

Exposition of the Book of Leviticus

Sunset Bible Church Adult Sunday School 2021

Week 2: Offerings and Sacrifices (Leviticus 1-7)

“I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.” – Philippians 4:18

“And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” – Ephesians 5:2

Opening Discussion: What did you notice as you read? What questions did you have? How is theology taught through the offerings?

Laws for Burnt Offerings (1:1-17)

- **Purpose of the offering:**
 - Offered on holy days, such as the day of atonement for the purpose of atoning or covering over sins. Likely, these were offered to cover all sins not covered by the sin and guilt offerings. These were offered twice daily (Numbers 28).
 - These offerings were offered freely – sometimes as a response of gratitude, sometimes in a time of crisis.
 - This offering is different from the others in that no portion of it was consumed by the priest – the whole of it is offered to God.
- **Identity of the offering**
 - The animal offered could be from the herd (cattle) or the flock (goat or sheep) or a bird (turtledove or pigeon).
 - The animal was to be a male without blemish.
- **Instructions**
 - The animal was brought before the tent of meeting (into God’s presence)
 - The worshipper placed his hands on the head of the animal, signifying a transfer of sins from the worshipper to the animal.
 - The worshipper then killed the animal (the term used indicates it was killed by cutting the throat).
 - The priest only was to handle the blood of the animal. He would sprinkle the blood around the base of the altar where it was to be burned.
 - The worshipper skinned and flayed the animal and arranged the pieces on the altar (except in the case of the Passover lamb where the lamb was not cut into pieces).
 - The worshipper then cleaned the legs and inner parts to remove the dung/excrement.
 - The pleasing aroma to YHWH signifies peace with God.
- **Result of the offering:** The offering results in a pleasing aroma to the Lord, signifying peace between God and the worshipper. (See Philippians 4:18; Ephesians 5:2).

- **Variations:**
 - Sheep, goats, and cattle are offered the same way.
 - When a bird is offered, there is some variation. The head is removed and burned and the crop is removed. The bird is torn open, but not cut into pieces.

Laws for Grain Offerings (2:1-16)

- **Purpose of the offering:** This seems to be parallel to the burnt offering, but is an accommodation for the poor who could not afford an animal.
- **Identity of the offering**
 - Portion of fine flour
 - Unleavened loaves made with fine flour or wafers smeared with oil or cooked in a griddle of a pan.
- **Instructions**
 - Oil and frankincense is poured on the offering
 - A handful is burned as a memorial
 - The rest is given to the priest
- **Additional Restrictions**
 - No grain offering is to be made with leaven.
 - No honey is to be burned (but may be brought with firstfruits).
 - All grain offerings are to be seasoned with salt. Salt, as a preservative, represented the permanency of the covenant.

Laws for Fellowship Offerings (3:1-17)

- **Purpose of the offering:** There were three types of fellowship offerings:¹
 - Thanksgiving offerings made as a response of gratitude for God's provision
 - Votive offerings, made at the beginning of a special vow made to God
 - Freewill offerings, made as an expression of love or devotion to God.
- **Identity of the offering:** The animal is to be from the herd or the flock, male or female, without blemish.
- **Instructions:** Similar to the burnt offering, the animal is brought to the tent of meeting, the worshipper would place his hand on its head, it is killed, and its blood is thrown on the sides of the burnt offering. Different from the burnt offering, only the fat, kidneys and the long lobe of the liver is burned. The rest of it is eaten. The fat (the best portion) of the offering is never to be eaten. Blood is never to be eaten in any case.

Laws for Sin Offerings (4:1-5:13)

- **Purpose of the offering:** Sin offerings are made to atone for specific sins. These are sins that are the result of human weakness, lack of attention, or inadvertence. Although most translations refer to "unintentional sin," this should not be understood as lacking purposefulness but as opposed to a sin that is an outright rejection of God and the covenant.

¹ Mark F. Rooker, *Leviticus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000). 100-101

- **Identity of the offering:** The animal offered differs based on whose sin is needs atonement:
 - A priest offers a bull without blemish
 - If the sin is the sin of the whole congregation, a bull is also offered
 - If the sin is the sin of a leader, a male goat is offered
 - If the sin is the sin of a commoner, a female goat is offered
 - If a poor person cannot afford a goat, he can offer birds or grain
- **Instructions for animals being offered:**
 - A bull without blemish is brought before the tent of meeting
 - The worshipper places his hand on the head of the animal and kills it
 - The priest takes some of the blood into the tent and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD in front of the veil of the sanctuary.
 - Then, the priest will put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of incense.
 - The rest of the blood will be poured out at the base of the altar of burnt offering
 - All of the fat on the entrails and the two kidneys and the long lobe of the liver are burnt on the altar.
 - The skin, flesh, head, legs, entrails, and dung (the rest of the bull) is carried outside the camp to the ash heap and burned up.
 - The sacrifice makes atonement and the sinner is forgiven.
- **Instructions for a grain offering:** Similar to a grain offering. A portion is burned and the rest is kept for the priests.

Laws for Guilt Offerings (5:14-6:7)

- **Purpose of the offering:** The guilt offering is similar to the sin offering, but seems to be distinguished based on the need for compensation (as in a theft or a breach of trust).
- **Identity of the offering:** In addition to the animal, money is brought to make compensation for the crime. One fifth of the worth is brought before YHWH for the purpose of making restitution. This would be in addition to restoring whatever was stolen or the loss incurred by a victim.

The Priests and the Offerings (6:8-7:38)

- **The law of the burnt offering for the priests:** The altar for burnt offerings is to be kept burning continually. The priest changes his clothing before taking the ashes of the burnt offering out of the camp.
- **The law of the grain offering for the priests:** The grain for grain offerings is to be eaten unleavened in a holy place.
- **Ordination grain offerings:** On the day when a priest is anointed, he is to offer a tenth of an ephah of fine flour, half in the morning and half in the evening. It shall be made with oil on a griddle and the whole of it is to be burned and not eaten.
- **The law of the sin and guilt offering for the priests:** The priest who offers the sin offering shall eat it in a holy place. Whenever the blood splatters on the clothing, it will be cleaned. The grain is to be shared. The priests are to share the grain offerings.

- **The law of the fellowship offering for the priests:** A portion of the grain is offered to the lord and a portion is eaten by the priest. The flesh must be eaten on the day of the offering or the following day. Whatever is left afterward is burned and is not to be eaten.

Discussion, Theology of the Covenants: How do each of these covenants connect to Christ and the New Testament?

- Burnt offering
- Grain offering
- Fellowship offering
- Sin offering
- Guilt offering

Reading Leviticus Together: Leviticus 8-10