

LEVITICUS 1

THE BURNT OFFERING - ALSO CALED

THE WHOLE BURNT OFFERING

I. First on the list of sacrifices for good reason.

A. Its intent is to express the purest and most comprehensive form of worship.

1. The Hebrew word for burnt offering "**Olah**", in the Septuagint "**holokautoma**" from which we get the word "**holocaust.**"

a. Literally: "**that which ascends**" Read Judges 13:20

b. The whole animal is totally consumed for God, nothing is shared with others.

c. The modern Hebrew Bible in the English language simply says: "**and the whole was turned into smoke**" obviously to God, verse 9.

2. The flesh is not conceived of as being destroyed or burned, but rather sent up to God in a "**fuming**", or in an "**incense**" form.

a. As an "**odor of sweet smell.**"

b. It is called a "**sweet smelling sacrifice**" of special pleasure to Jehovah.

3. parts of other sacrifices are consumed by the priest and the worshiper and his family.

a. But this one is totally for God's consumption and pleasure.

b. It was a grave sin for a man to eat God's sacrifices - Let us take a quick look at the sin of the sons of Eli, 1 Samuel 2:12-17.

B. Therefore such "**fuming**" stands for the total consecration of the worshiper himself - obviously to God.

1. Consecration to God is prerequisite to all Israel's privileges and duties.

2. Consecration of the worshiper to God would tend to eliminate extensive need for sacrifices whose central thrust is atonement such as the sin and the trespass offerings.

3. The burnt offering gave the spiritual Israelite the opportunity to say to God: "**As this animal is totally given to You and consumed for Your pleasure so I want myself to be totally consecrated to Your glory and honor.**"

a. In reality, each of the bloody sacrifices in some way is seen to take the place of the one offering it for himself.

b. There is some vicarious representation in each of the animals offered to God.

c. Ultimately this will be seen in Christ perfectly , John 17:19.

4. So that what happens physically to the animal is conceived of as being the expression of the heat's desire of the worshiper.

5. Genesis 22:2-19, God commanded Abraham to offer Isaac as an "**Olah**", a burnt offering.

a. What is Abraham expected to learn from that event? Simply that he must surrender Isaac to God with no strings attached.

b. What was Isaac to get out of the experience? Isaac belongs totally to God – But as a "living sacrifice" rather than a pile of ashes.

c. Genesis 22:5 explains Abraham's purpose and his faith: "**And Abraham said to his young men, You* abide here with the donkey and I and the lad will go over there, and we will worship and come back again to you*.**"

C. The altar in the Tabernacle courtyard is most frequently called "**the altar of burnt offerings**", Leviticus 47:10, 18, 25, 30, 34.

1. Indicating the centrality of the burnt offering in worship.

2. All other sacrifices were to be offered on this altar also.

3. The Hebrew word for altar – "**mizbeach**" – meaning "**to slay or to slaughter**" – and it only here were sacrifices accepted, and only at the tabernacle. Joshua:229; Exodus 20:24; Deuteronomy 12:5-14.

4. The burnt offering was not only central in worship but was also the most important of the sacrifices – taking precedence over the sin and trespass offerings.

D. The burnt offering was the most common sacrifices in Israel .

1. It could be offered voluntarily at any time by any man in fellowship with God.

2. God demanded also the "**continual burnt offering**" each morning and evening, Exodus 29:38; Leviticus 6:8-13.

3. It also was the central act of worship on all great Feast Days.

a. Even on the great Day of Atonement when the sin sacrifice is central – the burnt offerings of the people and the priests is not ignored.

b. For there must be the rededication and reconsecration of the people following atonement.

c. The burnt offering – when offered at the same time with any sin offering or trespass offering, is always presented last.

E. The burnt offering is the most God-ward and spiritual of the entire sacrificial repertoire.

1. It recognizes God's right to our highest devotions.

2. It lays claim to the most undivided of our expressions of love and consecration.

3. This is God's side of the sacrifices and is therefore the best of the best – the sweetest of the **“sweet smelling sacrifices.”**

4. When a man gives such expressions – even externally as in the sacrifice – it goes up before Jehovah as **“an odor of sweet smell.”**

5. And God seems to say: **“I like it.”**

F. Consecration is more important than atonement – the more the consecration. The less the need for atonement – Abel offered the **“Olah”**; Cain offered the **“Korban.”**

1. The sin. Trespass and Yom Kippur sacrifices were of a lower or lessor position – for they speak of disobedience not devotion.

2. Yet they are not to be disparaged – for they are **“most holy”**, Leviticus 6:7.

G. Burnt offerings are of ancient use among God's people.

1. Noah offered of every clean beast a burnt offering to God – even of the birds also – Genesis 8:20.

2. Abraham offered the covenant sacrifices in burnt offerings in Genesis 12:7-8; 13:4, 18.

a. Look particularly where Isaac was to be presented to God as **“a burnt offering.”** Genesis 22:2, and also verses 8 and 9.

b. Verse 13 Abraham **“offered a ram up for a burnt-offering”** in stead of his son Isaac.

3. Peace and Meal offerings were also offered before the law also.

4. Sin, Trespass and Atonement sacrifices are first enjoined in the Law.

II. The Victim was to be “of the herd” – cattle, and “of the flock” – sheep and goats, and of the “turtle-doves or young pigeons” (Leviticus 1:2, 14).

A. These are considered the sacrifices of the Covenant.

1. Ox, sheep, goat, dove, and pigeon were all offered by Abraham when God made His covenant with the Patriarchs in Genesis 15:9.

2. The animals were divided in covenant fashion in the Abrahamic episode and in Leviticus, but the birds are small and therefore two birds of either species were demanded as one sacrifice.

B. The carnivora was excluded from all offerings.

1. that which lives by the death of others could never typify Him who gave His life for others.

2. Only clean beasts and fowl were allowed.

3. Israel could not offer as “food for God” that which they couldn't eat.

4. The clean animal logically related to the Spiritual Holy Christ.

C. Further selection was made among the clean animals and birds.

1. Only domesticated animals allowed – could.

2. Indicating an endearing relation between the owner and the animal (as if to say, Roy Rogers had to offer Trigger).

3. Nothing savage or untamed allowed – could be eaten (Deuteronomy 14:5) but not offered as a sacrifice.

4. No animal taken of constraint, as the unwilling captive of the chase.

Freely, unresisting, obedient antitype.

D. Normally the animal was a “**male without blemish**” , verse 3 (exception is made for the poor in the birds, verse 14.

1. The “**male**” as representing strength within the species.

2. “**Without blemish**” = Ideally perfect as a type.

3. The Israelite is thus taught that God claims the best we have.

III. Stages of the ritual.

A. The Presentation of both worshiper and sacrifice.

1. Like asking for an audience of God.

2. And declares himself by his appearance before the priest to want to express his worship unto Jehovah.

3. “He shall offer it” – is considered the presentation of the animal to God.

a. The act of presentation is much more conspicuous in the Day of Atonement sacrifices (Leviticus 16:6, 9).

b. There, it is required that Aaron “**set the goats before Jehovah at the door of the tent of meeting**” (Leviticus 16:7).

4. The worshipper, as late seen also of the sinner, must bring and present his own sacrifice.

a. Worship to God is a personal, individual duty.

b. Others may lead in worship, but none can worship for us.

B. The worshiper lays **ONE** hand on the head of his substitute victim.

1. Not as some suppose – to declare the animal as personal property.

2. Rather as an act of designation for special function.

a. Characteristic of all bloody sacrifices – except for the continual burnt-offering and the bullock and first goat on the day of Atonement.

b. He thus designates the substitute to some function, office, or service – such is intrinsic to the laying on of hands.

1) Leviticus 24:14 – witnesses lay hands on The blasphemer to appoint him unto death.

2) Moses laid hands on Joshua to be his successor (Numbers 27:23; Deuteronomy 34:9).

3) Hebrews 6:2 such is part of the series of “first principles” of Christ – first contained in the Old Testament rituals.

3. So the ceremony seems to symbolize the transfer or communication of something invisible in connection with the visible act.

4. In this case, it is clear that the transfer of guilt for sin is intended – through the sins be **UNSPECIFIED**.

a. Verse 4 says: **“And he will lay his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, and it will be accepted for him to make atonement for him.”**

b. Hereby is seen the transfer of the obligation to death because of the sin or sins atoned for.

c. From henceforth the sacrificial victim stands in the place of the offeror and is treated accordingly – as guilty.

5. Further illustration of transfer is seen in the formal substitution of the Levites in the place of the first-born of Israel.

a. Numbers 8:5-19 declares **“...For all the firstborn among the sons of Israel are mine, both man and beast. ...”** Jehovah says.

b. But instead of the first-born of other tribes serving God as priests, the Levites are substituted.

1) Verse 10 **“and you will present the Levites before Jehovah. And the sons of Israel will lay their hands upon the Levites.”**

2) And in verse 12. **“And the Levites will lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks and offer you the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering, to Jehovah, to make atonement for the Levites.”**

3) In verses 17 and 18, all the first-born are claimed by God regardless of tribe but **“For all the firstborn among the sons of Israel are mine, both man and beast. On the day that I killed* all the firstborn in the land of**

Egypt I sanctified them for myself. 8:18 And I have taken the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the sons of Israel.

c. Therefore, the Levites became a "wave offering before Jehovah" – verse 13.

6. In the ceremony of the great Day of Atonement.

a. Aaron was to lay both hands on the Head of the "goat for Azazel" – but not on the "goat for Jehovah" **Leviticus 16:21.**

b. With hands on the goat, Aaron shall "**And Aaron will lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over him all the iniquities of the sons of Israel and all their transgressions, even all their sins. And he will put them upon the head of the goat and will send him away by the hand of a man who is in readiness into the wilderness. 16:22 And the goat will bear upon him all their iniquities to a solitary land. And he will let the goat go in the wilderness**" (Leviticus 16:21,22).

c. Albert Edersheim, in his book "**The Temple**" (which can be purchased on Amazon) page 114, gives this ritual or formula of confession with the burnt or peace offering: " **I entreat, O Jehovah: I have sinned, I have done perversely, I have rebelled, I have (naming the sin); but I return in repentance, and let this be for my atonement (covering)**".

1) It is evident that on the day of Atonement in the ceremony – **SPECIFIC** sins are under consideration.

2) As also for the sin and trespass offerings - Leviticus 5:5; 6:7.

3) Remember, for the burnt- offering the sins are **UNSPECIFIED**.

7. The Hebrew word for "lay hand on", is the word "Samak", "to lean heavily upon to rely upon."

a. As in Ezekiel 24:2 – Egypt leaned upon Jerusalem.

b. Genesis 27:37 – Sustained with food.

c. Isaiah 63:5, "***And I looked and there was none to help. And I wondered that there was none to uphold. Therefore, my own arm brought salvation to me. And my wrath, it upheld me.***"

d. Isaiah 59:16, "***And he saw that there was no man and wondered that there was no intercessor. Therefore, his own arm brought salvation to him. And his righteousness, it upheld him.***"

e. Psalm 88:7, "***Your wrath lays hard upon me, and you have afflicted me with all your waves. Selah.***"

1) Indicating that the sinner is resting or relying on his victim to procure from God that for which he was presented – Namely atonement.

2) Therefore, expressing his faith and dependence of God to accept the substitute in his stead.

8. Through the laying on of hands the sinner implied and expressed.

- a. The confession of his sinful nature.
- b. Acceptance of God's penal judgments against his sin.
- c. The sinner's expression of repentance and remorse for sin.
- d. The sinner's acceptance of God's remedial program.
- e. Expresses thankful acceptance of God's provision for atonement.
- f. Then he knew his sin was symbolically transferred to his victim.
- g. Leaned heavily in reliance upon his substitute.

9. Through faith we lay our hand upon Christ today and lean upon Him for our atonement.

- a. Atonement – in the root idea means **“to cover”** – from the Hebrew word - **“Kaphar.”**
- b. As physically the ark was covered with pitch – Genesis 6:14.
- c. The thought suggests that between the sinner and the Holy One comes the guiltless victim, so the eyes of God look not upon the guilty but upon his innocent substitute.

C. The slaying of the victim (Kill – shahat = (sacrificial slaughter) tirtsah = you shall not kill Exodus 20:13.

1. The sinner himself slays his own substitute sacrifice.

- a. Therefore, he is made to realize he is responsible for the death of the sacrifice.
- b. He sees immediately the terrible consequences for his sin.
- c. Before atonement can be given blood must be shed life given, and the violated Law of God satisfied.
- d. The death of the victim was instead of the sinner.

2. he was thus made conscious of God's provision for his escape.

- a. And obviously was abundantly grateful.
- b. This was one aspect of the sacrifice – praise and worship of God for His goodness and mercy.

3. The sinner therefore agrees with Heaven's judgment against his sin.
 - a. He concurs that he is worthy of death.
 - b. For he executes God's penalty against his own sin – and thus condemns his own **"stand-in"** to die in his stead.
 - c. He therefore agrees that any creature with his sin in him is not worthy to die.
4. Surely he thus expressed his own repentance for his sins.
 - a. He abhors his own sin in his substitute.
 - b. Maybe in this way the Jew "died to his sin" as he carried out heaven's curse against it.
5. Therefore the Jew had direct contact with his sacrifice.
 - a. He could watch it die – see its blood being offered.
 - b. He could thus identify with it, and feel immediately the realities of God's condemnation of His sin.
6. Every sinner today must feel himself casual in Christ's death.
 - a. It was sinners who crucified Jesus – ***"being given up by what had been determined by the counsel and foreknowledge of God, you* assassinated him, having taken him and fastened him to a cross through lawless hands;" (Acts 2:23).***
 - b. Our sins nailed Him to the tree – and He bore them willingly – 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24.
 - c. The death of Christ was our act too.
7. Verse 5 – ***"And he will kill the bullock before Jehovah and Aaron's sons, the priests, will present the blood and sprinkle the blood all around upon the altar that is at the door of the tent of meeting."***
 - a. After all it was God's holy Law which the offerer – failing of that perfect consecration which the burnt-offering symbolized, had failed to glorify and honor.
 - b. And it was God's righteousness that had to be satisfied.

D. The sprinkling of the blood by the priest (**zaraq = to splash**)

1. The sinner has gone as far as he can go.
2. From henceforth, he must depend upon the priest to act in his behalf and apply the Blood as God demands in the prescription.

- a. Just as we, having laid our hands by faith on the Christ and contributed to the killing of our victim.
- b. We now rely upon Him as our great High Priest to act in our behalf toward God.
- c. More will be seen on this in the study of the Great Day of Atonement and the book of Hebrews.

3. The use of the blood varies in different offerings.

- a. According to how much prominence is given to the idea of expiation.
- b. In burnt and peace offerings, the idea of atonement is always present, but not the dominant concept of the sacrifice.
- c. Because other purposes assume the dominant role.
 - 1) In the sin-offering the use of blood is central.
 - 2) But it is secondary in the burnt-offering – to give place to consecration as the central idea.

4. Blood was always sprinkled on the sides of the altar of burnt offerings in the court-yard.

- a. This is the most inconspicuous use of blood in all the sacrifices.
- b. Since the altar was the place where God had promised to meet the people and from there He will come and bless His people, Exodus 20:24.
 - 1) Then sprinkling of blood on the altar was symbolic of presenting the Blood to God directly.
 - 2) The blood stood for life – the life required by violated law, so the Laws demands were fully met and satisfied.
 - 3) Symbolically, as in the Passover – **“when I see the blood.”**

E. Skinning or flaying the animal.

- 1. From Leviticus 7:8 we learn that the priest **“...will have to himself the skin of the burnt offering which he has offered...”** Read 1 Chronicles 29:34.
- 2. The Red Heifer alone was not flayed, but the whole body, with the skin was consumed with fire – Numbers 9:5.
- 3. Some have attempted to make something out of this.
 - a. Accordingly, Christ as the sacrificing priest, gives us the covering for our shame and nakedness.
 - b. He not only gives us cleansing for our sins, but robes of righteousness.

c. But this seems far-fetched – since the priest kept the skin for himself.

F. The priest then divides the sacrifice into two parts.

1. This is done in covenant fashion – or covenant-making ritual.

a. According to this practice, the Hebrew term “karath berith” means to **“cut a covenant”** – **2 Chronicles 7:18; Haggai 2:5** (the word covenant is “berith”).

b. The highly suggestive passage of Genesis 15:9-10 and later 12-18.

1) God has promised Abraham his seed “as the stars of heaven” and the land promise is made – Genesis 15:5, 14, 15.

2) Abraham asks for proof – so God commanded that he take one heifer, one she-goat, one ram, a turtle-dove and a pigeon – and divide them in two -except the birds.

3) Abraham did so and “laid each half over against the other” – verse 10.

4) Then in a dream he saw Jehovah come down in the representation of **“a smoking furnace and a flaming touch that passed between these pieces. IN THAT DAY JEHOVAH MADE A COVENANT WITH ABRAM...”** **VERSE 17, 18.**

5) Such practice was obviously quite common among Semitic people. Apostolic Preaching of the Cross, page 60-107, by Leon Morris,

6) Read Jeremiah also 34:17-20 for Israel’s confirmation of its covenant with Jehovah.

a) For further insights on Israel’s ratification of the Sinai Covenant through the “cutting a covenant” sacrifice process – Deuteronomy 11:26-32; 2:7-9, 11-13; Joshua 8:30-35.

b) Jeremiah 34:17 explains the **“passing between the parts”** of the sacrificial animal in covenant making fashion.

7) Quite possibly Ruth repeated the covenant oath when she said to Naomi: “...Jehovah do so to me and more also, if anything but death parts you and me” (Ruth 1:17).

2. The same idea of renewal of covenant is carried over into the sacrificial system of Leviticus.

a. It cannot be thought of as the making of covenant for the worshiper was already in covenant relation with God.

b. Therefore it must have been for the purpose of commitment to the renewal and respect of the covenant.

c. Or in recognition that such privileges afforded by God to His covenant people were based on fidelity to covenant.

3. In 2 Timothy 2:15 "**rightly dividing the word**" is the same word used in the Septuagint.

G. The inwards and legs of the sacrifice are then washed with water.

1. Perhaps to remove from that which is offered on the altar to God anything extraneous, corrupt, or unclean.
2. More likely to wash away any extra blood, for blood was never burned on the altar but always sprinkled for atonement
 - a. With the one exception of the 4 Red Heifer (Numbers 19:5).
 - b. But even then it was not an atonement or worship sacrifice only used for ceremonial impurities.

H. The sacrificial burning on the altar.

1. This is the central act of the burnt-offering sacrifice.
 - a. Verse 9 literally says: "**... And the priest will burn the whole on the altar, for a burnt offering, an offering made by fire, of a sweet aroma to Jehovah.**"
 - b. Anything laid on the altar was therefore "**sanctified by the altar**" and properly belonged to God. (Matthew 23:16-22).
 - c. any gift that was to be given to God must be placed on the altar – for God's portion out of every sacrifice was "**fumed**" to Him from the altar of burnt-offerings.
 - d. Read Genesis 8:21 when Noah offered burnt offerings of every clean animal and "**Jehovah smelled the sweet aroma...**" and then made the rainbow covenant.
2. Some discussion as to the meaning of the fire upon the altar.
 - a. Some assume it to represent Jehovah's consuming wrath against sin and the sinner's substitute.
 - b. Some think it symbolizes the eternal fires of hell.
 - c. Others say rather it is the fiery sufferings of Christ which He endured in His soul on the cross.
 - d. But fire in Scriptures also stands for God's presence and action.
 - 1) The Pillar of Fire by night over the Tabernacle.
 - 2) The Burning Bush on Sinai.

3) Also, God's purifying action - 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 1 Peter 1:7.

e. Interesting variation of the word "burn" in Hebrew.

1) Not the same ore in Hebrew as that used of the burning of the sin-offering outside the camp - **SARAPH** in Hebrew, which is the root word for seraphim, who are the avengers of God and protectors of His holiness.

2) This one is as the "fuming of incense", where all goes up - **NOT AS SMOKE OF JUDGMENT** but as a **PURE, SWEET AROMA!** Leviticus 6:15; Deuteronomy 33:10; Psalm 66:15; Jeremiah 44:21 - where the Hebrew word is **KATAR** - same as for burnt-offering.

3) For other passages on "burn" as in the sin-offering, Genesis 40:3; Leviticus 10:16; 2 Chronicles 16:14.

f. So the burning symbolizes in the burnt-offering the ascending of the offering in total consecration to God.

1) And the words "smell of sweet aroma" stands for God's acceptance, approval, and appropriation of the sacrifice.

2) This is graphically set forth in Leviticus 9:24 when the tabernacle is and the burnt-offering is prepared on the altar "***And there came out fire from before Jehovah and consumed the burnt offering and the fat upon the altar. And when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.***

3) Lighted by no human hand visibly demonstrating that God claimed the victim on the altar for Himself.

3. This ended the sacrifice of the Burnt-offering.

a. Reviewing the ritual stages, they are:

- 1) Presentation.
- 2) Lays hand on head of animal.
- 3) Slaying.
- 4) Sprinkling blood.
- 5) skinning.
- 6) Dividing the animal.
- 7) Washing the parts
- 8) Sacrificial burning.

b. Provision is made for a poor man who couldn't afford the larger animals - so He may offer two doves or pigeons.

- 1) There must be two for they are too small to divide in covenant fashion so one is place on each side.
- 2) The heads of the birds are wrung by the priest.
- 3) The blood is grained on the side of the altar.
- 4) The feathers and inwards are removed and placed on the east side of the altar – where the ashes are.
- 5) Its wings are broken – but it is not divided.
- 6) It is then **“fumed”** or burned upon the altar as an **“offering made by fire, of a sweet aroma to Jehovah.”**

c. Thus it seems correct to admit as someone suggested: “Man’s first attention to fire was for the Purpose of worship.

- 1) Since man did not eat flesh until after the flood such could likely be true.
- 2) At least the earliest record of fire is upon altars.

Our Next topic to consider is The Continual Burnt-offering.

