**Offerings and Sacrifices**

There were basically five different kinds of offerings, and each of the five sacrifices are briefly covered in the first six chapters of Leviticus. The first seventeen chapters of Leviticus are devoted to explaining the occasions for, and the correct procedures to be followed in, sacrifice.

**Burnt Sacrifice**

**Leviticus 1**

The burnt sacrifice is the most important of all the sacrifices offered to God, because it expressed “dedication.” This sacrifice was wholly consumed (the skin excepted), which was not the case in any other offering, and is also described as the “whole burnt offering.” Of the other sacrifices, part was burned and part was eaten by the priests or the offerer himself; but all the burnt offering ascended to God in flame and smoke. The offerings were graded in value so that even the poorest worshippers who were conscious of their spiritual need might find access to God by coming in complete devotion.

The sacrifices signified that the whole man, in whose stead the sacrifice was offered, was to be entirely offered or devoted to God's service; and that the whole man did deserve to be utterly consumed, if God should deal severely with him; and directed us to serve the Lord with all singleness of heart, and to be ready to offer to God even such sacrifices or services wherein we ourselves should have no part or benefit.

This sacrifice was “of a sweet savor unto the Lord,” since this is what He had desired; therefore it was literally a “pleasing odor.”

**Meat Offerings**

**Leviticus 2**

The meaning of a word changes in the course of time, and we have just such an instance here. The meat offering was the one offering that did not consist of “meat.” The proper translation is “**meal offering**,” which consisted of an offering of grain or cereals made of fine flour. The word translated “meat” in Hebrew simply means a “present.” The primary idea of this offering is that of a gift presented to God as an act of worship. Yet, because this offering was the product of the soil and the result of man's labor, it symbolized the consecration to God of the fruit of one's labor. This was in the form of food, and indicated that all our toil or our activities should be dedicated to God.

The ingredients included are significant. The oil has been recognized as a symbol of the Holy Spirit (1 Samuel 16:13, Isaiah 61:1, Luke 4:18). People who are dedicated to God can expect the power of His Spirit to guide, aid, and empower them on a daily basis. Frankincense was incense of high quality. It was white like the manna (Exodus 16:14, Numbers 11:8) and symbolized prayer and praise, and was sanctified by continual petition and thanksgiving. The reference to salt indicates that the act of sacrifice was a reminder of the eternal covenant relationship between the worshipper and his God. A “covenant of salt” was indissoluble (Numbers 18:19).

This sacrifice was also “of a sweet savor unto the Lord.”

**Sacrifice of Peace Offering**

**Leviticus 3**

This sacrifice had as its essential feature the concept of “fellowship.” This concept is indicated as part of the offering was laid on the altar and burned as a gift to the Lord, part was given to the priests, and the remainder was eaten by the worshipper. It expressed not only joy, peace, and gratitude, but also sharing, joint participation, fellowship, and friendship. Such are the characteristics of true worship. These types of offerings were made quite frequently in emotional situations, when one made vows or found himself seeking God's deliverance or praising Him for His mercy.

This sacrifice was also “of a sweet savor unto the Lord.”

All three offerings above are similar to Christ's offering:

Ephesians 5:2, "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a **sweetsmelling savour**."

**Sin Offering**

**Leviticus 4**

The sin offering was not a voluntary sacrifice, as were the three sweet savor oblations above. This offering was required of all; priests (verses 3-12), the congregation as a whole (verses 13-21), rulers (verses 22-26), and common people (verses 27-35). It made atonement for sins done **through ignorance** (unintentionally or inadvertently - see Numbers 15:24-31). A sin of this type may result from two causes; negligence or ignorance. Either the perpetrator knows the law but unintentionally violates it, as in the case of accidental homicide (Numbers 35:22-28, Deuteronomy 19:4-10, Joshua 20:2-6,9); or he acts without knowing he has done wrong, as in the case of Abimelech's complaint to Abraham (Genesis 20:9), and Balaam (Numbers 22:34).

The justice of God was shown, in that degrees of guilt were thus recognized. Not all sins were equally heinous. The sin offerings were of different kinds, according to the rank and responsibility of the offender. This indicated that there were degrees of responsibility corresponding with the rank and position of the people concerned. The sin of a ruler, because of his wide influence, might create a greater scandal and bring more reproach on the name of God than the son of a lone man (2 Samuel 12:14, Psalm 51).

**Trespass Offering**

**Leviticus 5 and 6**

The trespass offering may be rendered “guilt offering,” and it symbolized satisfaction or restitution. It may be regarded as a particular kind of sin offering, or even as an offering for a particular kind of sin. It related to invading or disregarding the property of another. This also made atonement for sins done **through ignorance** (Leviticus 5:15), but not necessarily. In every case and for all people, the offering was in the form of a ram. This was different from the sin offering, which had a gradation according to the degree of guilt and responsibility, and wealth or poverty, of the offender. Also requires was full reparation for the trespass and an additional fine of “one fifth part” of the whole amount involved.

Leviticus 5:14-19 relates to the “holy things of the Lord,” which includes tithes, offerings, and property given in vows; also to sacrilege, and defrauds in spiritual matters; such as the neglect to consecrate or redeem the firstborn, the withholding of the first-fruits, tithes, and such like; and, according to the rabbins, making any secular gain of Divine things, keeping back any part of the price of things dedicated to God, or withholding what man had vowed to pay.

Whereas Leviticus 6:1-7 deals with the property of men. This sin, though directly committed against man, is emphatically said to be done against the Lord, not only in general, for so every sin against man is also against the Lord, but in a special sense, because this was a violation of God's government, whereof God is the author, and president, and defender: and because it was a secret sin, of which God alone was the witness and judge: and because God's name was abused in it by perjury.

The spiritual meaning is that everything on this earth belongs to God, but is entrusted to man as a steward.

Psalms 24:1, "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."

http://www.ecclesia.org/truth/offerings.html