

Sacrifices: Leviticus 1-7

I. Introduction

A. The Bible is one big story, a true story.

1. The main goal in what God is doing in history is...
 - a. God's people, in God's place, enjoying God's presence (his rule and smiling face).
 - b. **Psalm 84:1-4**
"How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! ²My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God...⁴ Blessed are those who dwell in your house, ever singing your praise"
2. The part of the story we are in: The Tabernacle which is like a garden temple so that...
 - a. God will be among his people
 - b. And that God's people can in some way meet with him.

B. At the end of Exodus, we see the tabernacle is complete, but there is a problem

1. The glorious problem (Exodus. 40:33-35)
2. How is it that his people will have the Holy God among them...and be able to draw near to him?
 - a. **Leviticus 1:1** The Lord called Moses and spoke to him *from* the tent of meeting, saying,
 - b. **Numbers 1:1** The Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, *in* the tent of meeting
 - c. Leviticus provides the answer to how this change happens
3. This is all of grace (see Lev. 17:11)

II. The Burnt Offering (Lev. 1)

A. Notice he jumps right in, and there are a lot of details which seem foreign to us.

1. Jim Hamilton illustrates this by saying, picture a baseball game from today being broadcast over radio waves 3000 years in the future....
 - a. The announcer just jumps in...
 - b. he doesn't have to stop and describe how to tune in to the baseball game, why a ball is considered "foul" or "fair," etc.
2. The audience he is speaking to understands details, but those details might be harder for a group living 3000 years in the future to get immediately.

B. The Burnt offering Details

1. Offer something **from herd/flock (2)** – this is an expensive offering.
 - a. We see that the sacrificial system is not works righteousness but based on faith: faith that God is and is a rewarder of those who seek him (see Heb. 11:6)
 - b. "Meat was a rare luxury in OT times for all but the very rich (cf. Nathan's parable, 2 Sam. 12:1–6)."¹ In sacrificing as God commands, they are showing that they believe God is in the Tabernacle and that he is worthy of their worship and the source of their life and joy.
2. The offering is to be **"without blemish" (v. 3)**. Signifying a perfect substitute was needed as a sacrifice.
3. The goal of the offering is **"that he may be accepted before the Lord" (v. 3)**.
4. What is the result? It is a **"pleasing aroma to the Lord" (9, 13, 17)**.

C. We see the Burnt offering in the NT (Mark 10:45, Eph. 5:2, 1 Pet. 1:18-19)

¹ Wenham, Gordon J. 1979. *The Book of Leviticus*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids, MI.

III. The Grain Offering (Lev. 2)

- A. It is a “food offering.” God is not hungry (Ps 50:12, Acts 17:24-25, 2 Chorn. 6:18)

IV. Third: The Peace Offering (Lev 3)

- A. The ritual is similar to that of a burnt offering.

1. But, the whole animal isn't burnt. What happens to the rest? (Lev. 7:11-15, 16)
2. This offering expresses peace and fellowship between the offerer and the Lord. “All meat came from animals given by the worshipper to God, and now partly given back to the worshipper by God. This symbolized the way God gave back to the worshipper his life to go on enjoying²

V. Fourth: The Sin Offerings/Purification (4:1-5:13)

- A. The focus is on personal sin...it also deals with purifying (which isn't always sin).

1. Sin must be cleansed by a ransom paid. **Uncleanness**, the effect of death and the curse of sin, must be wiped away by the blood of life.
2. “Life ransoms from death, life wipes away the stain of death” (Morales, *Who Shall Ascend...*)

- B. This is for those who sin “unintentionally” (4:2, 13, 22, 27)

1. Note, these are still sins (4:2, 35; 5:1, 5-6)
2. So what does “unintentional” mean?
 - a. Heb. 5:2 contrasted with Num. 15:29-31 (high handed vs. unintentional).
 - b. High handed sin says, “I don't believe God is in there or worth all this.”
 - c. Unintentional, “They realized their guilt” (Lev. 4:13, 22-23, 27-28, 5:2-3)

VI. Fifth: The Guilt Offering [restitution] (Lev. 5:14-6:7)

VII. Instructions for the Priests (6:8-7:36)

VIII. Conclusion (Lev 7:37-38)

“The sacrificial system therefore presents different models or analogies to describe the effects of sin and the way of remedying them. The burnt offering uses a personal picture: of man the guilty sinner who deserves to die for his sin and of the animal dying in his place. God accepts the animal as a ransom for man. The sin offering uses a medical model: sin makes the world so dirty that God can no longer dwell there. The blood of the animal disinfects the sanctuary in order that God may continue to be present with his people. The reparation offering presents a commercial picture of sin. Sin is a debt which man incurs against God. The debt is paid through the offered animal.”³

Two applications

1. First, Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice (Heb 10:1-4, 11-23)
2. Second, we now, get to bring our lives to God as a living sacrifice... (Rom. 12:1 cf. Mal. 1:6-14)

² Wenham, Gordon J. 1979. *The Book of Leviticus*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids.

³ Wenham, Gordon J. 1979. *The Book of Leviticus*.