

September 21 2023
The Burnt Offering **Leviticus 1**

Leviticus 1:1-9

The Lord called Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying, **2** “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of livestock from the herd or from the flock. **3** “If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer a male without blemish. He shall bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the Lord. **4** He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. **5** Then he shall kill the bull before the Lord, and Aaron's sons the priests shall bring the blood and throw the blood against the sides of the altar that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. **6** Then he shall flay the burnt offering and cut it into pieces, **7** and the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire. **8** And Aaron's sons the priests shall arrange the pieces, the head, and the fat, on the wood that is on the fire on the altar; **9** but its entrails and its legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall burn all of it on the altar, as a burnt offering, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

In World War 2 there was a concentration camp for the Jews. Inside the camp, the Jews would look up and see a **black smoke ascending or going up to the sky**, and the Jews would say, “**o-law**” has been offered up to God.

The Nazi's in Germany would bring all the Jews together in a concentration camp and have them take off their clothes, gas them and take into a hot oven to be burned completely. The Jew's would

say **o-law'** knowing that their fellow Jews were given as a burnt offering.

The word **o-law'** is a Hebrew Word and in English it means **holo**. This is where you get the word, "Holocaust" in English.

Burnt Offering (Hebrew: 'ôlâh, Pronounced: **o-law'**) = whole burnt offering, ascent, stairway, steps

Meaning: A whole burnt offering (that which goes up) to heaven.

[church congregation "**What are the first five books of the Bible?**"
Answer: _____, _____, _____, _____, _____]

Did you know that in ancient Israel, **little children studied Leviticus as the first book** to learn. Why?

Scholars believed that children are more pure than adults so it was easier to introduce to them to worship to a Holy God. Remember, Leviticus is all about the "purity" of worship. God is pure and holy, so it was **easier to instruct children on how they can get to the presence of God**, because **God requires a purity of worship**. So it made sense to teach children Leviticus first instead of Genesis.

Did you also know that in the book of **Leviticus no one moved**. Remember, the Israelites came out of Egypt and was headed towards the promise land. But before heading out to the promise land, they had to receive **instructions on how to get into the presence of God**. This is very interesting, because the people want to move, but God says, wait and be still so you can hear God's voice.

Many times, we humans have a tendency to hurry and we want to jump right into God's promise, but then **we miss out on the journey**. A lot of times, the Lord wants to speak to us, but our mind is so busy and we have so much going on in our lives, we miss out on what God is trying to say to us.

So sometimes for the believers, if you wake up in the middle of the night or that you just can't go to sleep, it is because God is wanting to talk to you. I would encourage you to pray and seek the Lord.

Psalm 46:10

“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”

God is telling the Israelites, ***“Before I have you move on and before I have you go into the promise land, I need to have you listen to the following instructions.”*** Be still and know that I am God.

So this are your first five offerings:

First Five Offerings:

1. Burnt (Leviticus 1)
2. Grain (Leviticus 2)
3. Peace / Fellowship (Leviticus 3)
4. Sin / Purification (Leviticus 4)
5. Trespass (Leviticus 5)

Thank You Offerings: Grain and Peace or Fellowship Offerings are basically saying, “Thank you to God.”

“God, I want to say thank you for what you have done in my life and for my family and we give an offering of grain and peace. You saved us from Egypt.”

I'm Sorry / “Forgive Me” Offerings: Burnt, Sin, and Trespass as an apology offerings.

“God, I want to say, that I am sorry for the sin I have done. Please forgive me. I confess of my wrong doing. Lord, I disobeyed your command and I have done wrong. Forgive me God.”

God knows our human nature. When the Israelites could not see God, they made their own god in the form of a “golden calf.”

What is very interesting about the “**I’m Sorry offerings**” is that you need to make a blood sacrifice.

So when you make a sin offering, you kill an animal and the blood of the animal becomes an **atonement**.

Atonement = “Covering” the sin

In order to receive an “atonement,” there is an exchange of your animal sacrifice for **God’s mercy and grace**. So I as a sinner would offer up an animal to God, then God’s grace would come.

So when the blood is shed, then God covers over your sin. *In other words something needs to die in our place because of sin.*

So an atonement needs to be made in order to have a **relationship with God**. Remember, our goal is to get into the presence of God, but there has to be an atonement and exchange.

Why an animal sacrifice?

You have to remember that in ancient times, people were already making sacrifices to their gods. Like in Canaanite they were *sacrificing children to the god of Moloch (burnt offering)*. God said that is evil. You don’t sacrifice humans to have a good harvest or to win a war. So God instructs us to have a proper “atonement” through animal sacrifice.

I want to make this clear about the “atonement”, *even though God’s grace is there, you still had to deal with sin.* Because God is a Holy and He is very serious about sin.

That's why Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sin, because it is **Sin that divides between us and God**. So sin and holiness does not co-exist with God's holiness. They cannot be together.

So what are the animal sacrifices authorized by God:

Animal Sacrifices:

1. Bull / Cow
2. Sheep
3. Goat
4. Turtle Dove
5. Pigeons

Question: **Why are there different animal sacrifices?**

The reason why God allows for different animal sacrifices is for your **financial availability**. And this is why I love about God. Is that He allows us to give based upon what you can give financially. God is NOT a demanding God. He will work with you.

So if your poor and you don't have much money, then you give from your best and for the Israelites that meant "**pigeons**" and they are all over New York City and basically free if you wanted one.

Instead of going to God empty handed, God allows for you to give based upon what you can give from the best that you have.

Now **what saddens God heart** is that when you can afford it, your wealthy and your supposed to purchase a bull but instead you purchase a "goat" or a "turtle dove" to save some money. So instead of buying a "bull" for worship, you bring a "sheep" or a "goat" to the Lord. That's what breaks God hearts.

Even if your a middle class family, and you should have bought a "sheep" or a "goat" but then you get a "turtle dove" or even a "pigeon" **God is not pleased**. This is not a pleasing aroma to God.

Humans have a tendency to try and trick God. Listen, my friends, God cannot be tricked. God will not be fooled. God looks at the heart of man.

So if the people know that if have some wealth, but still give little from God's money, then basically the message they are sending is that, "***This is my money***" and not God's money and He doesn't deserve my best.

And this was exactly what was going on during Malachi's time.

Malachi 1:8

When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not evil? Present that to your governor; will he accept you or show you favor? says the Lord of hosts.

You guys don't even offer up a lame or diseased animal to the governor but yet your willing to offer up blind, lame, or sick animal to God! Malachi is saying, "***This is why blessings don't come your way and God's judgment will come.***"

The question is why. ***Why does God always want us to give from our best?*** Whether it be talents or gifts, God wants us to give from our best. Why?

It is in our human nature to always give from the 2nd or 3rd best.

- The churches get it all the time. "***You know what, since our table is breaking down, let's just give it to the church.***"
- Now there is a difference between the poor wanting used items because I get a lot of used items, but that's if those who want the used items. I know a lot of **homeless people turn down** a lot of "good stuff" because they don't want it. They even turn down food and health care.

- But what God is talking about is our offering to the Lord. **Our God is NOT a homeless man** that you can just give whatever. God is a Holy God and expects the best of our heart.

This is why the prophet Malachi was upset, “***Your physical offering was the manifestation of what is really going on in your heart.***”

Remember when Cain offered up his offering to the God, God wasn't too happy with His offering:

Genesis 4:3-5 New Living Translation

3 When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the Lord. **4** Abel also brought a gift—**the best portions of the firstborn lambs** from his flock.

The Lord accepted Abel and his gift, **5** but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected.

How did Able give His best? **What does that look like?** Able took and ***intentional effort*** to give from his best.

- Let's say, you have about 1,000 lambs. That means you have to look at every single one of them to see which out of one thousand lambs, it would be the best to offer up to God.
- You have to make sure that the one you give has no blemish, is not blind, and has no disease.
- You have to intentionally go through every single lamb. It was not about giving the best as worship, ***it was about intentionally finding the best as heart of worship.***
- This takes time. This takes energy, and it took priority. Able was prioritizing his best of the best to give to God.
- ***And that is worship.*** And this is what true worship means.

This is what it means to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength means.

- Able was to illustrate what it means when he gave from his best of the fruits.
- Able was showing us what it means to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.
- When you offer to the Lord your best, He is telling us to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.
- This is what it means to worship the Lord.

In closing and this is what you see throughout most of Leviticus.

Leviticus 1:3-7

3 “If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, **he shall offer a male without blemish**. He shall **bring it to the entrance** of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the Lord. 4 **He shall lay his hand on the head** of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. 5 Then **he shall kill the bull before the Lord**, and Aaron's sons the priests shall bring the blood and throw the blood against the sides of the altar that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 6 Then **he shall flay the burnt offering and cut it into pieces**, 7 and the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire.

Your Personal Worship:

- “**He shall offer a male without blemish**” (intentional work to find the best bull)

- ***“He shall bring it to the entrance of the tent”*** (He has to personally walk the bull to the entrance. You cannot have a servant do it on your behalf.)
- ***“He shall lay his hand on the head”*** (You have to personally say thank you or say “I’m sorry” or make a personal confession before God.)
- ***“He shall kill the bull before the Lord”*** (With his own hands and with his own knife must kill the bull before the Lord. A blood must be shed for the forgiveness of sin. An atonement must be made by our own hands.)
- ***“He shall flay the burnt offering and cut it into pieces”*** (From the beginning to the end, you must fully worship the Lord. You must burn all the animal pieces to be a pleasing aroma to the Lord.)

Why? **Why does God want us to be personally involved** and participating in the animal sacrifice? If your wealthy, why not just send a servant or pay someone to do it for you.

Why does God want us to be personally be active with the sacrifice from the beginning to the end?

In the biblical times you have people that live close to life. That’s why it has so many laws about what to do if you touch a dead body. How to clean yourself and so forth. Death and life becomes part of your every day journey.

What God is trying to teach us in Leviticus is that the **worshipper is fully involved from the beginning to the end of worship**. From finding the best animal, walking it up to the tent, personally confessing before God, killing the animal, and cutting the animal for burnt offering.

And this is what Paul was referring to in Romans 1

Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. **2** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

God is wanting us to be totally consumed with His worship from the beginning to the end. That's why He wants us to “***present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.***”