had slain their victims, they would cut off their heads and rush with them back to their canoes. Sometimes they would get thirty, forty, fifty-up to one hundred heads. They would have to wait for the message from their warrior-priests to know when to stop slaying. "They would find at times some little children, take them alive in their canoes, and away they would go. As the headhunting party neared their home villages they would blow a certain sound on the conch shell, and the people would know they had been victorious." When the village people heard the message of the shell, they would come in thousands to the shore to welcome the warriors. Then they would pay special homage to the idols and spirit images which were on the prows of the canoes and which they believed had given them success. Part of this homage would be to offer a human sacrifice before the images. Describing this sacrifice, Rangoso said: "On the day when the warriors would kill these little captured children, they would put them into their stone ovens and after cooking divide the bodies among the men."Some of the captured children would be kept and cared for and offered to the idols later. "The tribal priest would catch some of the blood, and sprinkle it on the idol and on the ground in front of it. The body would then be lifted up on a wooden cross and waved about in front of the idol, accompanied by weird chanting and incantations. "When this part of the ceremony was over, the child's body would be wrapped in banana leaves and placed in the hot-stone oven for several hours. A cannibal feast then followed, the people taking a small piece of flesh and eating it in the belief that extra spiritual power would be transferred to them in this way."*

### **Consider the Similarities:**

#### **Demons ordered the Solomon Islanders to:**

- kill particular tribes as "divinely" directed;
- kill whole tribes;
- kidnap children;
- sacrifice living children to the gods;
- consecrate some children as future sacrifices to the gods;
- perform burnt offerings rituals to the gods as thank offerings and appeasement offerings (also see "No Devil Strings - part 1);
- sprinkle the sacrificial blood over the sacred objects;
- eat the sacrificial flesh;
- eat human flesh so that they could receive extra spiritual power.

The preceding primitive religious practices were ordered by **demons**, but the Israelites god Yahweh was said to have given similar instructions.

**“God”, according to the Biblical record, ordered the Israelites to:**

- kill particular tribes as “divinely” directed; (Num 31:7; 1 Sam 15:18);
- kill whole tribes; (Num 31:17; 1 Sam 15:18);
- kill sinners; (Exo 32:27; Num 25:5; Deut 13:8; 21:18-22)
- kill children and infants (Num 31:17);
- kidnap children (Num 31:18; Deut 21:11, 12)
- offer a child as a burnt offering on a high place (Gen 22:2)
- kill all the animals (1 Sam 15:21);
- kill animals as sacrifices to God as sin offerings, trespass offerings, consecrations, meat offerings, burnt offerings, thank offerings, peace offerings and gifts (Lev 7:37);
- kill people to appease God when He was angry (Numbers 25:7-13);
- kill animals to appease God when He was angry (2 Samuel 24:25);
- sprinkle animals blood on the sacred objects (Exodus 29:16);
- eat the sacrificial flesh (Exodus 12:23; Numbers 9:11);
- believe that sin was transferred symbolically to the eater of animal flesh - the priest - (Lev 10:16-19);
- believe that sin was atoned by the slaying of animals (Exodus 30:10; Deut 21:1-9).

Are both demons and the One True God giving the same instructions to their followers? Are both demons and the One True God encouraging their followers to commit atrocities upon their fellow men, women and children and animals?

Consider the similarities between another pagan religion and the religion of the Israelites.

## **The Phoenicians**

The Phoenicians were Canaanites. (They were called Canaanites in the Bronze Age, but were called Phoenicians in the Iron Age). They were contemporary dwellers in Canaan with the Israelites. Their country consisted of a string of city-states which was a narrow strip of coastline squeezed in between the Lebanon Mountains and the Mediterranean Sea. The Phoenicians lived to the north of the Israelites. There exists a great deal of similarity in the worship of the Phoenicians and the Israelites.

## **Worshipping the Deities**

**The Phoenicians** worshipped several deities: the goddesses Astarte and Asherah; the gods El and Baal, plus Eshmun the god of healing and some Egyptian gods.

**The Israelites** also became confused in their worship of Yahweh or El. Archaeologists have found a few inscriptions in the Sinai desert and Judah mentioning "YHWH and his Asherah." Some scholars maintain that Yahweh was thought to be the Israelites to have a wife or escort just as did the other Canaanite gods.

## **Appeasing the Gods**

**The Phoenician** religion required that the gods were kept 'happy.' This doctrine was of major importance for if the gods were not worshipped correctly, they might cause devastation by plague, shipwreck, drought or defeat in battle. When these 'plagues' occurred, the priests would try to appease the gods by offering even more sacrifices and by performing more rituals.

When the Phoenicians' gods 'blessed' them (with rain, fertility i.e. good harvest, children, cattle and crops), the Phoenicians demonstrated their gratitude by burning incense and offering delicacies such as milk, wine, honey, fruit, oil, bread, cakes and perfumes to these gods.

**The Israelites** also believed that their god would both bless their land and increase their fertility, but would also curse them and send plagues upon them. Their god would not forgive misbehaviours without a blood sacrifice.

## **Child Sacrifice - the Ultimate Sacrifice**

Ancient writings confirm that the Greeks, Romans and Israelites accused the **Phoenicians** of sacrificing babies to their gods. Archaeologists have discovered burial grounds (tophets) which have been filled with the burnt bones of babies. Inscriptions found at these sites (tophets) reveal that the babies were offered to a goddess called *Tanit* or to the god *Baal Hammon*.

It was in Tophet, near Jerusalem that the **Israelites** also sacrificed their children to a god named Moloch, until King Josiah intervened to halt the practice.

## **Modern-Age Child Sacrifices**

Even today, some religions consider child sacrifice necessary to appease the wrath of their gods and to atone for the sins of their families.

David Kupelian inWorldNetDaily.com © 2000

Friday, 10 November, 2000, TROUBLE IN THE HOLY LAND

"Jerusalem cleric praises child 'sacrifices' 'The younger the martyr, the greater and the more I respect him.' The Mufti of Jerusalem, the city's

highest Muslim religious authority, is calling for the complete "liberation" by Palestinians not only of Jerusalem, but of all of Israel, and stresses that "sacrifice" and "martyrdom" of Palestinian children prove that "the new generation will carry on the mission with determination." Speaking to the Egyptian weekly, Al-Ahram Al-Arabi, Sheik 'Ikrima Sabri, the Mufti of Jerusalem and Palestine, addressed several issues regarding the Israeli-Arab conflict -- **including his admiration for the child "martyrs."** Over 40 Palestinian youths reportedly have died in the last six weeks of clashes between Palestinians and Israelis after the meltdown of the doomed Clinton-brokered "peace process." "We haven't sacrificed enough yet to be worthy of liberating Al-Aqsa," said Sabri. "To liberate Jerusalem, Salah Al-Din Al-Ayyubi made great sacrifices for a long time, **and we have to sacrifice until Allah's victory is completed ...**"

### **'Child Sacrifices in London'**

<http://www.thisislondon.com/news/articles/19328071?source=Evening%20Standard&ct=5>

By Richard Edwards Crime Reporter, Evening Standard , 16 June 2005

**"Boys from Africa are being murdered as human sacrifices in London churches. They are brought into the capital to be offered up in rituals by fundamentalist Christian sects, according to a shocking report by Scotland Yard. Followers believe that powerful spells require the deaths of "unblemished" male children.** Police believe such boys are trafficked from cities such as Kinshasa where they can be bought for a little as £10. The report, leaked ahead of its publication next month, also cites examples of **African children being tortured and killed after being identified as "witches" by church pastors. ....Many such churches, supported mainly by people from West Africa, sanction aggressive forms of exorcism on those thought to be possessed. There are believed to be 300 such churches in the UK, mostly in London.** The report was put together by an expert social worker and lawyer for the Met after talking to hundreds of people in African communities in a series of workshops. It uncovered allegations of witchcraft spells, child trafficking and **HIV-positive people who believe that by having sex with a child they will be "cleansed"**. An extract reads: 'People who are desperate will seek out experts to cast spells for them. Members of the workshop stated that **for a spell to be powerful it required a sacrifice** involving a male child unblemished by circumcision. They allege that boy children are being trafficked into the UK for this purpose.' **A number of pastors maintain that God speaks through them and lets them know when someone is possessed. It is therefore their duty to deliver the child or adult from the evil spirit....The true figure for missing boys and girls is feared to be several thousand a year. '"**



David S. Ayliffe, Executive Director, of International Needs Australia requests signatures for a petition to be presented by the Australian government to the United Nations to prevent the practice of a system of child sacrifice in Africa. He states:

“In West Africa today, thousands of women and girls are still kept in horrific slavery. The practice is variously called 'Trokosi' or 'Fiashidi' or 'Woryokwe.' The terms mean 'Bride of the Gods.' ”

Practice of the Trokosi/Fiashidi/Woryokwe belief system (religion), requires that little girls (sometimes 7 or 8 years of age) are taken from their parents and given to traditional shrines to atone for sins of family members and prevent thus appease the anger of the gods. Some children die because of this treatment, but many repeatedly become pregnant to the priests. Ghana has enacted (but apparently has not enforced) a law which makes illegal the Trokosi/Fiashidi/ Woryokwe practice, but in other African countries such as Togo and Benin, child sex slavery - a sacrifice to appease the wrathful gods and to make an atonement for the family's sin - is still legal. <http://www.in-australia.org.au/stbpetition.htm>

The *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2000*, released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, February 23, 2001 states:

“Trokosi, a traditional practice found among the Ewe ethnic group and in part of the Volta Region.... is a system in which a young girl, sometimes under the age of 10, is made a slave to a fetish shrine for offenses allegedly committed by a member of the girl's family. In rare instances, boys are offered. *The belief is that, if someone in that family has committed a crime, such as stealing, members of the family may begin to die in large numbers unless a young girl is given to the local fetish shrine* to atone for the offense. *The girl becomes the property of the fetish priest, must work on the priest's farm, and perform other labors for him. Because they are the sexual property of the priests, most Trokosi slaves have children by the priests. Although the girls' families must provide for their needs such as food, most are unable to do so. There are at least 2,200 girls and women bound to various shrines in the Trokosi system, a figure that does not include the slaves' children. Even when freed by her fetish priest from the more onerous aspects of her bondage, whether voluntarily or as a result of intervention by activists, a Trokosi woman generally has few marketable skills and little hope of marriage and typically remains bound to the shrine for life by psychological and social pressure arising from a traditional belief that* misfortune may befall a Trokosi woman's family or village if she abandons her obligations to the shrine. *When a fetish slave dies, her family is expected to replace her with another young girl, thus perpetuating the bondage to the fetish shrine from generation to generation....A local group, calling itself the "Troxovi Institutional Council" (Troxovi is alternate*



spelling for Trokosi), declared that Trokosi, as defined by CHRAJ and other human rights groups to be a form of ritual servitude, does not exist in the country. The group claimed that the practice of `Troxovi' does exist but neither enslaves nor exploits anyone. The Council also listed 23 `genuine Troxovi shrines' in Ghana, describing them as educational institutions and as part of the 'Afrikania religion...' ”  
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2000/af/803.htm>

## **Abortion**

2024 is a year when many societies around the world have been convinced that it is a woman's right to dictate if tiny babies will be allowed to live or if they will be condemned to a horrific, unimaginable death through abortion. This is actually handing the task of the Creator to fallible, sinful human beings.

Women are acting in the place of the Creator, but instead of preserving the gift of life and treasuring that gift, they believe it is acceptable and even their right to take the life of those innocent, unborn babies.

When the Bible predicts in 2 Timothy 3:2 that people will be 'lovers of their own selves' it is difficult to imagine how this evil selfishness might be displayed in any more convincing manner than through abortion.

It is difficult to see how abortion is different from the any other ritualistic practice of child sacrifice. The end result is certainly the same for the precious life that is violently destroyed.

*Does the One True God require a human sacrifice to appease His wrath? Does the destruction of a child's life through repeated rapes, justify the parents' sinful behaviour? Does a child's suffering produce sanctification? Does ANY suffering produce justification and sanctification? Do any of these crimes reflect the loving character of God as demonstrated by the life of the Son of God? Absolutely not!*

## **Cannibalism**

Alexander Hyslop in the Two Babylons reveals that Baal worship combined the worship of the fire-god and the serpent-god. An essential element of Baal worship involved the rite of burnt offerings as a form of purification. The religion necessitated that the priests slay the victim and eat the burnt offering. In Baal worship, the sacrifice which had to be eaten, was the flesh of children. Similar rituals occurred in Egypt well before the Hebrews arrived. (Refer to Appendix for more information)

Human Sacrifice in Ancient Egypt.by Caroline Seawright, October 11, 2003  
[http://www.thekeep.org/~kunoichi/kunoichi/themestream/egypt\\_humansacrifice.html](http://www.thekeep.org/~kunoichi/kunoichi/themestream/egypt_humansacrifice.html)

The Cannibal Hymn

“Not strictly an offering to the gods, the Cannibal Hymn of Unas and Teti talk of cannibalism to gain power from the gods in ancient Egypt. The Pyramid Texts have a section that seems to hint that in Predynastic times, the ruler could gain the magical powers of the gods through human sacrifice. Utterances 273 - 274 of the Pyramid Texts, known as the Cannibal Hymn, describe the pharaoh as a god who cannibalises the gods - 'A god who lives on his fathers and feeds on his mothers ... who lives on the being of every god, who eats their entrails ... Pharaoh is he who eats men and lives on gods.'”

(Egyptian Mythology (Paul Hamlyn:1965:58).

“There (in Phoenicia), the queen Astarte, entrusted to her (the goddess Isis) the care of her newly born son. **Isis adopted the baby and would have conferred immortality upon it had its mother not broken the charm by her cries of terror upon seeing the goddess bathe the baby in purificatory (purifying) flames.**”

Hyslop traces the history of Baal worship from Egypt, to the Israelites.

“Cannibalism was practised **by the priests** in ritualised child sacrifices in Egypt as the worship of the pagan “father of the gods” the fire-serpent god - Bol-Khan. “He devoured his sons as soon as they were born.”. It was “through fire worship,” that the worshippers sought “cleansing and regenerating (of) the souls of men.” The same system of worship in Rome, termed the same god, “Vulcan.”

“There is reason to believe that the same practice obtained in our own land in the times of the Druids. We know that they offered human sacrifices to their bloody gods. We have evidence that they made **“their children pass through the fire to Moloch,”** and that makes it highly probable that they also offered them in sacrifice; for, from Jeremiah 32:35, compared with Jeremiah 19:5 we find that these two things were parts of one and the same system. The god whom the Druids worshipped was Baal, as the blazing Baal-fires show, and **the last-cited passage proves that children were offered in sacrifice to Baal. When “the fruit of the body” was thus offered, it was “for the sin of the soul.”** And it was a principle of the Mosaic law, a principle no doubt derived from the patriarchal faith, that the priest must partake of whatever was offered as a sin-offering (Num 18:9,10). Hence, the priests of Nimrod or Baal were necessarily required to eat of the human sacrifices; and thus it has come to pass that “Cahna-Bal,”<sup>7</sup> \* the “Priest of Baal,” is the established word in our own tongue for a devourer of human flesh. Then the mode in which the rites of Tammuz<sup>8</sup> or Adonis were celebrated in Syria was essentially the same as the rites of Osiris....From the historian Castor (in Armenian translation of EUSEBIUS) we learn that it was under Bel,

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<sup>7</sup> The word Cahna is the emphatic form of Cahn. Cahn is “a priest,” Cahna is “the priest.”

<sup>8</sup> Tammuz means ‘to perfect by burning’ - Tam (to perfect); muz (to burn)

or Belus, that is Baal, that the Cyclops lived; and the Scholiast on Aeschylus states that these Cyclops were the brethren of Kronos, who was also Bel or Bal, as we have elsewhere seen. The eye in their forehead shows that originally this name was a name of the great god; for that eye in India and Greece is found the characteristic of the supreme divinity. **The Cyclops, then, had been representatives of that God--in other words, priests, and priests of Bel or Bal. Now, we find that the Cyclops were well-known as cannibals,** Referre ritus Cyclopum, "to bring back the rites of the Cyclops," meaning to revive the practice of eating human flesh." "(OVID, Metam.) The Two Babylons, Alexander Hyslop, Chapter 7, Section 1, "The Great Red Dragon."

<http://www.biblestudy.org/bibleref/twobaby/twobaby.html>

Some Christians consider that just as God permitted polygamy and divorce, **because of the hardness of the Israelites' hearts**, He also tolerated the Israelites' sacrificial system in their worship rituals, in preference to sacrificing their children, "which abomination" He hated (*Jer 32:35; Jer 19:5*).

This suggestion has been made, yet it tends to cast doubt on God's character also. Doesn't God care about the animals which were slaughtered in these repetitive ceremonies and the pain which they endured?

Eventually, the ritual of human (including child) sacrifice was largely, but not completely replaced by the blood-letting substitutionary rites of circumcision and animal sacrifices.

## **Ellen White on Child Sacrifice**

While recognising that Ellen White was given the gift of prophecy and accepting her position as God's messenger, it is obvious that in keeping with her statement that "God has not given any one person all the light", we must consider the following comments to have been made with a true heart, but without special revelation from God on this matter. Ellen White does not claim that she "was shown" the following in special vision or as a special communication from God. Perhaps, it is simply her human opinion.

3 Spiritual Gifts, p 303

*"God was a wise and compassionate lawgiver, judging all cases righteously, and without partiality. While the Israelites were in Egyptian bondage, they were surrounded with idolatry. The Egyptians had received traditions in regard to sacrificing. They did not acknowledge the existence of the God of Heaven. They sacrificed to their idol gods. With great pomp and ceremony they performed their idol worship. They erected altars to the honor of their gods, and they required even their own children to pass through the fire. After they had erected their altars they required their children to leap over the altars through the fire. If they could do this without their being burned, the idol priests and people*

received it as an evidence that their god accepted their offerings, and favored especially the person who passed through the fiery ordeal. He was loaded with benefits, and was ever afterward greatly esteemed by all the people. He was never allowed to be punished, however aggravating might be his crimes. If another person who leaped through the fire was so unfortunate as to be burned, then his fate was fixed; for they thought that their gods were angry, and would be appeased with nothing short of the unhappy victim's life, and he was offered up as a sacrifice upon their idol altars. Even some of the children of Israel had so far degraded themselves as to practice these abominations, and **God caused the fire to kindle upon their children**, whom they made to pass through the fire. They did not go to all the lengths of the heathen nations; but **God deprived them of their children by causing the fire to consume them in the act of passing through it.**" 3 Spiritual Gifts p 303

Was Ellen White accurately portraying God's character in this instance?

Are we to understand from her statement that the pagan Egyptian gods were more merciful and **less bloodthirsty** than the God of the Israelites? At least the god of the Egyptians permits **some** children to escape the flames. However, it appears that Ellen White believed that the One True God CAUSED the Israelites' children - ALL the Israelite children who were "passed through the fire" - to burn to death.

**If Ellen White's statement is correct**, (that God ensured that the Israelite's children burn to death on the pagan altars), then it inadvertently makes a dreadful attack on the character of God.

**If Ellen White's statement is correct**, then logic requires answers to the following questions:

- Didn't the One True God have the option of extinguishing the fire on the altar? (Yes. The same God refused to permit Satan to ignite fire on Baal's altar during Elijah's ceremony on Mt Carmel).
- Why then, did God not only permit the fire to burn all the children, but to CAUSE the fire to burn all the Israelites' children? (Answer: Jesus said that hurting children is wicked. God is not a serial child-murderer, but Satan has a record of child murder e.g. Infants in Egypt, infants in Bethlehem, child sacrifice etc.).
- Why didn't God extinguish the fire? (Answer: The parents, not God, burnt the children. God forbade child sacrifice, but when the parents disobeyed His direction, God being rejected, was not authorized to intervene to prevent their children's deaths).
- Would the One True God burn children on an altar to a pagan god?

- Would the One True God make an offering to another god? To a pagan god?

It is absurd and offensive to make such accusations against the pure, holy Creator.

For all these questions, we can find the answers in Jesus' life.

Jesus was not a child-murderer. Jesus would not even condone the stoning of an full-grown, sinful woman taken in adultery. It is ludicrous to believe that He would condone the burning of babies and children or in fact, that He would CAUSE the burning of children on the altar of pagan gods.

Perhaps Ellen White's words have another meaning, or if not, she clearly did not intend to speak against the One True God, whom she loved. It might be however, that her words, unknowingly implicated the Father's character as a murderer of little children.

### **Future Sacrifices - 'God' Says Kill 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath Keeping Children**

It might be argued that while some professed “Christians” consider God has instructed them to perform child sacrifices (as the preceding news reports demonstrate), most Christians might recoil from the concept that God would command adults to sacrifice children. However how might the majority of modern Christians react **if** they truly believed the “One True God” did convey a similar murderous command today?

Consider the following possible scenarios:

- Perhaps the president of a country might feel impressed that “God” wants him/her to declare war on an “unholy” country. Would Christians support this impression as a divine instruction?
- Perhaps “an angel of light” appears to the world and instructs the Sunday-keeping Christians that for the sake of peace and unity, all seventh-day Sabbath keepers, including children, should be exterminated. Seventh-day Sabbath keepers might be accused of desecrating the first day sabbath and of being traitors to the world. How might professed Christians respond? Would they uphold God's holy law that forbids murdering men, women and children or would they also kill the “heretics”?

In ***Christ in Collision***, (published by Pacific Press, 1982:18) the author describes a similar situation which can be compared to a possible “last day” scenario as outline above. George E Rice states:

*“There were those (**Jews of Christ's day**) however who would speculate conditions that would usher in the Messiah's presence, but who would not set a date. **Repentance and good deeds for example, would hasten His appearance. Some went so far as to state that keeping a single sabbath properly by all the people would bring Him immediately. Indeed if all Israel kept two sabbaths properly they felt not only would the Messiah appear but the nation would be redeemed forthwith.**”*

Perhaps when, at the end of the world, the "angel of light" appears, he (Satan) might tell the world that if one or two Sunday sabbaths were kept perfectly by everyone that God would usher in the 1000 years of peace.... The familiar doctrine of having to do something to appease an angry god might once again be presented - on pain of death. How likely is it to occur? It is prophesied that Satan disguised "as an angel of light" will impersonate Christ (2 Cor 11:14).

John 16:2

*“They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. Will God's people kill then or will it be the demon-possessed people who are killing the true Christians?”*

Ellen White, Great Controversy p 624

*“As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. Revelation 1:13-15. The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air: "Christ has come! Christ has come!" The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to*



*them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion. Like the Samaritans who were deceived by Simon Magus, the multitudes, from the least to the greatest, give heed to these sorceries, saying: This is 'the great power of God.' Acts 8:10."*

Jeremiah 9:24

*"But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."*

### **Circumcision - Which Covenant?**

This section presents a theory which might challenge traditionally held beliefs about God and the rite of circumcision.

Definition of Circumcision: Surgery that removes the foreskin (the loose tissue) covering the glans of the penis. The Latin "circum-" means around (or about).

**Circumcision is, literally, a cutting around.** Circumcision dates back to prehistoric times. It is one of the oldest surgical operations known to have been performed by people.

What is symbolised by the sign of circumcision? In the Christian era, baptism is said to have replaced the Hebrew rite of circumcision as a sign of the new covenant. If circumcision was a sign of the old covenant, it was not similar to baptism.

1. A sign is supposed to be visible to others – publicly noticeable. Baptism is a visible, outward sign, but circumcision is not visible unless one was naked in public. Naked adults and children did participate in sexual orgies in the pagan fertility “religious” celebrations, but the One True God's religion had no rituals that were to be celebrated in a sexual manner;
2. Baptism is an elected ritual - Adults make an informed decision to choose their allegiance to God, but circumcision is performed on a baby before the baby is able to give consent or to refuse the procedure- in a similar manner to christening which is performed in the Roman Catholic and other churches;
3. Circumcision is a violent, blood-letting ceremony, while baptism is free from pain and bloodshed.

### **Questions**

- How practical was it to use circumcision as a sign? Completely impractical. Circumcision is not a visible sign – unless a man is naked or his genitals are exposed.
- Is it logical to expect that the One True God established a “secret” sign, when what He required was a method that could broadcast His kingdom's loving laws to the world?

- Would God be entirely truthful if He established an inflexible, permanent sign to demonstrate a flexible, free-choice religious allegiance?
- Wouldn't a perfect system have allowed for a flexible sign which might be removed if a man decided to apostatise?
- If the man apostatised, he could keep his apostasy a secret. How would anybody else know of his change in religion unless his outward, visible behaviour also changed?
- Circumcised babies did not make a choice to be circumcised. How can their circumcision be recognised as a sign of their choice to give their allegiance to the One True God?

### **Origin of Circumcision**

At the various International Symposiums on Circumcision, research has been found that the rite of circumcision pre-dates Abraham. The following points were presented by the various International Symposiums on Circumcision:

- *Bodies preserved since 4000BC have been exhumed in Egypt and disclose evidence of circumcision* "(Breasted, 353, p.10 cited in Gerald A Larue in Religious Traditions and Circumcision, 1991 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Circumcision).
- Evidence suggest that phallic pagan worship system, which involves circumcision, might have originated in ancient Egypt.
- In Egyptian mythology, Ra - the sun god - "the source of all life" - was said to have circumcised himself. From the blood of this operation, two deities were given life, resulting in a trinity of gods.
- Akhenaten, was a monotheist Egyptian pharaoh whose capital city was the place where the circumcised penis was found - Akhetaten (modern El-Amarna).
- Circumcision was the symbol of the sun god Aten's religion with which Moses was familiar.
- Obileks were massive stone images displayed to represent erect, circumcised penises as a sign of fertility worship. They were found outside pagan temples.
- Kings, nobles and priests were circumcised so circumcision became a status symbol in Egypt. Average Egyptians could not afford the operation.



- Egyptian priests were only allowed to serve their god/s in their temples, if they were circumcised (a condition which also applied in the Israelite religious culture).
- In pagan religions circumcision is apparently a substitutionary blood offering to the god i.e. an offering of value, involving a sacred gift (reproductive organ), involving blood (life) and pain (penance);
- Circumcision appears to be a blood-letting ritual in a fertility ceremony which gives honour to pagan fertility gods.
- There is a connection between circumcision and human sacrifice. It is thought that human sacrifice was eventually largely replaced by circumcision in pagan religions
- Circumcision is thought to have been a substitution for human sacrifice.

**(G. Rawlinson -- Ancient Egypt, vol. I, p. 452).  
 "Was it connected with phallic worship, and thus regarded as an offering to the deity of fertility? or was it, as some think, a substitute for human sacrifice?"**

John P Warren and Jim Bigelow in The Case against Circumcision  
 "We do not know with certainty why this operation was carried out, but many writers have suggested that it was a sacrificial rite. No doubt human sacrifice was widespread, and it seems likely that substitutes for this practice included the sacrifice of domestic animals and mutilations of the human body, of which circumcision is just one example." <http://www.come-and-hear.com/editor/br-warren/>

### **Jewish Culture**

Today, the Jewish religion requires that, even if a baby boy was circumcised in a "religious-free" operation previously, or was born without a foreskin, he must undergo a special 'covenant ratification' circumcision ceremony. The Mohle (circumciser) will prick the baby's penis so that blood is shed in a religious ceremony/rite, or else the Abrahamic covenant is not ratified.

Note the following news report from the Sydney Morning Herald, by Barney Zwartz on 27 October, 2006. The heading read: "**Anger as Rabbis Demand Boy be Recircumcised.**"

*"A BOY on the verge of his bar mitzvah was told he was not properly circumcised and therefore was not Jewish. Orthodox rabbis in Sydney said he had to be recircumcised within four days or the ceremony - which marks the transition of Jewish boys to adulthood at 13 - could not go ahead. The boy's mother, the journalist Ros Reines, said she was shocked and sickened, and*

refused a second circumcision. "He's undoubtedly circumcised. It's just a matter of degree," she said. She was able to arrange the ceremony on the same day this month at a Progressive synagogue (a more liberal version of Judaism). In accordance with Jewish practice, the boy was circumcised when he was eight days old. It was done in hospital by a Jewish doctor in the presence of a rabbi. Ms Reines, a convert to Judaism, told the Orthodox rabbis she would not contemplate an operation under general anaesthetic four days before the ceremony. "I said that's not an option. They then tried to persuade my son, but even if he said he wanted to, which he didn't, I wouldn't allow it. Imagine if he got an infection. "It's not a good thing to say, but those people have gone mad on their power." She said it was "so hurtful" to be told her son wasn't Jewish. If he had been in Nazi Germany he would certainly have been "consigned to the ovens". The Australian Jewish News quotes one of the rabbis, Moshe Gutnick, as saying the Progressive synagogue was "fooling the child" into believing he was Jewish. **Rabbi Gutnick said they noticed the incomplete circumcision as they prepared to take a drop of blood from the boy's penis to symbolise his Orthodox conversion.** They called a mohel (ritual circumciser) who confirmed it needed to be done again. **A Melbourne mohel, Dr Herschel Goldman, said yesterday a proper circumcision required the whole head of the penis to be revealed when erect.** 'Do we test that? No, but often you can see,' he said. He said the boy was a convert, which required him to be circumcised, accept the commandments and take a ritual bath. **If he was already circumcised, a ritual drop of blood would be taken instead, as happened here.** 'It's a tragic event. It's certainly sad for the boy and his mother too.'" <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/rabbis-demand-boy-be-recircumcised/2006/10/26/1161749260137.html>

1 Samuel 16:7

“...for [the LORD seeth] not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.”

### **Roman Catholic Culture**

The Roman Catholic church celebrates the Feast of Circumcision eight days after the supposed birth of Christ on 25 December. (Tammuz -the Babylonian sun god, was said to be reborn each year on 25 December). The feast of Circumcision falls 8 days later on 1 January. The Roman Catholic “Feast of Fools” falls also on the Feast of Circumcision.

The "fathers" of the Catholic religion ruled that circumcision was not just a mere ceremony, but a sacramental rite.

### **Ancient Israelite Culture**

God forbade “cutting into the flesh” operations in ceremonies which mourned the dead.

Leviticus 21:5

“They (**the priests**) shall not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, **nor make any cuttings in their flesh.**”

It seems strange that God forbade any cuttings into the Israelites' flesh to mourn the dead, but supposedly commanded that all male babies were to be circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of life. Even the strangers and slaves were to be circumcised – which might be seen as an amazing denial of the freedom of choice – a practice nowhere reflected in Jesus' teachings.

Genesis 17:10-13

“This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. (11) And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. (12) And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. (13) He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.”

Abraham apparently performed the circumcision operations and the tradition was passed down through the Israelite families even while in captivity in Egypt, however for the forty years of desert wanderings under Moses' leadership, circumcision was NOT permitted, supposedly to represent that God would not recognise the Israelites as His people. After crossing into the Promised Land, Joshua announced that there would be a mass circumcision ceremony at Gilgal.

Joshua 5:8, 9

“And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. (9) And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.”

Immediately following the operations, Joshua commented that “the reproach of the Egyptians was now rolled off” them. The Egyptians considered the circumcised to be nobility class - it was the UNcircumcised males who were a reproach - they were merely slaves or commoners. Only the Pharaoh, priests and the wealthy could be circumcised.

How could the reproach of the Egyptians be rolled off the uncircumcised Israelites? Only by becoming circumcised - which would identify them (in sexual fertility ceremonies) as nobility or priests of Aten, the god of the Egyptians.

Would it not be logical to assume that a pagan god would be pleased that the reproach of the Egyptians (uncircumcision) is rolled off the Israelites? Wouldn't the pagan god be pleased that a million males were permanently marked with the

sign of the sun god?, Wouldn't the pagan's god be delighted to lead the Israelite men to display their "mark of devotion" to the sun-god to the Canaanites when they joined in their fertility ceremonies?

The Israelite's mass circumcision ritual occurred in a location called **Gilgal**. The word "**gilgal**" means 'circle of stones' or 'wheel' and apparently stems from a duplication of the root *gll* meaning 'to roll' or to 'roll away.' Gilgal was the first place that the Israelites camped after crossing the Jordan River (Joshua 4:19). After crossing the Jordan River, Joshua instructed that the Israelites set up a memorial. A monument was constructed from twelve unhewn river stones (Joshua 4:20).

The actual location of Joshua's Gilgal is not certain today, although it is interesting that some say Gilgal is currently the location of a huge five-ringed solar wheel (photo available at: <http://www.mt.net/~watcher/gilgalrefaim.jpg>)

Amos describes Gilgal as a place to multiply transgression (Amos 4:4; 5:5). Hosea notes that evil was done at Gilgal (Hos 9:15) and makes reference to the sacrifices which were offered there as "vanity" or worthless (Hos 12:11).

When the Assyrians took control of Gilgal, the Assyrian chief god Ashur (an eagle-headed, winged deity) was worshipped there – at the place of the solar wheel. Ashur was the god of water and of corn. He was depicted in a winged - wheel and holding a bow and arrow. To the Assyrians, the solar wheel which surrounded their country's god, was a symbol of life, and the idol was worshipped as **a god not of war only, but also of fertility**. His blessing required human sacrifices. (**Sacred Texts** CD-ROM, chapter 14 p 346: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/mba/mba20.htm> HYPERLINK "http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/mba/mba20.htm" )

Perhaps it is not illogical to suppose that the Israelites believed that, just as Ashur, the Assyrian god of fertility and war would have been pacified through their blood-letting ritual, that Yahweh also might be similarly pleased, for immediately following their mass circumcision ceremony, the Israelites waged violent war against the Canaanites, apparently with the blessing of the "Lord" and at his command.

The Israelites might have believed that the Lord was "appeased" based on the story of Moses' experience in his journey to Egypt to ask Pharaoh to let God's people go.

Exodus 4:19-26

“And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life. (20) And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand. (21) And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go. (22) And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: (23) And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn. (24) And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the LORD met him, and sought to kill him. (25) Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. (26) So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.”

The three verses dealing with the circumcision of the baby boy appears to be “slotted in” to the main story, but it does not flow well. One finds questions brought to mind.

- If God wanted the baby circumcised, why didn't He remind or tell Moses of this vitally important condition, prior to giving him the important job of leading the Hebrew people out of bondage?
- Why did God attempt to kill Moses, when He had just given him the leadership task?
- Why did Zipporah immediately assume that the bloody ritual of circumcision was necessary to appease the angry “God?”

Some insight into this intriguing situation might be gained by understanding some of the rituals which were believed and practised in Egypt and in many of the countries of Canaan.

According to Egyptian religious beliefs, Isis was the wife and sister goddess of Osiris, the ruler of the Egyptian gods. Seth, who is Osiris' jealous brother, kills Osiris by tricking him into lying inside a wooden chest which he then locks and throws into the Nile River. Isis searches for the chest which contain the remains of Osiris, but when the chest is recovered, Seth rushes in and dismembers the body. Seth scatters the parts of Osiris' body, but Isis manages to find and gather all of them, except for his penis. Isis manages to put all the pieces together and makes a wooden penis to take the place of the missing organ. She then “breathes” into Osiris, the breath of life by waving her wings over his body parts. Then Osiris and Isis have a sexual experience, using the wooden penis and Isis becomes pregnant. Her son is born and is called Horus.

Jonathan Kirsch (1997:167) considers the similarities of the story of Zipporah and Isis. Both stories involve:

- *an attack on a husband;*
- *rescue by the wife;*
- *a penis operation; and*
- *wings.*
- *Zipporah means 'bird.'*

Kirsch (1997:173) continues:

*"The notion of circumcision as a surrogate for child sacrifice begins to explain even the most bizarre and baffling details of Exodus 4:24-26. An angry and vengeful Yahweh seeks to kill the father of a firstborn son - or perhaps the child himself - because Yahweh has been denied the offering of flesh and blood to which he is entitled by divine decree. When Zipporah cuts off the foreskin of her son, her firstling, she is safely mimicking the sacrifice of the child himself - she is 'sanctifying' the baby who 'opened the womb of Israel' precisely as God had commanded. Only through the mock sacrifice in the form of a circumcision is God appeased and only then does he break off his attack....."*

It is recorded in the King James Version of the Bible, that Zipporah circumcised her baby, then threw the foreskin at Moses' feet, however the KJV has used the expression "cast it at Moses' feet" when the Hebrew text actually states "made it touch his feet." The KJV also sometimes uses the word "feet" when it is referring to "genitals" (e.g. Deuteronomy 28:57).

Recall that the most valuable part of any offering that was made to the gods, was the blood - for "the life is in the blood." The blood of circumcision also sealed the covenant between Yahweh and the Hebrew race (Genesis 17:10; Acts 7:8; Romans 4:11).

### **John Wesley's Notes on the Bible**

*"Circumcision was a bloody ordinance, for all things by the law were purged with blood" (Heb 9:22; Exo 24:8)."*

The sacrificial blood also sanctified and anointed the priesthood.

Exodus 29:20-21

"Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle

the blood upon the altar round about. (21) And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him: and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.”

How did Zipporah use the “precious, sealing blood” of the circumcision covenant? Did she unceremoniously 'throw it away?’ It seems unlikely. According to the Hebrew terms, it appears she might have used it to anoint Moses' genitals. If so, she would have been following a practice similar to that which was later recorded in the Mosaic 'anointing' laws for the sanctification of the priests, only the blood was applied to other body parts and not the genitals.

Kirsch (1997:163) remarks

*Indeed we might wonder whether it was some priestly redactor,<sup>9</sup> rather than God, who cared so passionately about circumcision. The fact is that circumcision was not a uniquely Israelite ritual in the era of the Exodus; it was practised by the Egyptians and many of the native dwelling peoples of Canaan, too. So a circumcised sexual organ could not have served to readily distinguish the Israelites from their neighbors in their early history. Among the peoples of Canaan, the Bible identifies only the Philistines and the unfortunate kinsmen of Hamor, prince of the Hivites, as uncircumcised.”*

## **Conclusion**

Historical evidence reveals that pagan gods were considered to possess both good and evil traits in their characters. Worshipers of these gods desired to receive 'blessings' from the gods and also to avoid receiving their 'curses.' The common pagan belief system taught that human beings could anger the gods by their misbehaviour (committing sin). To prevent the gods from retaliating against the offenders tribe, the ritual of bloody human sacrifices were designed. Pagan religions taught that the 'life was in the blood.' The shedding of blood therefore, represented the immortal spirit of the sacrificed person, and was thus considered sacred. To appease the offended gods, or to ask for favours, this blood (representing the life of the immortal soul) was presented to the gods as an irresistible offering. It was reasoned that a human sacrifice would demonstrate the belief that the god/s originated life (i.e. the god was the creator). The ritual of the human sacrifice produced a 'sacred' symbol of that life – the blood. This life, as symbolised by the blood, was returned to the god/s who were thought to have originally given that life to humanity.

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<sup>9</sup> Redactor - similar to an editor

However, human sacrifices were eventually seen to be very 'expensive' as each 'gift' to the gods inflicted further suffering on the remaining members of the tribe through the loss of labour, protection and potential offspring. Though it was still considered necessary to 'stay on the good side' of the pagan deities, a less costly sacrificial system was conceived.

Slowly, pagan worshippers began to develop alternative blood-letting rituals as a substitute for human and child sacrifice. The sacrifice of animals – as substitutes for human sacrifice – began to become common and yet it did not entirely replace human sacrifice.

Human sacrifices still continued in the form of the bloody ritual of circumcision. While the life of the victim was not destroyed, the 'sacred' blood was still obtained – from the organ that to the pagan mind, represented the origin of life – the penis.

The 'precious blood' was still provided to satiate the god/s, and pain was involved for the victim, but it did not cost the life of the victim. Pain and self-inflicted suffering was thought to be especially motivating to the gods and circumcision caused pain and blood loss. Thus the rite of circumcision was a perfect substitute for human sacrifice.

Circumcision had value as appeasement offering because it:

- substituted taking the life of the child/victim;
- caused strong pain;
- involved the shedding of blood;
- permitted an offering to the gods of the symbol of life – the blood; and
- involved the organ symbolic of life and fertility – the penis;
- caused a permanent sign in the flesh which symbolised that the worshipper was dedicated to the sun god (the god which was recognised to be the creator of life)

Archaeological findings reveal that the bloody rite of circumcision was practiced in Egypt as early as 4,500 BC, pre-dating Abraham's covenant in 1875 BC by some 2600 years.

Just as the wedding ring originated from pagan customs to signify the shape and colour and eternalness of the sun, so too circumcision made a permanent, circular mark in the flesh of the male organ of reproduction that signified its wearer as a worshipper of the ultimate fertility god – the sun god – the “source of all life” (to the pagan).<sup>10</sup>

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10 To investigate the subject of circumcision further, visit [www.themeofthebible.com](http://www.themeofthebible.com/) HYPERLINK "http://www.themeofthebible.com/" – **and send email via the “contact me” button and request further information.**



Would the One True God require His people injure themselves and to become fixated on a reproductive organ – a sign of fertility – when He is the True and Only Creator? The life of Jesus did not ever exhort God's people to injure themselves in worshipping Him, but Satan's religions certainly appear to do so.

### **Gentle Jesus?**

Gentle Jesus,  
Meek and mild  
Look upon  
A little child.

Gentle Jesus?  
Or cruel and vile?  
Does He like to kill  
Just once in a while?

Would Jesus slit  
The tender throat  
Of a trusting lamb  
Or a baby goat?

Would He smile  
And kill the little lamb?  
And would He sacrifice  
Both ewe and ram?

Would He ring the neck  
Of a turtle dove  
As He sent a prayer  
To His Father above?

Would Christ enjoy  
To take the knife  
And thrust it hard  
To extinguish life?

A newborn calf  
With eyes so brown  
Would Jesus slash it?  
Watch it thrash around?

Would He collect  
Their blood and boast  
That He would sanctify  
A sinful host?

Would He then enjoy  
A sausage sizzle  
Consuming flesh  
From which blood drizzles?

An animal writhing  
In distress;  
Are these the scenes  
That Christ likes best?

Gentle Jesus  
If you're cruel and vile  
Please don't look upon  
My little child.

### **Animal Sacrifices**

Animal sacrifices were prominent in the Jewish sanctuary services.

### **WARNING - GRAPHIC PHOTOS FOLLOW OF ANIMAL SACRIFICE**

Prior to examining the issue from a Biblical perspective, readers might like to look briefly at modern day, Jewish animal sacrifices. Some readers might find the pictures of chickens being slaughtered distressing. Desensitised readers might not be offended or upset at the graphic scenes of chickens being slaughtered.

Here is a sample of the photos from:  
<http://www.israelnn.com/news.php3?id=113032>



(Photos: Ezra HaLevi)

One article concerning the ritual sacrifice of chickens and accompanying photographs can be found at Israel National News.com at  
<http://www.israelnn.com/news.php3?id=113032>.

The website states:

*The practice of kapparot using live fowl entails the following: A male or female chicken is taken in hand, corresponding to the gender of the taker or family members on whose behalf they are performing the ritual. Psalm 107:17-20 and Job 33:23-24 are recited and the live bird is swung around the person's head three times. While swinging, the person recites the following three times: "This be my substitute, my vicarious offering, my atonement. This cock (or hen) shall meet death, but I shall find a long and pleasant life of peace." "As the bird is slaughtered, the person thinks about how he himself deserves what is being done to the bird, and through this is inspired to repent, draw closer to the G-d, and remove the decree from upon his head," explains Rabbi Eliezer Melamed of the Har Bracha Yeshiva. Immediately following shekhita, kosher slaughter, the chickens are placed in cones to begin the process of draining the blood, which may not be consumed.*

*The chickens, or the money used to purchase them, are then donated to the poor, to provide them with food before and after the Yom Kippur fast."*

A sample of comments regarding public reaction to the article and the photos of the events which occur on the Eve of Yom Kippur, demonstrates an important fact

- that generally vegetarians are not in favour of the slaughtering of animals, but that those who consume meat and animal products often do not object to the sacrificial slaughter of chickens.

The argument appears to be that, slaughtering an animal as a sacrifice can be justified on the basis that the animal would be slaughtered to provide meat anyway. It is reasoned that slaughtering an animal for meat purposes is not wrong, so why should people consider it wrong to slaughter an animal as a sacrifice - especially when its body is going to be used to feed poor people?

Vegetarians appear to argue from the basis that it is not right - but cruel and violent - to slaughter an animal for either sacrificial or meat/food purposes.

Mary from New York writes: #1 **theres nothing wrong with slautering (sic) a chicken** #2*these chickens that are slautered (sic) are given to the poor so it IS charity, #3 there is no torture involved here, so what are you people blabbing about!?"*

Shoshana Krol from Ramat Beit Shemesh writes: "**I want to know if they eat chicken?** It has to be killed, right? It is done properly, kosher! What will these people do when we are again required to do Temple Sacrifices?!"

Moses from New York writes: "*This practice is actually very beneficial for the chicken and elevates its spiritual essence. **Since chickens were only created to provide man food this custom allows the chicken to accomplish its purpose in a holy way by participating in the mitzvah.** The chickens feel no pain whatsoever when properly slaughtered according to Jewish law. When this practice is performed in sincere holiness by a god-fearing Shohet (Jewish ritual slaughterer) you will notice that the chickens actually quarrel among each-other in order to be chosen and sanctified by this holy mitzvah. I have witnessed this myself and it is amazing and inspiring watching these chickens courageously and fearlessly volunteer to sacrifice and sanctify their lives in holiness for sake of this holy mitzvah. I invite the self righteous so-called animal rights activists among you to sincerely and honestly consider the harm you are doing to the chickens by your libelous and hate-field words against the Torah and the holy deeds of the righteous."*

Eli from Binyamin writes: "*The previous writer obviously didn't read the article. The only difference between this ritual and year round slaughter is the painless waving of the bird. He also missed the article's explanation that the chicken does not receive the sins. Rather, **the knowledge that that chicken is about to meet its end helps bring a person to accept the precariousness of his own future and thus leads to proper repentance** & his disgust with those who merely wave a bird proves the veracity of R' Kook's statement that animal rights activism leads to hatred of those who don't join this man-made mitzvah."*

Moshe from New York writes: "Some of the posts contain erroneous information about the custom of "Kapparoth". The poster in the picture refers to this as "Pidyon" (Redemption of sin by giving charity to the poor). The "Shehitah" (ritual slaughter) of the fowl is done according to the "halachah" (Jewish law). The fowl is given to poor families as charity. The concept of "Pidyon" is established in Jewish Law (Redemption "Pidyon" of the first-born etc). The "Shulchan Aruch" (Code of Jewish Law) and the "Mishneh Torah" of the "Rambam" provide that is a meritorious and beneficial way of giving charity before the Yom Kippur.(Day of Atonement). **Please note that the fowl is slaughtered humanely in accordance with Jewish Law.**"

Andy from Mechanicsburg writes: "We live on a farm and every year friends come to hunt the deer. Often we get invited to a venison meal and/or get some meat to store in the freezer for further use. However, I wouldn't go to a restaurant and have a live lobster killed for my consumption. But I wouldn't hesitate if the lobster would be already dead. So let's not be hypocritical. **If you buy meat at the store someone had to kill it before you throw it in your skillet. As long as there's no inhumane handling I have no problem with it whether this practise makes sense or not.**"

Ryan H from Ashdod writes: "This custome is Pagan and needs to be deleted. The Backward mindset of many Jews is embarresing (sic) to me. Kitniyot on Pesach - No Basis. Dressing like a freak in fur hats from Poland - No Basis. **People are so scared to break from tradition because they and their dogmatic unthinking communities are unable to differentiate between custom and law.** The contention that Minhag becomes law is the most regressive of all."

Mary from Houston writes: "**The whole Torah is based upon substitutionary atonement of sins by placing the sins on innocent animals.**"

EGW from Vancouver writes: "Atonement,Substitute,Vicarious Offering. The practice is a combination of sending the pure animal into the desert, laden with the sins of the people, and the original Temple sacrifice of a person. Batya, seeing these birds in such horrible situations...what did you do about it??? Did you upbraid the shopkeeper?? I have seen many Capporot ceremonies and never saw a bird "swung" but gently circled over the head. **I have practiced this custom since babyhood.** We used money instead of birds. It all goes to charity and it a good practice,the Sages who disagreed, had their own reasons who knows why?"

Avi D from Israel writes: "Since you seem to know halacha, please explain how the mishna brura is barbaric, and what exactly the difference between korbonos (ie chatas) and kapores is- **they both "absolve" good yidden of their sins using the dead of an animal. And that is the best possible use of animals anyway. Eating it is a much lower form of tikun- or are you a vegetarian?!?** (sic) **That would would be ignoring the whole first section**

**of Yoreh Deiah!** And what is wrong with giving your chicken to poor people- do you also have something again giving tzeddaka?!?!?!?!?"

Laura writes: "This is taking animal rights too far. A bird being waved around hardly conotes savegery! **And if you eat chicken you are full of bull! The birds are slaughtered the usual way** and given to the poor. What is the difference if they were held over someone's head a few seconds first!?? some people have nothing better to do than criticize others. When was the last time you did an act of kindness or donated to charity. Give me a break!!"

Avraham writes: "The Chickens are quite calm during the kapores session. **I think they get nervous when they feel the knife.** Let me tell you something. People TAG animals, punch holes through cow's ears, inject chickens with microchips, etc for tracking. These animals undergo shechita and are fine - **they die but don't suffer any more than the farmer picking one up and lopping off it's (sic) head. Why on earth is this an issue???** Now, for some humor, some militray Cadence... "Swing that chicken 'round your head... in a few hours, he'll be dead, sound off, 1,2 sound off, 3,4 1,2,3,4, they're dead meat. lol!!Lighten up."

JP Sutton from New York City writes: "**Torturing an innocent (non-sinful) creature to death to absolve oneself of sins simply adds one more sin.** Instead of buying a chicken/rooster, use the money for kaporos and then give it to the needy. Judaism is normally more enlightened than this barbaric, selfish practice indicates. **Torturing animals in a ritual devised by man, not demanded by HaShem, is inexcusable. What a bunch of heathen savages to perform such a brutal act -- esp for selfish gain.** Shame on all who participate in this disgraceful display of savagery."

Batyah writes: "This is a disgrace, and nowhere in Torah are we commanded to do this idiotic practice. **It makes me so ashamed when I see religious people standing around thinking they are so pious all the while they are abusing defenseless animals.** I have seen chickens at Mahane Yehuda lying in their own vomit and excrement, unable to move, with their feet wired together, and their wings broken. **What happened to Jewish kindness?** I hope that these Haredim and Chassidim who are the main practitioners of this stupidity will see the light and correct themselves. Or else go to hell for this aveira."

The same arguments that appear in the preceding comments as attempts to justify and support the slaughter of chickens, are also made by fishing and hunting enthusiasts. In response to concerns for the fish or animals' pain, it is stated that, "Fish don't feel the pain" or, "It's a quick death." While these assumptions might comfort fishermen and quiet a hunter's conscience, science argues against their veracity and a sensitive conscience protests the cruelty.

For those who argue that the sanctuary services were ordained of the Creator God, perhaps a viewing of the film "Meet Your Meat" (from the



[www.themeofthebible.com](http://www.themeofthebible.com) website), would be thought-provoking. The following section presents the author's testimony, written in response to that film:

*“What words could express my reaction? I am sickened and shocked to my very being; initially speechless with revulsion; amazed as to how any human being could condone such limitless cruelty; enraged at the system that hides these atrocities from the public eye in the name of 'business' and revolted by a religious system that proclaims that God commanded a similar system for the mutilation of live animals in the Old Testament sanctuary rituals.*

*The most dreadful footage of the poor animals hoisted up by their legs alive, and having their throats cut while still alive was too much to view. I had to turn my eyes away; my stomach reacting with revulsion, but the poor animals had no such escape from the torture and dreadful road to death. What indescribable agony! What monstrous cruelty! What absolute vileness! My senses conveyed overwhelming revulsion.*

*While taking fearful glimpses of the throat-slitting sections of your video, I thought about the animal sacrifices described in the Old Testament of the Bible, which were supposedly instigated by the God of Life - the Creator God Himself. This disgusting, violent, infinitely evil practice of sacrificing animals is said to be pleasing to God; this 'fact' it is stated 39 times in the first 4 books of the Bible (e.g. Exodus 29:18).*

*It is illogical to suggest that the Life-giver - a God worthy of worship and respect - would command the violent slaughter of animals which He created. Such a god would not be respected, but abhorred.*

*Is it so difficult for Christians to remove the blindfolds with which traditional beliefs have placed upon their eyes?*

*On the Vegetarian Network Victoria website <http://www.vnv.org.au/CD.htm> there appears a statement from the late Linda McCartney. She says, 'If slaughterhouses had glass walls, the whole world would be vegetarians.' In the same way, perhaps Christians might benefit by exposing themselves to a reality check. Perhaps those who believe that God commanded the slitting of an animal's throat as a 'holy act', in a holy place, (the sanctuary court) might benefit by viewing footage of 'Meet Your Meat.' The video reveals the intense pain involved in performing 'holy' animal sacrifices by the throat-slitting method. Perhaps Christians might be motivated to rethink their traditional position concerning the violent attributes they presume constitute God's character.*

*It would be interesting to consider the outcome arising from a more honest viewing of church doctrines. Why don't church leaders reveal to prospective members, the 'fine print' of the baptismal agreement?*

*In many churches, many baptismal candidates are required to accept that the Bible is inerring; yet if they accept that belief, it is necessary also that they believe that God ordained, commanded and initiated the brutal, violent slaughtering of animals as ritualised sacrifices - for the Bible insists that such sacrificial rituals were commanded by God and given through Moses in the Old Testament.*

*Incredibly, it seems easy for many dedicated Christians to accept this 'sterilised' doctrine, perhaps due to the fact that few Christians have ever witnessed with their own eyes, the horror of an animal's throat being slit and the resultant, slow death of the pain-crazed victims. Some sacrificial proponents even claim that sacrificial animals do not suffer pain, but the evidence on **'Meet Your Meat'** does not sustain that fictitious belief; in fact, it proves the belief to be a conscience-comforting fallacy - a lie.*

*If, as part of their Bible study preparations, adult Christians were required to view a sacrificial re-enactment scene, perhaps the heart-wreching sight might deter the candidates from declaring allegiance to the monstrous god who commands and delights in the suffering of innocent creatures. Pehaps there might be less baptisms and more logical questioning of the way God's character is viewed.*

*Christians need to know the character of their God and not confuse the holy God of Life and Love with the evil god of pain, death and destruction. Can anyone be drawn through 'love' to a god who commands the butchering of animals? It is contrary to logical thought that a loving, pure and holy God could condone, command and take pleasure in such atrocities. Only an evil, monstrous being could find pleasure in the infinite suffering, torture and abuse of helpless creatures, whether the killings take place in the abattoir or in the Old Testament sanctuary."*

Clearly **the place** where the killing of an animal occurs, does not make it a holy act, but can **the purpose** of the killing, justify the death of the animal?

Consider the purposes for which animals are killed or abused:

- profit;
- sport;
- entertainment;
- food production;
- sacrificial purposes to negate guilt and sin; and
- pest control



Is it moral to kill or abuse animals for any reason? Is it ever necessary? God promises that He would even miraculously rebuke the devourer (pests, problem animals).

Malachi 3:11

“And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.”

A little faith in God might help us see things differently – from a more gentle perspective, perhaps employing non lethal deterrents for pests. It is tragic that today, just as in the pre-flood days, religious and secular violence toward human beings and toward animals is filling the earth once again.

Genesis 6:11

“The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.”

### **Movement To Bring Back Jewish Temple Sacrifices**

*"It's not a question of 'maybe' or 'if,'" says the Temple Institute's Rabbi Yisrael Ariel. "Bringing the Paschal sacrifice is a Torah obligation incumbent upon the People of Israel these very days."*

*Speaking with Yoel Yaakobi of the weekly B'Sheva newspaper, Rabbi Ariel said that though there are some grave Halakhic [Jewish legal] problems associated with bringing the Paschal sacrifice, "we have found the solutions, and the obligation is as strong as ever. This is one of the only two positive Biblical commandments that those who forsake it are liable to receive the ultimate karet [cutting off] punishment. From the moment that a Jew stands on the Temple Mount and the site of the Holy Temple is under our control, the Jewish People are immediately obligated to bring this sacrifice."*

*Sixteen of the 613 Biblical commandments relate to the Paschal sacrifice, which must be brought on the 14th day of the month of Nissan - Passover eve - and eaten on the night of the 15th. .... The 200 commandments that are connected with the Temple cry out every day, 'Jews, where are you?!'" Rabbi Ariel: Paschal Sacrifice is Still Obligatory, 14:35 Apr 20, 2006 / 22 Nisan 5766 by Hillel Fendel <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/news.php3?id=102189>*

Three arguments will be examined in this section:

- the illogical premise, that the violent act of sacrificing an animal produces penitence for sinful behaviour;
- that violent acts of sacrificing an animal enhances one's understanding and appreciation of a non-violent Person's character (Christ's) and demonstrate the plan of salvation; and

- the illogical premise that salvation can be 'bought' and forgiveness 'purchased' by material gifts that human beings bring to God i.e. the doctrine of indulgences.

## Violence Begets Violence

The question has been asked, "But why would God want man to go through the awful procedure of killing an animal?"

The usual answer is similar to that given below:

*"When the offerer saw the sacrifice suffering and bleeding for the sins which he had committed, he was impressed with the awfulness of sin and the penalty of death (Ezekiel 18:4, 20) the sinner deserved. THE SACRIFICE SHOWED HIM GOD'S:*

- **HOLINESS because of His hatred of all evil;**
- **JUSTICE because He does not leave sin unpunished;**
- **MERCY because of His readiness to pardon the truly repentant and believing by providing a substitute for him.**

[http://www.amfi.org/l\\_chaim.htm](http://www.amfi.org/l_chaim.htm)

The reasoning appears to be that the results of sin and sinful behaviour are not obvious in the natural world, so human beings must be shocked and horrified by the ritualistic slaughter of young and gentle animals by cutting their throats. This violent process will supposedly cause them to realise the horror of death that sin causes. This realization is also supposed to make the sinner reluctant to continue in sinful practices – however, the evidence clearly reveals that such a belief is based not on fact, but wishful thinking!

The process of desensitization creates the ability to withstand the initial shocking scenes. The first experience of taking the life of an animal can be traumatic, however if these actions are repeated, the slaughterer becomes 'desensitised' to the violence committed upon the victim.

A similar process of desensitization has been scientifically proven to occur in the field of 'soft' pornography which is shown to be causally linked with disrespect, violence and sexual rape against women.

Violence begets violence. Does causing the violent death of a gentle, young animal foster the development of a sensitive spirit and a gentle character in the slaughterer?

Research undoubtedly supports the opposite position. It is not sensitivity, but desensitivity that is caused by repeated exposure to the suffering of animals. Acceptance of violence against animals is shown to be instrumental in directing violence toward human beings.

The National Anti-Vivisection Society makes the following observations:

***“Criminology studies show a link between animal cruelty and violence to humans.”***<sup>11</sup> *It is not uncommon that a murderer or spouse/child abuser has had a past that included deliberate harm or torture to animals. When you think about it, this makes sense because compassion is a quality that transcends species. So what does this have to do with animal dissection? Does dissection encourage violent behavior? Does it make the student less caring and sensitive to suffering? Research indicates that the more frequently people are exposed to a certain situation, the more comfortable they become with it. Therefore, students who may be uncomfortable with the first dissection exercise are likely to become increasingly more comfortable with the procedure with repeated exposure. This desensitization to violence in animals and how it may translate into desensitization to violence in people is increasing gaining the attention of psychologist and sociologists.*

[http://www.navs.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ain\\_edu\\_link\\_violence\\_cruelty](http://www.navs.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ain_edu_link_violence_cruelty)

According to Arluke and Lockwood, ***“criminology studies show a link between animal cruelty and violence to humans.”*** That being the case, could anyone invent a more effective training programme to desensitise a nation, to prepare a people to commit violence against humanity; to ‘justify’ murder than what ‘god’ gave to the Israelites in the form of the sacrificial system?

What a perfect system to prepare the Israelites to commit **human** genocide as they entered the ‘Promised Land!’

Surely the god of the Israelites foresaw the dreadful psychological effect that the sacrificial system would inevitably cause the ‘chosen people!’ Clearly the killing of animals did not improve the character of the Israelites, but ensured they became even more violent. The chosen people did not escape the inevitable consequences of becoming desensitised to the suffering of animals. It can be seen in their history that their sympathetic or compassionate response to human suffering was also eroded.

Wasn’t God interested in the Israelites developing a Christ-like character? Or if not, was the Israelite religion simply a matter making the right sacrifices with the ‘right’ amount of animals, in the right way, at the right time. Just rituals? Was it a gospel of works?

Evidence is certainly not lacking to support the fact that the ancient Jewish society generally became desensitised to violence, both to the suffering inflicted upon animals and on human beings. Given the daily exposure to the death of many sacrificial animals, and the participation of the males in the daily slaughter, can it be wondered that the Jewish people were desensitised to the point that they did not consider killing the babies of pagans to be reprehensible, criminal,

<sup>11</sup> (See references at document end)

deplorable - or at least 'wrong' or horrific (1 Samuel 15:3; Deut 12, 20, 32:25)? In fact, the Jewish people came to justify these genocides by claiming that God commanded the destruction of innocent babies.

Horrific as killing an animal is, some support the view that God required or encouraged human beings to perform acts of violence against animals, in order to demonstrate the evil effects that sin could produce. Is this feasible?

Violence and death are natural outcomes and consequences of sin (Romans 6:23). When a person is separated from God, the sinful nature matures and a selfish character develops. Inevitably, the consequences of acting on selfish principles will inevitably produce death. No other demonstration is necessary than that which occurs in reality.

However, if the principle is accepted that God introduced animal sacrifices to demonstrate that sin brings forth suffering and death of innocents, surely this can be interpreted to mean that, on its own, the dreadful results of sin weren't obvious enough already and God found it necessary to make sin appear more horrific than it was in reality.

Didn't sin bring forth enough suffering and death as 'natural consequences?' Selfish behaviour produces enough horrendous effects - unaided by God - that will thoroughly convince human beings - even those who are eternally lost - that sin brings forth suffering and death and that God's principles, as seen in Jesus Christ, are life-giving.

Philippians 2:10, 11

“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; (11) And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (See also Romans 4:11; Isaiah 45:23).

God desired the world to be populated by gentle, peaceful, unselfish people who ate a vegetarian diet. Instead, sin has produced a violent people who participate in killing animals and each other in a warring world.

Is this what God designed or has there been a serious mistake regarding the sacrificial rituals of the Old Testament?

## Gentle Jesus?

Gentle Jesus,  
Meek and mild  
Look upon  
A little child.

Gentle Jesus?  
Or cruel and vile?  
Does He like to kill  
Just once in a while?

Would Jesus slit  
The tender throat  
Of a trusting lamb  
Or a baby goat?

Would He smile  
And kill the little lamb?  
And would He sacrifice  
Both ewe and ram?

Would He ring the neck  
Of a turtle dove  
As He sent a prayer  
To His Father above?

Would Christ enjoy  
To take the knife  
And thrust it hard

To extinguish life?  
A newborn calf  
With eyes so brown  
Would Jesus slash it?  
Watch it thrash around?

Would He collect  
Their blood and boast  
That He would sanctify  
A sinful host?

Would He then enjoy  
A sausage sizzle  
Consuming flesh  
From which blood drizzles?

An animal writhing  
In distress;  
Are these the scenes  
That Christ likes best?

Gentle Jesus  
If you're cruel and vile  
Please don't look upon  
My little child.

It seems a little incredulous to consider that cruel, animal sacrifices were required by the One True God, just as they were required by the supposed pagan gods, which we understand to be demonic entities.

Blood-letting rituals using sacrificial animals are violent and horrific; however, the barbarous practice of slitting the throats of lambs, calves and kids, bullocks, heifers, goats, and breaking the necks of turtle doves and pigeons were undertaken by the Israelites in their many sanctuary ceremonies. Such ceremonies were said to 'point them to Christ' as the ultimate sacrifice, but obvious question begs an answer: Christ was non-violent (Isa 53:9), so how could a violent exercise reveal any aspect of Christ to those engaged in slaughtering

innocent and unwilling animals? None of the sacrificial animals voluntarily laid down their lives, but their lives were taken by violent, painful force. The sanctuary services were not to typify the rough treatment of evil men, but the actions and motives of the Messiah.

Despite this illogical premise, that violent acts enhance one's view of a non-violent Person, it is said that animal sacrifices pointed to the death of Jesus Christ and the great sacrifice He would make when He died for humankind's redemption.

It is also often stated by Seventh-day Adventist theologians, that **every** act/ritual performed in the sanctuary services, depicted some facet of the life and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. While there is evidence that the demonstrates the plan of salvation and Christ's character, there are also obvious signs that paganism has been mixed with the true sanctuary sacrificial services, obscuring important truths concerning the life, character and sacrifice of both Father and Son. Some of these rituals will be examined in the following section.

### **Offerings of Blood Poured Out to the Gods**

It was a well known pagan custom, when after a man hunted and killed an animal for food, that he would pour out the blood on the ground, as an offering in honour of the gods who enabled/blessed his successful hunting trip. Pagan worshippers also slaughtered animals to appease their wrathful gods by the pouring out of blood as a libation on the ground or on an altar to honour their gods. "The blood was sprinkled on the image of the god....The blood of victims was sprinkled on altars, images, and trees." <sup>12</sup>

The Israelites were to abide by different laws, but the same principle remained.

Leviticus 17:5-7, 9

"To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest, and offer them for peace offerings unto the LORD. (6) And the priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat for a sweet savour unto the LORD. (7) "**And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring**....(9) And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD; even that man shall be cut off from among his people."

Leviticus 17:7 reveals that like pagans, the Israelites also had been offering blood sacrifices **in the field** to pagan gods (devils) and that this was not acceptable

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<sup>12</sup> The Religion of the Ancient Celts chapter 26, Sacrifice, Prayer and Divination p 237, 244,  
<http://www.sacred-texts.com/neu/celt/rac/rac19.htm> Sacred Texts CD-Rom

according to the writer of Leviticus. Specific instructions, **on pain of death**, were given to the Israelites to bring their animals to the sanctuary for sacrificing to 'god', while animals required for food purposes, were still permitted to be slaughtered in the field.

The only extra stipulation was that when the Israelites slaughtered the food animal, the blood had to be covered with dirt – probably for health reasons – instead of being poured out as a thank offering to 'god.' Just as in many pagan ceremonies, the offering of blood to the gods was not permitted to be made by anyone who was not an ordained priest. If this 'sacred' ritual was performed by a mere 'layperson', it was a serious crime and the Israelite offender earned the death penalty. He was 'cut off' i.e. killed.

In contrast, an animal sacrificed for religious purposes, was to be taken to the door of the tabernacle for a ritualistic slaughtering, and its blood was to be poured out both on the altar and at the door of the tabernacle in the shape of a circle<sup>13</sup>. This same violent sacrifice was then deemed to be 'blessed' by god, simply because the location was in the tabernacle, and the mediation of the blood had been properly performed by an ordained priest.

### **Question**

Is it likely that the same violent, blood-letting sacrificial ritual was practiced by both pagans and Israelites – the only difference appearing to be the location of the death of the animal and the mediation of an ordained priest who was qualified to pour out the blood to 'god.' Historian, Philo comments on the Jewish sanctuary services:

“The blood of the animal being poured at the altar in a circle, the perfect figure; for blood is life, and the ritual action expresses the will of the mind to serve God completely” Philo in *De Spec. Leg.* 1 p 204-205 cited in *The Jewish Temple*, (CTR Hayward, 1996: 117).

### **Did All the Sanctuary Sacrifices Represent Christ?**

It was prophesied of the Messiah, that none of His bones would be broken.

Psalm 34:20

“He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.”

John's witness confirms the prophecy was fulfilled.

John 19:36

“For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.”

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<sup>13</sup> Philo, cited in *The Jewish Temple*, CTR Hayward, (1996) p 117



According to the instructions concerning the feast of the Passover, none of the lamb's bones were to be broken. Thus the Passover is said to symbolise Christ - that none of Christ's bones would be broken when He died on the cross. However when John demonstrated that prophecy had been fulfilled, he referred to David's prophecy, **not** to the sacrificial ceremonies in the Mosaic law. Christ certainly fulfilled the Messianic prophecy in that none of His bones were broken when He laid down His life for humanity, but why didn't Christ announce Himself as the Lamb of God?

**Christ called Himself :**

- ***the Bread of Heaven,***
- ***the Bread of Life;***
- ***the Water of Life;***
- but never the **“Lamb of God.”** Furthermore, Christ is never referred to as “the bull of God,” “the red heifer of God,” “the goat of God” or “the turtledove of God,” so why was He called by others, “the Lamb of God” twice and “the Lamb which was slain” three times?

Isaiah prophesied in his Messianic prophecy that ***Christ's character was*** lamb-like in His tolerance of the violence heaped upon Him. His **character** was demonstrated to be “harmless and undefiled.” He was, and still is, long-suffering and gentle, even under severe provocation.

Isaiah 53:7

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.”

John the Baptist and John the Revelator referred to Christ as 'the Lamb' (John 1:29, 26; Rev 5:6, 12; 13:8). Paul used the expression, “Christ our Passover,” and Peter also compares the blood (life/soul) of Christ to a lamb “without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:19). Such expressions were used to communicate the truth to Jewish minds, steeped in the Jewish sacrificial culture, that Jesus was the true Messiah, but Jesus Himself did not claim to be His Father's sacrificial lamb.

Christ's sacrifice of becoming a mortal, human being was the reason that sinners, were 'passed over' and offered life instead of death as they deserved. But Christ's victory was not made effective **because** of a blood-letting, torturous and abusive death. Christ made the ultimate sacrifice for humanity, when as the Son of God, He took on the responsibility of redeeming the sinful human race by becoming a mortal man and living a holy life, in sinful flesh.

Christ accepted the death sentence when He became a human being. Whenever He would have died, His death would have redeemed humanity – but only if Christ had lived a sinless life. By heaping torture upon Christ, Satan endeavoured to prevent Jesus from living a sinless, unselfish life. In this sense, Christ is indeed our Passover. He and the Father sacrificed “all heaven” for us. Christ sacrificed His high position as the Prince of heaven and took on sinful humanity. Christ sacrificed His honour, His majesty and glory in order to redeem humanity. <sup>14</sup>

And finally, as Satan was intent on destroying His human body, Christ laid down His life and died the death which belonged to sinful humanity. But the Father did not require a blood-letting ritual to atone for sin. He ***did require a perfect human character though, and in order to provide that character, Christ had to accept mortality as a human being.***

Humanity owes no gratitude to Satan for organising the torturous death of the Son of God on a pagan cross. Whenever Christ laid down His life, it would have redeemed humanity – as long as Christ's life and character were sinless.

However, if ***all*** the sanctuary sacrifices are said to represent Christ's sacrifice, then shouldn't all of the sacrificial rites have avoided breaking the animals' bones?

If an animal's bones are broken, how could the sacrificed animal then represent Christ's sacrifice?

For instance, one might logically question how the turtle dove sacrifices could accurately portray Christ's sacrifice.

When poor people, who had sinned, were seeking to obtain atonement and forgiveness, they were required to bring two turtle doves to be sacrificed - one as a sin offering and another as a burnt offering.

Leviticus 5:5-9

“And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing: (6) And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin. (7) And if he be not able to bring a lamb,

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<sup>14</sup>Ellen White: “Do you contemplate that Christ sacrificed his majesty, his honor and glory to bring salvation within your reach and save every son and daughter of Adam?” *An Important Testimony to our Brethren and Sisters in New York PH039.008.002 (1887)*

then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, **two turtledoves**, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering. (8) And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer that which is for the sin offering first, and **wring off his head from his neck**, but shall not divide it asunder: (9) And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin offering upon the side of the altar; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: it is a sin offering."

The act of wringing off the head from the neck of one of two turtle doves involved the breaking of its neckbones. This cannot represent the death of Jesus Christ, for in fulfilment of David's prophecy in Psalm 43:20, **Christ's** bones were not broken.

Furthermore, it is difficult to imagine that a burnt offering typified Christ's death in any way as Christ's body was never burnt. It is interesting to note however, that sacrifices made by pagans, were burnt to represent and honour the sun god. The sun god's supposed attributes of life and energy, were represented by the fire on the altar of burnt offering.

Furthermore the Israelites' sacrificial laws involved many more abhorrent sacrificial practices, many which are still practiced in witchcraft, animist and pagan religions today. Such sacrificial rituals required:

- the slitting of the throat with a knife;
- the breaking of bones;
- the flaying or skinning of the animal;
- the tearing apart of the bodies of doves and pigeons with the hands, by grasping and pulling the wings;
- the sprinkling of animal's blood on furniture, altars and on people;
- the chopping off of the legs and tail;
- the removal of the kidneys and fat;
- the disemboweling of animals;
- washing for ritualised purification of the animal's internal organs and feet;
- the incineration of the animals' bodies by fire to please the 'god';
- the rearranging of the animals' dismembered body parts on an altar.

None of these gorey and barbaric actions are represented in a prophecy concerning Jesus' death, so how can these actions be a shadow of Christ's ministry?

In addition, God's initial plan for humanity was that they consume a non-flesh diet, but the Mosaic laws required that the priests eat animal flesh as part of a religious rite to achieve forgiveness of sins.

Similar beliefs and rituals are still held and practiced in the Roman Catholic and other religions.

How can the Mosaic command to consume a flesh eating diet, be harmonised with God's original diet for humanity?

How can the Mosaic principle of eating flesh to achieve forgiveness/atonement of sins, be harmonised with the fact that forgiveness of sins is only possible through Christ empowering a conversion of the mind?

### **Blood Sacrifices**

Did God require blood sacrifices in the sanctuary services for an atonement to be made for sin? Some verses in the Bible state "yes;" other verses state "no." Samples of both follow.

### **Animal Sacrifices Required:**

Exodus 20:24

"An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee."

Leviticus 1:5-9, 14-17

"And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that is by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. (6) And he shall flay the burnt offering, and cut it into his pieces. (7) And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire: (8) And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar: (9) But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD....(14) And if the burnt sacrifice for his offering to the LORD be of fowls, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves, or of young pigeons. (15) And the priest shall bring it unto the altar, and wring off his head, and burn it on the altar; and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar: (16) And he shall pluck away his crop with his feathers, and cast it beside the altar on the east part, by the place of the ashes: (17) And he shall cleave it with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD."

Ezekiel 43:23-25

“When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish. (24) And thou shalt offer them before the LORD, and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up for a burnt offering unto the LORD. (25) Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish.”

Leviticus 5:1-10

“And if a soul sin, and hear the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity. (2) Or if a soul touch any unclean thing, whether it be a carcase of an unclean beast, or a carcase of unclean cattle, or the carcase of unclean creeping things, and if it be hidden from him; he also shall be unclean, and guilty. (3) Or if he touch the uncleanness of man, whatsoever uncleanness it be that a man shall be defiled withal, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty. (4) Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with his lips to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever it be that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty in one of these. (5) And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing: (6) And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin. (7) And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering. (8) And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer that which is for the sin offering first, and wring off his head from his neck, but shall not divide it asunder: (9) And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin offering upon the side of the altar; and the rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: it is a sin offering. (10) And he shall offer the second for a burnt offering, according to the manner: and the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him.

### **Animal Sacrifices Not Required**

Immediately following the previous section in Leviticus chapter 5, a curious situation occurs.

Leviticus 5:11-13

But if he be not able to bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, then he that sinned shall bring for his offering the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering; he shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon: for it is a sin offering. (12) Then shall he bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it, even a memorial thereof, and burn it on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: it is a sin offering. (13) **And the priest shall make an atonement for him as touching his sin that he hath**

***sinned in one of these, and it shall be forgiven him:*** and the remnant shall be the priest's, as a meat offering."

Verse 13 depicts a sinner being forgiven of his sins and an atonement being made for his sins - ***without the shedding of blood.*** However, according to Leviticus and Hebrews, remission of sins is not possible without the shedding of blood.<sup>15</sup>

Jeremiah 7:21, 22

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. (22) **For I spake 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.**"

Micah 6:7, 8

"Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? (8) He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and ***what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?***"

**Jeremiah 9:24**

**"But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in *these* things I delight, saith the LORD."**

Psalms 40:6 -8

"Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.(7) Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, (8) I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is ***within my heart.***

Hebrews 10:5

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:"

Psalms 4:5

"Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD."

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<sup>15</sup> *Leviticus 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."*  
*Hebrews 9:22 "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."*

1 Samuel 15:22

“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.”

Psalms 51:17

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

Proverbs 12:10

“A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.”

Proverbs 17:1

“Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.”

Isaiah 1:11

“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.”

Jeremiah 7:21

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.”

Mark 12:33

“And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

Acts 7:42

“Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to ME slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?”

Hebrews 10:1, 6

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. (6) “In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.”

Hebrews 13:16

“But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”



1 Peter 2:5

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

A team of Jewish authorities (Emil G. Hirsch, Kaufmann Kohler, M. Seligsohn Isidore Singer, Jacob Zallel Lauterbach and Joseph Jacobs) suggest that among other ideas, the sacrificial system might not have been instigated by God, but was a human invention which was **“expressive of man's delight.”**

*“The sacrificial scheme was the target at which gnostics and other skeptics shot their arrows. God, it was argued, manifested Himself in this as a strict accountant and judge, but not as the author of the highest goodness and mercy. In refutation, Ben 'Azzai calls attention to the fact that in connection with the sacrifices the only name used to designate God is Yhwh, the unique name ("Shem ha-Meyuḥad; Sifra, Wayikra, ii. [ed. Weiss, p. 4c], with R. Jose b. Ḥalafta as author; Men. 110a; Sifre, Num. 143). Basing his inference on the phrase "for your pleasure shall ye offer up" (Lev. xxii. 29, Hebr.), Ben 'Azzai insists also that sacrifices were not planned on the theory that, God's will having been done by man, man's will must be done in corresponding measure by God: **they were merely expressive of man's delight; and God did not need them (Ps. I. 12, 13; Sifre, I.c.; Men. 110a).***

<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=35&letter=S>

From the website Jewish Veg (Frequently Asked Questions - FAQ) appears the article entitled, *“If God wanted us to have vegetarian diets and not harm animals, why were the Biblical sacrificial services established?”*

<http://www.jewishveg.com/faq03.html>

The sacrificial services are discussed and the following comment made:

*“Rashi indicated that God did not want the Israelites to bring sacrifices; it was their choice. He bases this on the haphtorah (portion from the Prophets) read on the Sabbath when the book of Leviticus which discusses sacrifices is read: 'I have not burdened thee with a meal-offering, Nor wearied thee with frankincense. (Isaiah 43:23)' Biblical commentator David Kimhi (1160-1235) also stated that the sacrifices were voluntary. He ascertained this from the words of Jeremiah: For I spoke not unto your fathers, nor commanded them on the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices; but this thing I commanded them, saying, "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. (Jeremiah 7:22-23) David Kimchi, notes that nowhere in the Ten Commandments is there any reference to sacrifice, and even when*

*sacrifices are first mentioned (Lev. 1:2) the expression used is "when any man of you bringeth an offering," the first Hebrew **we ki** being literally "if", implying that it was a voluntary act."*

## **Christ's Bloodless Ceremony - the Lord's Supper**

John 6:32-35; 50-58

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. (33) For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. (34) Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. (35) And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst... (50) This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. (51) **I am the living bread which came down from heaven:** if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. (52) The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? (53) Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.** (54) **Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life;** and I will raise him up **at the last day.** (55) **For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.** (56) **He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.** (57) As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so **he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.** (58) This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."

Cannibalism does not make anyone live forever, so clearly Christ did not institute a mindless, cannibalistic ceremony. Therefore the words Christ uttered must have a spiritual meaning.

At the Lord's Supper, Jesus demonstrated that the grape juice and bread represented a spiritual component of His ministry in the plan of salvation. The bread represented His human body which was prepared for Him so He could become mortal and therefore lay down His life. But by eating his flesh, Christ meant, believing on him - having faith in Him as their Messiah and Saviour, and thus receiving spiritual life and nourishment from him. The grape juice represented Christ's new testament *in His blood* - His life and spirit (His soul). Christ's entire life (His earthly ministry as Messiah and His spiritual ministry as High Priest) will provide eternal life to those who are justified by His life and sanctified by faith.

Luke 22:15-20

"And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: (16) For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be

fulfilled in the kingdom of God. (17) And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: (18) For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. (19) And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. (20) Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.”

If the Passover lamb represented Christ's sacrifice, it would seem logical to expect that the blood of the sacrificed lamb would represent Christ's blood. It would seem logical to expect that the flesh of the sacrificed lamb would represent Christ's body. Yet Christ chose non-blood and non-flesh emblems to represent His death. Christ instructed the disciples that the bread represented His body (His humanity) and that the grape juice represented His blood (His life, His spirit, His mind).

Some might assert Christ simply changed the sacrificial system, without regarding it as faulty. If so, why didn't Christ ever refer to Himself as the Passover lamb, or any other sacrificial beast?

Christ did refer to Himself as “the good shepherd” (John 10:11, 14) and He had perfect opportunity to compare Himself to the sacrificial beasts if He chose to do so. He certainly spoke of His impending death many times, but never appeared to compare His death with the slaughter of the Passover lamb.<sup>16</sup> Was Christ's silence on this issue significant?

In contrast to the Passover lamb and sanctuary sacrifices, when Christ introduced the Lord's Supper as a commemoration of His death, He compared His body (His humanity) and blood (His spirit, mind) - His entire life and existence - to non-blood symbols. Wasn't it rather unusual for Christ to institute a **memorial** supposedly of a blood-letting event, with pure, bloodless symbols?

But it is obvious from the Lord's Supper, that the bloodless symbols were considered appropriate by Christ to represent His life and death. Christ did not institute a ceremony or ritual which required the shedding of blood.

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<sup>16</sup>Concerning the origin of the Hebrew word which is translated as “passover,” Alfred de Grazia, in **God's Fire and the Exodus: Management of Exodus**, writes:

“The lintels of Hebrew houses were marked with sheep's blood to inform Yahweh not to destroy his people dwelling within, particularly the first-born. Many Arabs continue this custom. Yahweh would “pass over” them. Prof. Beer finds in the word “*passah*” **the original meaning “Jumping of the ram.”** *Several images now occur: the original spring sacrifices, the identification of Yahweh with the ram of Egyptian Thoth (Hermes) and thus a clue to Moses' religious origins, the passing over of the god in a cometary form, the awesome destruction of most homes and buildings by violent earthquake, and the passover into the desert from Egypt.”*

[http://grazian-archive.com/quantavolution/QuantaHTML/plaintext/gods\\_fire.txt](http://grazian-archive.com/quantavolution/QuantaHTML/plaintext/gods_fire.txt)

Christ assured His disciples that His life demonstrates exactly, the character of the Father. Christ declared that the works of His Father were those, which He, the Son of God, performed.

John 5:36; 14:10, 11

“But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. (10) Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. (11) Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. ”

In other words, Jesus appears to be saying, *“if you can't see that I'm the divine Son of God by my character, then at least believe it because of the good works you see me doing. Those works reflect the Father's character.”*

Jesus showed us the Father. If Jesus did not even refer to the Passover lamb as representing Himself, is it logically to assume that the Father required blood-letting sacrifices in the first place to point **towards** the death of His Son? Or might the sacrificial rites have been morphed into the true sanctuary services in error as the Israelites mixed with the pagan countries around them?

Both the fresh grape juice and the unleavened bread used at the Passover feast, were pure. No yeast appeared in the bread and no fermentation was permitted in the grape juice (Exodus 12). Both these aspects of purity typified the fact that Christ's LIFE was pure and free from any sin.

It was prophesied that a human body would be prepared for Christ, to enable Him to live and die as a human being – and as a human being (the Second Adam), to develop a perfect human character.

Hebrews 10:5

“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.”

Christ instructed His disciples that His body soul was represented by the Passover bread and grape juice.

The Bread of Life is the righteousness of Christ's character. It is the product of His perfect life. It is the essence of His life which He made available to humanity as a covering robe. His unselfish holy spirit/mind fills the believer and gives new spiritual life, just as bread is eaten to sustain the physical life.

Christ's life demonstrated the truth about God's loving character. “If ye have seen me, ye have seen the Father” (John 14:9). By partaking of Christ's

body – the Bread of Life – the Righteousness of Christ – a believer is renewed spiritually.

## The Bread

Romans 5:6, 8.

*"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly..." "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*

Grain offerings were offered to God in the Old Testament and were called "bread."

The Hebrew word used for "bread" supports the belief that Christ did **not** appear to associate His body with the murdered lamb – the physical **flesh** and **blood** sacrifice of the Passover lamb, but with the sacrifice of His divine position in Heaven to become the New Representative of the sinful, human race and its inherent mortality.

Leviticus 21:6, 6, 17

"They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God: for the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and **the bread of their God**, they do offer: therefore they shall be holy... (8) Thou shalt sanctify him therefore; for he offereth **the bread of thy God**: he shall be holy unto thee: for I the LORD, which sanctify you, am holy... (17) Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever he be of thy seed in their generations that hath any blemish, let him not approach to offer **the bread of his God.**"

<sup>6</sup>They shall be holy <06944> unto their God <0430>, and not profane <02490> (8762) the name <08034> of their God <0430>: for the offerings <00> <0801> of the LORD <03068> made by fire <0801>, and the **bread** <03899> of their God <0430>, they do offer <07126> (8688): therefore they shall be holy <06918>.

**Strong's Hebrew Concordance # 03899: bread**

<03899> lechem lekh'-em from 3898; food (for man or beast), **especially bread, or grain** (for making it):--((shew-))bread, X eat, food, fruit, loaf, meat, victuals. See also 1036. see HEBREW for 03898 see HEBREW for 01036

Ellen White, **Bible Training School**, Sanctification, 1 February, 1904

"God requires of us conformity to His image. Holiness is the reflection from His people of the bright rays of His glory. But in

order to reflect this glory we must work with God. The heart and mind must be emptied of all that leads to wrong. The Word of God must be read and studied, with an earnest desire to gain from it spiritual power. **The bread of heaven must be eaten and digested, that it may become a part of the life. Thus we gain eternal life.** Then is answered the prayer of the Saviour, "Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth."

How can Christians eat the Bread of Life? By asking God to send His spirit (mind) and to renew a right spirit in them (Jer 31:33).

Ellen White, 3 Spiritual Gifts, p 227

*"Here our Saviour instituted the Lord's supper, to be often celebrated, to keep fresh in the memory of his followers the solemn scenes of his betrayal and crucifixion for the sins of the world. He would have his followers realize their continual dependence upon his blood for salvation. The broken bread was a symbol of Christ's broken body, given for the salvation of the world. The wine was a symbol of his blood, shed for the cleansing of the sins of all those who should come unto him for pardon, and receive him as their Saviour."*

A. T. Jones, Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald, September 18, 1900  
Galatians 5:16-18

*"If men were to be saved by being delivered utterly from the flesh just as it is, then Jesus need never have come to the world. If men were to be saved by being delivered from all temptation and set in a realm of no temptation, then Jesus need not have come into the world. But never, by any such deliverance as that, could man have developed character. Therefore, instead of trying to save men by delivering them utterly from the flesh just where they were, Jesus came to the world and put himself IN THE FLESH just where men are and met that flesh JUST AS IT IS, with all its tendencies and desires, and by the divine power which he brought by faith, He "condemned sin in the flesh" and thus brought to all mankind that divine faith which brings the divine power to man to deliver him from the power of the flesh and the law of sin, just where he is, and to give him assured dominion over the flesh, just as it is. .... And every soul can have in its fullness that victory, who will receive and keep 'the faith of Jesus.' For 'this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.'"*

The bread symbolises the "Word of God" Whose body was broken by abuse He received as a human being. If believers place faith in Christ, then His spirit/mind will prompt their character development and enable them to live victoriously. This process is called sanctification. The bread at the Lord's Supper reminds us of our dependence on Christ's spirit to develop a holy character.

## **The Cup**

Luke 22: 20

“Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.”

Jesus instructed His disciples that the grape juice represented the new testament [in His blood](#).

Was Jesus suggesting that His blood was to be consumed to enforce the New Covenant? No, for such an instruction would have contradicted the Old Testament command that prohibited consuming blood (Leviticus 17:14) and a command which later in the New Testament, the Jerusalem Council reconfirmed as a principle to be taught to the Gentile believers - to abstain from blood (Acts 15:20).

The New Testament is not speaking about physical rituals. The New Testament refers to the righteousness by faith experience which Christ's sinless life as a mortal man made possible. It is the promise that Christ can save to the uttermost, all who thirst for righteousness and will come to Him.

John 7:37

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink (38) He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (39) (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”

The new covenant which is 'in His blood' - is the promise of a new, victorious life “in Christ” which is made possible by Christ's perfect spirit/mind 'in the life' of the believer.

Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26, 27

“**And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:** (ch 36:verse 26) A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. (27) And I will put my spirit within you, **and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.**”

Jeremiah 31:33-34

“But **this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel;** After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. (34) And



they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

The Old Testament asserts that 'the life in the blood.’ Does the new covenant life harmonise with this concept? Yes. In fact, it is the same concept, but appears that it was misunderstood and misapplied by the Israelites.

Leviticus 17:11

<sup>11</sup> For the life <05315> of the flesh <01320> is in the blood <01818> : and I have given <05414> (8804) it to you upon the altar <04196> to make an atonement <03722> (8763) for your souls <05315> : for it is the blood <01818> that maketh an atonement <03722> (8762) for the soul <05315> .

**Darby Translation Notes on Leviticus 17:11:**

'Life' and 'soul' are the same Hebrew word. The literal meaning is 'in souls.' Or 'that maketh atonement by the soul (or life).'

Leviticus 17:14

“For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: **for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof**: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.”

**Darby Translation Notes on Leviticus 17:14:**

Literally: “Its blood is for its life.” The preposition used here denotes *essence*.

The meaning or the essence of the blood, is life or 'life force' or spirit. So too, the grape juice is a symbol of Christ's death, but the believer's new, pure spotless LIFE in Christ, because Christ became mortal for humanity's sake.

Romans 8:2,10

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death....” (10) And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. “

EJ Waggoner, General Conference Sermons, 1891, Study #12, Romans 8:1-16

*“Again Christ said, 'He that believeth on Me . . . out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.' And this He spake of the Spirit, that He would give. Said Christ again said to the woman at the well, 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up*

*unto everlasting life.' Why? 'For if the Spirit that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.' Here is the hope of the resurrection again. What remains to be done when the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in you? Only to quicken, that is, to make alive, our mortal bodies."*

The grape juice demonstrates justification - forgiveness of sins and redemption. The Lord's Supper reminds us of our dependence on Christ gift of life which He gave to each of us at great risk to His own eternal existence.

By instituting the Lord's Supper, Jesus upheld the divine principle revealed in the Old Testament concerning abstinence from blood in the diet, and then introduced a meaningful, yet bloodless ceremony to mark the significance of His pure life as the spotless Son of Man.

## **The Doctrine of Indulgences**

Martin Luther began the Protestant reformation when he took a strong position against the Roman Catholic doctrine of indulgences, which the papal representative Tetzel was selling to those who believed they could pay a fee for the service of being forgiven. Fundamental Protestants still affirm Luther's position against indulgences, however, a very similar system operated in the Hebrew sacrificial system as recorded in Leviticus.

Leviticus 6:1-7

*"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, (2) If a soul sin, and **commit a trespass against the LORD**, and **lie unto his neighbour** in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in **a thing taken away by violence**, or hath **deceived his neighbour**; (3) Or have found that which was lost, and **lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely**; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein: (4) Then it shall be, **because he hath sinned, and is guilty**, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found, (5) Or all that about which he hath sworn falsely; **he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto**, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering. (6) And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest: (7) **And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD: and it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein."***

In the preceding paragraph, a penalty is given to 'informed' sinners who are guilty of intentionally breaking at least three of the 10 commandments (stealing; bearing false witness and coveting).

The legal process outlined in Leviticus 6 declares that three steps must be taken to restore the criminal to a 'forgiven/holy' status:

- restore the stolen goods;
- pay a fine of 20% to the victim; and
- present and sacrifice an expensive animal (a ram) at the sanctuary/temple.

There are several difficulties with these legal steps.

- heartfelt confession was not necessarily an accomplishment to the sacrifice of the beast as a requirement for forgiveness of sins; and
- a poor person is discriminated against in four ways. They are:
  - 1) unable to afford the 20% fine; and
  - 2) they are unable to afford the expensive sacrificial ram;
  - 3) they are sold into slavery (Exodus 22:3)<sup>17</sup>;
  - 4) they remain unforgiven, since they could not afford to pay the fine or purchase the required sacrificial ram to secure an atonement for their sin.

This discriminatory system of penalties permitted the rich to steal (sin) to the level that their wealth dictated – and secure forgiveness, while the poor who were unable to pay the fines, were sold into slavery and remained unforgiven.

The Roman Catholic doctrine of indulgences claims that premeditated sins can be forgiven – for a suitable price, while Protestants generally believe that heartfelt repentance marks true confession and a turning away from sin.

Hebrews 10:26

“For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins (27) But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”

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<sup>17</sup> Exodus 22:3 (concerning a financially poor thief) “... if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.”

Jesus puts it more clearly:

John 9:41

“Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.”

And Paul reiterates Christ's words.

Acts 17:30

“And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.”

1 Timothy 1:13 (Paul speaking of his sinful past)

“Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.”

Ignorant sinners are shown divine mercy, but premeditated sinning is not condoned in Christ's government.

The Levitical laws mentioned in this section appear to promote

- the use of violence against animals; and
- the doctrine of indulgences.

One might ask the question, 'would the Father – the God of peace (Rom 15:33; 16:20; Phil 4:9; 1 Thess 5:23; Heb 13:20) and gentleness (2 Sam 22:36; Psa 18:35; Gal 5:22; 2 Cor 10:1<sup>18</sup>) – the God of equality – originate such discriminatory and violent laws?'

### **God's Law is a Description of His Character:**

- **lovingkindness**

**Jeremiah 9:24**

**“I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.**

- **non-discriminatory**

Matthew 5:45; Acts 10:34

(Jesus said), “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just

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<sup>18</sup> “the meekness and gentleness of Christ,” 2 Cor 10:1

and on the unjust.” (Peter said), “God is no respecter of persons: (35) But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

- **converting, causing true repentance**

Psalms 19:7

“The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul.”

- **holy, just, good**

Romans 7:12

“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.”

- **fulfilled by loving and helping others**

James 2:8; Galatians 6:2

“If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.” “Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”

- **gentleness and meekness**

2 Corinthians 10:1

“Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you.”

- **righteousness**

Galatians 5:22, 23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (23), meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

- **non-violent, non-deceptive**

Isaiah 53:9

“And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.”

### **Comparing the (Characters of the) Sanctuaries**

In view of Ellen White's conviction that the sanctuary services were designed between the Father and Son in their heavenly counsels, one might begin to question if the sanctuary services were adulterated after the Israelites' interaction with pagan nations. Some theologians have suggested that pagan nations copied the Israelites' services, however there are problems that accompany this view (see objection #29).

The earthly sanctuary was said to be designed after the pattern of the sanctuary in heaven, but in comparing the Israelites sanctuary services with pagan nations temples and ceremonies, the similarities are extremely difficult to deny. It is apparent that it was not **God's** intention to have animals sacrificed to appease His anger; to purify the worshippers' souls; or as a means of achieving eternal life as both the Jews and pagans seemed to believe.

Despite the great spiritual darkness that Israel descended into, God was still able to make His truth known in the midst of extreme wickedness, and He did not cast off the Israelites because of the many evil practices in which they participated. God issued instructions designed to counteract evil arising from their unrighteous acts (polygamy, divorce). Could it be possible that the sanctuary services were adulterated to such a degree, that the love of God and the plan of salvation were only barely discernible – as though a veil was over their hearts? Is it possible that the original sanctuary services, which accurately reflected the heavenly sanctuary, also became obscured, because of the hardness of the Israelites hearts?

2 Corinthians 3:13-16

“And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: (14) But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. (15) But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. (16) Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.”

The Israelites had physically come out of Egypt, but they still carried Egyptian spiritual philosophy in their minds. These beliefs and practices were evidenced in their religious rituals, and were most evident at times of their national apostasy.

According to Old Testament references, along with pagan sacrifices, illicit (pagan) sexual activities appear to have been practised by the Israelites in idolatrous worship, yet they were “the chosen people” and promised to be obedient to the One True God (1 Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:46; 2 Kings 23:7).

God had great mercy on the Israelites. He dealt patiently with them, endeavouring to lead them out of paganism and into a deeper understanding of His loving righteousness. God would have led them out of paganism, as quickly as they would follow Him. The problem was not with God -it was with the people.

It appears that the ancient Israelites become so confused in their dealings with the pagan nations around them – so desensitised to their pagan sexual and child-burning worship rituals - that they confused the character of the pure and holy Creator, the One True God with the blended, good/evil character of the Canaanite religions?

## **The Biblical and historical evidence appears to strongly support this hypothesis.**

Walther Zimmerli (1907–1984) was Professor of Old Testament at the University of Göttingen, Germany, and considered by many as one of the most important biblical scholars of the twentieth century. Among his many publications in English are *Ezekiel*, 2 vols. (Hermeneia; Fortress Press, 1979/1983), *I Am Yahweh* (1982), *The Old Testament and the World* (1976), and *The Law and the Prophets* (1965). In *The Law and the Prophets*, Zimmerli writes:

*“In this connection Hosea attacks with particular passion the priests who should have been the true guardians of the knowledge of God, and who have especially failed in this duty (Hosea iv. 4 ff.). **They have allowed to pass unnoticed the very real exchange of Yahweh, the God of Israel, for the baals of Canaan.** This was no longer the same threat which had occurred in Elijah's time, it was something much more dangerous. **While the worship of Yahweh remained outwardly correct, in reality he had come to be regarded as a nature deity like the Canaanite Baal.** From him men sought the fertility of the soil and of marriage; he was worshipped with the forms of nature religion and with sacral prostitution, as men worshipped the Baals. **Yahweh became Baal. The name of one of David's warriors, which is recorded in I Chronicles 12:5 as Bealiah (Yahweh is Baal) demonstrates exactly this programmatic assertion.** Thus without knowing it, **Israel had begun to misunderstand the very nature of its God,** because the professional guardians of a true knowledge of him were asleep” (Walther Zimmerli, *The Law and the Prophets*, Basil Blackwell 1965 p.70).*

Columbia University Press Encyclopedia at Answers.com presents the following information concerning Baal, a pagan god who is acknowledged at an idol which represented Satan as he attempts to imitate the Creator – the One True God.

Baal (bā'əl) , plural Baalim (bā'əlīm) [Semitic, =master, lord], name used throughout the Bible for the chief deity or for deities of Canaan. The term was originally an epithet applied to the storm god Hadad. Technically, Baal was subordinate to El. Baal is attested in the Ebla texts (first half of 2d millennium B.C.). By the time of the Ugarit tablets (14th cent. B.C.), Baal had become the ruler of the universe. The Ugarit tablets make him chief of the Canaanite pantheon. He is the source of life and fertility, the mightiest hero, the lord of war, and the defeater of the god Yam. **There were many temples of Baal in Canaan, and the name Baal was often added to that of a locality**, e.g. Baal-peor, Baal-hazor, Baal-hermon. The Baal cult penetrated Israel and at times led to syncretism. **In the Psalms, Yahweh is depicted as Baal and his dwelling is on Mt. Zaphon (Zion), the locale of Baal in Canaanite mythology.** The practice of sacred



prostitution seems to have been associated with the worship of Baal in Palestine and the cult was vehemently denounced by the prophets, especially Hosea and Jeremiah. *The abhorrence in which the cult was held probably explains the substitution of Ish-bosheth for Esh-baal, of Jerubbesheth for Jerubbaal (a name of Gideon), and of Mephibosheth for Merib-baal. The substituted term probably means "shame." The same abhorrence is evident the use of the pejorative name Baal-zebul (see also Satan). The Baal of 1 Chronicles is probably the same as Ramah 2. As cognates of Baal in other Semitic languages there are Bel (in Babylonian religion) and the last elements in the Tyrian names Jezebel, Hasdrubal, and Hannibal."*

[http://www.answers.com/main/ntquery;jsessionid=29133c32f48kr?tname=baal&curtab=2222\\_1&hl=bealiah&sbid=lc05b](http://www.answers.com/main/ntquery;jsessionid=29133c32f48kr?tname=baal&curtab=2222_1&hl=bealiah&sbid=lc05b)

*Wikipedia Encyclopedia, Baal:*

"After Gideon's death, according to Judges 8.33, the Israelites went astray and started to worship the Ba'alim (the Ba'als) especially Ba'al Berith 'Lord of the Covenant'. A few verses later (Judge 9.4) the story turns to all the citizens of Shechem - actually kol-ba'alê šakem another case of normal use of ba'al not applied to a deity. These citizens of Shechem support Abimelech's attempt to become king by giving him 70 shekels from the House of Ba'al Berith. It is hard to disassociate this Lord of the Covenant who is worshipped in Shechem from the covenant at Shechem described earlier in Joshua 24.25 in which the people agree to worship Yahweh. It is especially hard to do so when Judges 9.46 relates that all "the holders of the tower of Shechem" (kol-ba'alê midgal-šakem) enter bêl 'el bərîl 'the House of El Berith', that is, 'the House of God of the Covenant'. Was Ba'al then here just a title for El? Or did the covenant of Shechem perhaps originally not involve El at all but some other god who bore the title Ba'al? Or were there different viewpoints about Yahweh, some seeing him as an aspect of Hadad, some as an aspect of El, some with other theories? Again there is no clear answer. We also find Eshbaal (one of Saul's sons) and Beeliada (a son of David). The last name also appears as Eliada. This might show that at some period Ba'al and El were used interchangeably even in the same name applied to the same person. More likely a later hand has cleaned up the text. Editors did play around with some names, sometimes substituting the form bosheth 'abomination' for ba'al in names, whence the forms Ishbosheth instead of Eshbaal and Mephibosheth which is rendered Meribaal in 1 Chronicles 9.40. **1 Chronicles 12:5 gives us the name Bealiah (more accurately bə'alyâ) meaning 'Yahweh is Ba'al'."**

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, presents information concerning Baal, from the research of AH Sayce.

*“Temples of Baal at Samaria and Jerusalem are mentioned in 1Ki 1:18; where they had been erected at the time when the Ahab dynasty endeavored to fuse Israelites and Jews and Phoenicians into a single people under the same national Phoenician god. Altars on which incense was burned to Baal were set up in all the streets of Jerusalem according to Jeremiah (11:13), apparently on the flat roofs of the houses (Jer 32:29); and the temple of Baal contained an image of the god in the shape of a pillar or Bethel (2Ki 10:26,27). In the reign of Ahab, Baal was served in Israel by 450 priests (1Ki 18:19), as well as by prophets (2Ki 10:19), and his worshippers wore special vestments when his ritual was performed (2Ki 10:22). The ordinary offering made to the god consisted of incense (Jer 7:9) and burnt sacrifices; on extraordinary occasions the victim was human (Jer 19:5). At times the priests worked themselves into a state of ecstasy, and dancing round the altar slashed themselves with knives (1Kings 18:26,28), like certain dervish orders in modern Islam.”*

AH Sayce demonstrates the two-tone, blended character of the pagan deity, Baal: *“As the Sun-god, Baal was worshipped under two aspects, beneficent and destructive. On the one hand he gave light and warmth to his worshippers; on the other hand the fierce heats of summer destroyed the vegetation he had himself brought into being. Hence, human victims were sacrificed to him in order to appease his anger in time of plague or other trouble, the victim being usually the first-born of the sacrificer and being burnt alive. In the Old Testament this is euphemistically termed ‘passing’ the victim ‘through the fire’ (2Ki 16:3; 21:6). The forms under which Baal was worshipped were necessarily as numerous as the communities which worshipped him. Each locality had its own Baal or divine ‘Lord’ who frequently took his name from the city or place to which he belonged. Hence, there was a Baal-Zur, ‘Baal of Tyre’; Baal-hermon, ‘Baal of Hermon’ (Jud 3:3); Baal-Lebanon, ‘Baal of Lebanon’; Baal-Tarz, ‘Baal of Tarsus.’ At other times the title was attached to the name of an individual god; thus we have Bel-Merodach, ‘the Lord Merodach’ (or ‘Bel is Merodach’) at Babylon, Baal-Melkarth at Tyre, Baal-gad (Jos 11:17) in the north of Palestine. Occasionally the second element was noun as in Baal-Shemaim, ‘lord of heaven’ Baalzebub (2Ki 1:2), ‘Lord of flies,’ Baal-Hamman, usually interpreted ‘Lord of heat,’ but more probably ‘Lord of the sunpillar,’ the tutelary deity of Carthage. All these various forms of the Sun-god were collectively known as the Baalim or ‘Baals’ who took their place by the side of the female Ashtaroth and Ashtrim. At Carthage the*

*female consort of Baal was termed Pene-Baal, 'the face' or 'reflection of Baal.'*

[http://www.answers.com/main/ntquery;jsessionid=29l33c32f48kr?tname=baal&curtab=2222\\_1&hl=bealiah&sbid=lc05b](http://www.answers.com/main/ntquery;jsessionid=29l33c32f48kr?tname=baal&curtab=2222_1&hl=bealiah&sbid=lc05b)

It is clearly demonstrated that prior to the time that the Old Testament writings were written down in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, the Israelites were very knowledgeable about the religion of Baal worship.

In that pagan context, is it surprising that the 'blended' character traits of 'the baals' was transferred unto the character of the One True God?

**Understanding the sanctuary services, and how they could have operated without the violence of blood, will bring the truth about God's character into focus and the filth that Satan has attempted to cast on the character of God will be removed.**



## **Ellen White Concerning Sacrifices**

1 Testimonies for the Church, p 25

“My feelings were very sensitive. I dreaded giving pain to any living creature. When I saw animals ill-treated, my heart ached for them. Perhaps my sympathies were more easily excited by suffering because I myself had been the victim of thoughtless cruelty, resulting in the injury that had darkened my childhood. **But when the thought took possession of my mind that God delighted in the torture of His creatures, who were formed in His image, a wall of darkness seemed to separate me from Him.**”

Desire of Ages 1898, p 90 (similar passage Signs of the Times, 6 August, 1896, p 9)

“Mary often remonstrated with Jesus, and urged Him to conform to the usages of the rabbis. But He could not be persuaded to change His habits of contemplating the works of God and **seeking to alleviate the suffering of men or even of dumb animals**. When the priests and teachers required Mary's aid in controlling Jesus, she was greatly troubled; but peace came to her heart as He presented the statements of Scripture upholding His practices.”

Ministry of Healing, p 316

“What man with a human heart, who has ever cared for domestic animals, could look into their eyes, so full of confidence and affection, and willingly give them over to the butcher's knife? How could he devour their flesh as a sweet morsel?”

Signs of the Times, 25 November, 1880, p18

“Here is a lesson to all who have reasoning powers, that harsh treatment, even to the brutes, is offensive to God. Those who profess to love God do not always consider that abuse to animals, or suffering brought upon them by neglect, is a sin. The fruits of divine grace will be as truly revealed in men by the manner in which they treat their beasts, as by their service in the house of God. Those who allow themselves to become impatient or enraged with their animals are not Christians. A man who is harsh, severe and domineering toward the lower animals, because he has them in his power, is both a coward and a tyrant. And he will, if opportunity offers, manifest the same cruel, overbearing spirit toward his wife and children.”

Ministry of Healing, p 316, 317

“The moral evils of a flesh diet are not less marked than are the physical ills. Flesh food is injurious to health, and whatever affects the body has a corresponding effect on the mind and the soul. **Think of the cruelty to animals that meat eating involves, and its effect on those who inflict and those who behold it. How it destroys the tenderness with which we should regard these creatures of God!...(317)** Is it not time that all should aim to dispense with flesh foods? How can those who are seeking to become pure, refined, and holy, that they may have the companionship of heavenly angels, continue to use as food anything that has so harmful an effect on soul and body? **How can they take the life of God's creatures** that they may consume the flesh as a luxury? Let them, rather, return to the wholesome and delicious food

given to man in the beginning, and themselves practice **and teach their children to practice mercy toward the dumb creatures that God has made and has placed under our dominion.**”

Desire of Ages, p 286

“Thus greater care was shown for a dumb animal than for man, who is made in the image of God. This illustrates the working of all false religions. They originate in man's desire to exalt himself above God, but they result in degrading man below the brute. Every religion that wars against the sovereignty of God defrauds man of the glory which was his at the creation, and which is to be restored to him in Christ. Every false religion teaches its adherents to be careless of human needs, sufferings, and rights. The gospel places a high value upon humanity as the purchase of the blood of Christ, and it teaches a tender regard for the wants and woes of man.”

In the light of the foregoing statements, Ellen White's following statements become challenging.

Review and Herald, 6 May, 1875 p 3

“God gave a clear and definite knowledge of his will to Israel by especial precepts, showing the duty of man to God and to his fellow-men. The worship due to God was clearly defined. A special system of rites and ceremonies was established, which would secure the remembrance of God among his people, and thereby serve as a hedge to guard and protect the ten commandments from violation. (4) God's people, whom he calls his peculiar treasure, were privileged with a two-fold system of law; the moral and the ceremonial. The one, pointing back to creation to keep in remembrance the living God who made the world, whose claims are binding upon all men in every dispensation, and which will exist through all time and eternity. The other, given because of man's transgression of the moral law, the obedience to which consisted in sacrifices and offerings pointing to the future redemption. Each is clear and distinct from the other. From the creation the moral law was an essential part of God's divine plan, and was as unchangeable as himself. The ceremonial law was to answer a particular purpose of Christ plan for the salvation of the race. The typical system of sacrifices and offerings was established that through these services the sinner might discern the great offering, Christ. But the Jews were so blinded by pride and sin that but few of them could see farther than the death of beasts as an atonement for sin; and when Christ, whom these offerings prefigured, came, they could not discern him. The ceremonial law was glorious; it was the provision made by Jesus Christ in counsel with his Father, to aid in the salvation of the race. The whole arrangement of the typical system was founded on Christ. Adam saw Christ prefigured in the innocent beast suffering the penalty of his transgression of Jehovah's law. (5) The law of types reached forward to Christ. All hope and faith centered in Christ until type reached its antitype in his death. The statutes and judgments specifying the duty of man to his fellow-men, were full of important instruction, defining and simplifying the principles of the moral law, for the

purpose of increasing religious knowledge, and of preserving God's chosen people distinct and separate from idolatrous nations. "(6) The statutes concerning marriage, inheritance, and strict justice in deal with one another, were peculiar and contrary to the customs and manners of other nations, and were designed of God to keep his people separate from other nations." The necessity of this to preserve the people of God from becoming like the nations who had not the love and fear of God, is the same in this corrupt age, when the transgression of God's law prevails and idolatry exists to a fearful extent. In ancient Israel needed such security, we need it more, to keep us from being utterly confounded with the transgressors of God's law. The hearts of men are so prone to depart from God that there is a necessity for restraint and discipline. (7) The love that God bore to man whom he had created in his own image, led him to give his Son to die for man's transgression, and lest the increase of sin should lead him to forget God and the promised redemption, the system of sacrificial offerings was established to typify the perfect offering of the Son of God."

Ellen White's position appears contradictory.

- She rebukes those who would butcher innocent animals, and yet promotes the idea that the sacrificial system, (which required the brutal slaughtering of many animals), offered the Jews an opportunity to develop their characters;
- She tells SDA's to teach their children to be merciful to animals, but how could the Jews teach their children to practice mercy toward the dumb animals, and not to be careless of their needs and sufferings, while the Jews were to instruct their children how to slit the animals' throats. (Pagan religions also required that children become instructed in these "offerings to the gods");
- How could Ellen White suggest that God's people should eat only a vegetarian diet, while the Jewish sacrificial system required every Jew to eat meat e.g. The paschal lamb?
- How could Ellen White suppose that killing thousands of animals would teach the Israelites the dreadfulness of their sins, when she agrees that God commanded the Israelites to deliberately kill men, women, children and infants? How does a lamb compare to killing a baby? It is far more traumatic to kill a baby than a lamb.

While not denying that Ellen White was shown certain divine revelations, it is still probable that there were issues which were not revealed to her.

As Sabbath-keepers who regard the pioneering Seventh-day Adventists' Principles of Faith as being divinely revealed, shouldn't we continue to advance to further knowledge of the perfect character of Jesus Christ?

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