

4. Altar of Sacrifice

Our Purpose: Help each visitor feel the Spirit and learn God loves them. He invites them to prepare to enter His presence.

Your Role: Share the story below in your words—in 3-4 minutes.

Let the Spirit guide you. Have fun—your enthusiasm is contagious.

Core Message:

Welcome to the Altar of Sacrifice. Unlike our replica, the original was made of wood overlayed with brass. It is here the Israelites offered up the firstlings of their flocks to the Lord. In general, sacrifice was a sign of faith and obedience in ancient Israel and consisted in giving the best to the Lord. It was also done to repent of sin and impurity and give thanks. Prophets taught that sacrifice was a symbol that pointed to the future sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

As you look at the Altar of Sacrifice, what do you think the Lord was trying to teach the Israelites? What does He want us to learn?

Possible answer: We can be forgiven for our sins through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

Here is how the process would work if you were bringing a sacrifice to the altar.

1. You would personally present an animal at the Gate.
2. If the Priest found the animal unblemished and acceptable, you would dedicate it to God. It became your personal representative.
3. The person who brought the animal would slay the animal. This helped make a personal connection to the symbolism of the offering.
4. The Priest would collect some of its blood and apply it to the altar—specifically to the horns. You might think about it this way: As the animal's blood covered the altar, the Savior's blood covers your sins.
5. The Priest then burned all or some of the animal on the altar depending on the type of sacrifice. The offering that was not burned was offered as a meal to worshipers, priests, and families. Does this remind you of the sacrament?

Animal sacrifice continued until the death of Jesus Christ.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions.

- The Lord gave Adam and Eve the law of sacrifice after they were cast out of the Garden of Eden.
- On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest offered a double sacrifice for Israel. He killed one goat and sprinkled its blood on the Mercy Seat. He released a second goat -the “scape goat”- into the wilderness to carry away the sins of the people. You can read about this in the visitors' center.
- Peter taught “...ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold...But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” (1 Peter 1:18-19)
- You can read more about specific sacrifices in Leviticus 1 & 16.
- Horns represented strength and power. Jesus is the “horn of salvation” (Luke 1:69)

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