

## A THANK OFFERING FOR GOD – “HONOR HIM”

As we begin our series for the month of November I'm calling “A Thank Offering for God,” it may serve to spend a few moments considering the concept. What is a “Thank Offering” anyway? Is it a collection taken up over the Thanksgiving Holidays? Though one could do that, it's not quite in line with the Biblical examples. **What is a Thank Offering?**

*The “Thank-Offerings” were eucharistic/ thankful in nature and made by the Jewish people indicating that they were already reconciled to and in covenant with God. Some details can be found throughout the book of Leviticus (chapters 3;7:7-18;19:5-8; 23:19) These were also called “fellowship” or “peace” offerings but not because they were offered in hopes of appeasing God or to make amends for some wrong they'd done. They expressed gratitude for the beautiful relationship that already existed. Though there are specifics about how the offering is to be made – with a real emphasis on the quality of the sacrifice - the thing that impresses me most is that the thankfulness in the heart of the giver is what made it an aroma pleasing to the Lord.*

*Unlike other sacrifices, they were not normally (Pentecost may be an exception) offered at set times or seasons. The Thank Offering was usually spontaneous, as the feelings of appreciation and gratitude arose in the heart of the one making the sacrifice. Thank offerings might be made during periods of rejoicing or when making solemn pledges. In only two cases (Judges 20:26; 2 Samuel 24:26) do they accompany repentance and/or fasting - yet even then it is with anticipation that God's forgiveness is available for the asking. Often, if the sacrifice was edible, it would actually be eaten afterward.*

So in this season, rather than focus on the mechanics of such an offering we're going to ponder the prompts for it. And there are many. Consider closely **Psalm 50:23** and see if you can pick up on what I believe is the primary motivation. The LORD says there. **“He who sacrifices thank offerings honors Me...”** Please don't miss this.

**Thank Offerings Honor God.** And doesn't He deserve to be honored? Absolutely – and just for who He is. His very “name” evokes awe, for it identifies the eternal Creator and controller of the Universe. *He is Elohim (God), El Shaddai, (The Lord God Almighty), El Elyon (The Most High God), El Olam (The Everlasting God), Yahweh (Ever Present I Am / Jehovah), Yahweh Nissi (The Lord My Banner), Yahweh Raah (The Lord My Shepherd), Yahweh Rapha (The Lord that Heals), Yahweh Shammah (The Lord Who's There), Yahweh Tsidkenu (The Lord of Righteousness), Yahweh Mekoddishkem (The Lord Who Sanctifies), Yahweh Jireh (The Lord Will Provide), Yahweh Shalom (The Lord Is Peace), Yahweh Sabaoth (The Lord of Hosts), Adonai (Master).* He is the One who is all powerful, all knowing, and ever present; The One who is the author of life and love and He deserves all our honor and devotion.

Think how dignitaries or members of royalty are honored just because of the positions they hold. Images of motorcades and people lining the streets. Red carpets rolled out. People standing out of respect, if not saluting at attention, or even bowing in their presence. If the event allows, they applaud or even cheer. Why? What's their motivation? Perhaps some feel compelled to do so. They fear getting in trouble or being looked down upon if they don't show respect. Cruel kings or domineering dictators have demanded subjects to grovel at their feet or suffer severe consequences. In the Bible, we read of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego being tossed into a furnace for refusing to "worship" the king of Babylon.

Others, however are moved by something more. They give honor not out of fear, but a deep respect, as they recognize one who is in a position of authority. When we lived in the UK, Queen Elizabeth was looked upon with a sort of reverence. People lined the streets when she came to our city to christen the new Hospital (PRI) where I served. They just hoped to catch a glimpse of her passing by. Some children were permitted to approach her with gifts they had made for her.

Perhaps it seems strange to us – especially with the lack of respect so many display in our culture today for our local and national leaders. Oh, I hear all the time that "Respect is to be earned and they haven't earned it." Though that may be true on some level in some circumstances, there are those we are to give honor to just because of who they are. And that is certainly true when it comes to God – and the more we understand Who He is, the more that will become obvious.

**Revelation 5:11-13** comes to mind. John the Apostle is blessed to take a peek into the throne room of heaven and this is what he records:<sup>11</sup> **Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.** <sup>12</sup> **In a loud voice, they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"** <sup>13</sup> **Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise, and honor, and glory, and power for ever and ever!"**

Though John had seen many wondrous things on his walk through heaven – like golden streets and pearly gates - nothing captured his attention like the One sitting on the throne. Earlier he had caught a glimpse and he fell to his face in worship. Now, he joins the crowd as they sing in unison a song that they were not taught to sing. Without hymnals or words on a screen, they pour out their hearts, honoring the King of kings, the Lord of glory. They are giving honor to the One they behold. This is also an apt description of what we should give in response to Him. For all power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and praise belong to Him. He deserves everything we have.

Let's return to **Psalm 50:23** and we'll consider the rest of the verse this time as well. The LORD says: **"He who sacrifices thank offerings honors Me - and prepares the way so I may show him the salvation of God."** What is He referring to? Present revelation? Future deliverance? We could be left to wonder about it. Better yet, we could honor Him and find out. I invite you to join me in doing just that.