

# **SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES of the Melchizedek Priesthood**

## **SACRIFICES IN THE CHURCH AGE**

- today's sacrifices are called "spiritual sacrifices (*pneumatikos thusias*)" (1 Peter 2:5): they're offered in the Spirit and are a part of the age of the Spirit—they are Church age sacrifices
  - spiritual sacrifices are offered by priests after the order of Melchizedek (1 Peter 2:5)
  - these spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God (1 Peter 2:5; cf. Rom 15:15–16; Phil 4:18)
- God accepts spiritual sacrifices because of the sacrifice of His Son (1 Peter 2:5; cf. Heb 13:15)
  - God is pleased with spiritual sacrifices (Rom 12:1; Eph 5:2; Phil 4:18; Heb 13:16)

## **KINDS OF SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES**

- ten spiritual sacrifices are mentioned in the New Testament: (1) prayer is a "memorial offering" (Acts 10:4, 31; Rev 5:8; 8:3–4), (2) almsgiving is a "memorial offering" (Acts 10:4), (3) money given to missionaries (Phil 4:18), (4) faith (Phil 2:17), (5) praise (Heb 13:15), (6) doing good (Heb 13:16), (7) sharing (Heb 13:16), (8) our bodies (Rom 12:1), (9) souls saved (evangelism) (Rom 15:15–16), and (10) death by martyrdom (of Paul and Jesus) (Phil 2:17; 2 Tim 4:6; Eph 5:2; cf. Heb 7:27; 9:14, 25, 26, 28; 10:10, 12, 14)
  - any act of self-denial can be offered as a spiritual sacrifice to God

## **FASTING**

- though not mentioned as such, fasting is a spiritual sacrifice that often accompanies the sacrifice of prayer: it shows how serious you are—that you're willing to suffer hunger to bring about God's will on earth
  - fasting will be rewarded (Matt 6:16–18)

## **A RIGHTEOUS LIFE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN SACRIFICES**

- God desires seven qualities more than sacrifices: (1) love (loyalty) (Mark 12:33), (2) compassion (Matt 9:13; 12:7), (3) the knowledge of God (Hosea 6:6), (4) covenant loyalty (*hesed*, Hosea 6:6; cf. Micah 6:6–8), (5) obedience (1 Sam 15:22), (6) do righteousness and justice (Prov 21:3; cf. Micah 6:6–8), (7) to walk humbly with God (Micah 6:6–8)

## **OFFERING SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES**

- you must be spiritual (clean) to offer spiritual sacrifices (for prayer, Psalm 66:18; for good works, 2 Tim 2:21)
  - spiritual sacrifices are costly (cf. 2 Sam 24:18–25)
- spiritual sacrifices will be rewarded by God: almsgiving (Matt 6:3–4), prayer (6:6), fasting (6:16–18), giving to missionaries (Phil 4:17–18), faith (2 Tim 4:7–8; 1 Pet 1:7), good works (Rom 2:6–7; 2 Cor 5:10; Eph 6:8), sharing (1 Tim 6:18–19), evangelism (John 4:36; "planting" in 1 Cor 3:8), preaching and teaching ("watering" in 1 Cor 3:8; "building" in 3:9–17), martyrdom (Rev 2:10)
- the sacrifice of Christ was rewarded with rule over all—session at the right hand of the Father (Heb 10:12; cf. Eph 1:20–22)

## **LANGUAGE OF SACRIFICE TODAY**

- sacrificial lingo is still with us, but the associations with our priesthood have become fuzzy and blurred
- allusions to spiritual sacrifices are found in worship services today: (1) an "offering" is collected during an "offertory" and placed on an "altar" near the front of the church, (2) "sacrificial giving" is encouraged along with "offering praise" and "offering prayer"