

Leviticus 1-4 • Understanding the Sacrifices

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We're starting the Book of Leviticus tonight and I, this is the fourth time that I will have taught through the Book of Leviticus here at Calvary Chapel, Ontario.

I remember still the very first time that I taught through this book and I ran into a family member of someone who was attending our fellowship at the time, and that family member heard that I was teaching through this book. And as we were conversing, it was a woman, and she said to me, she just, she looked at me, she went, Leviticus? It was like, you're teaching through the Book of Leviticus. Oh, isn't that interesting?

And I could tell by the way she was saying it, it was something that had never dawned on her that someone would want to do like on a Wednesday night, or a Sunday morning, or something like that.

But it was so amazing because the very first time I taught through the Book of Leviticus, I wasn't really looking forward to it. I'll be honest with you because I'd read the book, and I knew what was in it. And I remember thinking to myself, this is going to be a challenge. And I remember how much I enjoyed it. And I was surprised, going through the Book of Leviticus, that it was actually enjoyable. And then the second time, the same thing. Third time, it was even better. So here we are at the fourth time. It's been 8 years, by the way.

Typically to get through the entire Bible, it takes us somewhere between 8 and 12 years, depending on the book. So I was looking it up and it's been 8 years since we've been here.

It wasn't that long ago that we ended our study of Exodus and I didn't want a ton of time to pass between Exodus and Leviticus, because these books, they go together. In the Hebrew Canon, there's just this natural flow of events that's taking place between Exodus and Leviticus. And I'll put up on the screen here where we ended in Exodus, not that terribly long ago.

It says in chapter 40,

Exodus 40:34-38 (ESV)

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, (and that's the constructed tabernacle) and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. (and the Lord began to speak to Moses during that time) And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. (and it says) Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.

And to show you the progression of the Exodus to Leviticus, let me put on the screen here just these 4 narratives. We call them the continuing narratives of the Lord to His people.

The continuing narratives...

The construction of the tabernacle (Ex. 25-40)

The instructions about sacrifices (Lev. 1-7)

The ordination of the priesthood (Lev. 8-10)

Israel's worship and walk before God (Lev. 11-27)

And it begins there at the toward, at the end of Exodus in chapters 25 through 40 with essentially all of the instructions related to the construction of the tabernacle.

And then as we get into Leviticus, the Lord begins to give this narrative through Moses about the instructions concerning sacrifices and the entire sacrificial system.

He will then talk about the ordination of the priesthood in chapters 8 through 10. And then in the final chapters of Leviticus, the Lord will instruct Israel through Moses as it relates to Israel's worship and walk before God.

We're going to get into, we're going to hopefully get through a few chapters here tonight. We're going to start with an introduction, but before we do that, let's pray.

Father, we thank You that we get to study the Bible, and I thank You, Lord, specifically for that. That we still have a free nation, where we can gather freely, and we can come together as the people of God and just simply study the Bible.

And we pray that You would be here in our midst, that You would make our study of Your Word special because Lord, we confess to You today that it is You who makes it special. It is You who enlivens our hearts, opens our minds, our spirit to truly lay hold of the Word of God to understand its meaning, and apply it to our lives.

We ask You to do that tonight and we thank You Father for Your incredible goodness to us, to always be faithful to do those very things. We trust that no less will be done tonight, and we ask these things in Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

Alright, as we move on here in the Book of Leviticus, I wanted to talk here about the book itself in a way of introducing it. By the way, the title of the book that we know of as Leviticus is not one that the Hebrews would've known about, frankly. It's Latin.

Leviticus is Latin and it actually comes from an ancient Hebrew word that means, matters of the Levites. That's what Leviticus means. Matters of the Levites. That's essentially what the book largely is and what it contains.

But the ancient Jewish people, this is interesting, but when they would refer to a book in the Hebrew Canon, they would call it by usually the first 1, 2, or 3 words of the book. They would simply take those first words and that was the name of the book.

And in this particular case, the first word of Leviticus is translated by 2 English words, and they are essentially, He called. And it's referring to the fact that God called Moses and spoke to him about the things that we're going to read here. But that's what they called this book, He called.

They would, I suppose, in the synagogue, they would get together and unroll the scroll and they'll say, from the writings of Moses from He called. And everybody knew they were going to be dealing with something from the passage in Leviticus.

And before we also get into this book, I want to make it clear at the outset, that the Book of Leviticus is a challenging one for believers today to tackle. It's challenging on several different levels.

We know this because when people begin to read through the Bible it's in Leviticus where they start needing help. And we heard, we've gotten notes from people over and over and over again, particularly through the pandemic. The first year of the pandemic, when people couldn't go anywhere, couldn't go to church in many cases, they were just shuttered in their homes, a lot of them just started to read the Bible.

And they started, Genesis was pretty, pretty good, exciting, and pretty interesting. And Exodus was okay. And then they get to Leviticus and it was like the air would get let out of their tires and they didn't really know what to make of this book. And so they would start to get online and that's where people began to find us and Christian ministries that we're teaching through the Bible because Leviticus was the book where folks needed help.

They wanted to know what's this about? How can I apply this to my life? What is there in the Book of Leviticus that even applies to me today? I understand that this is instructions for the Levitical priests, well, I'm not a Jew, I certainly, therefore can't be a Levite or part of the priestly line, certainly not of the high priestly line of Aaron so how is this even applicable? I mean, why would I even want to read through this book, let alone study it?

Well, that is the question I... And I think today if a lot of Christians were asked that question by someone else, they would be hard pressed to be able to answer it. I mean, what would you say if somebody stopped you on the street, knowing that you are a Christian and you believe that the Bible is the Word of God, God breathed and all that stuff. And they said, I was reading through the Bible, Leviticus, why in the world should I study that book? What would you say? I think it's a fair question.

And I, even though some Christians, even many Christians would be hard pressed to explain why it's helpful. It is very helpful and I'll tell you why.

First of all, by understanding what Leviticus presents to us, which is really the practices, the ceremonies, and all the things that are outlined in this book, we gain a better understanding of the groundwork that God laid for the nation of Israel to understand the basic ideas behind redemption.

We get to the New Testament, we love talking about redemption. We love talking about how Jesus redeemed us through His death on the cross. Well, this is the groundwork for that you guys. The Book of Leviticus helps us to understand the basic building blocks of what God did through Jesus Christ.

But secondly, knowing the Book of Leviticus and the groundwork that it lays, it's a key to understanding much of what the New Testament authors are writing about. Because when you read through the New Testament, so much of what they are saying becomes so much more meaningful when you understand the groundwork of God's redemptive program laid down through the Book of Leviticus. And I'll even go as far as to say that the entire redemptive sacrifice of Jesus comes into a clearer view when you understand what the Book of Leviticus is saying and so forth.

Just to let you know the events that we're going to be looking at, as we go through this study in Leviticus, all happened while the nation of Israel was camped at the foot of Mount Sinai. They were there for about a year. It's where they heard the 10 Commandments. It's where on 2 separate occasions Moses climbed to the top of Mount Sinai and spent 40 days each time in the presence of the Lord. It's where so much. So many events.

It was only a year, but when you think about all the things that happened in that year, while they were camped at Mount Sinai. The construction of the tabernacle, which we've already dealt with in the Book of Exodus happened during that time. The organizing of Israel's army took place during that year camp there at Mount Sinai. The establishment of Israel's system of laws and government, and the whole idea of the courts, was established during that one year period.

And all of the instructions that went into Israel's understanding of worshipping the Lord creator God, happened in that first year. Happened during this time when Leviticus took place.

And if somebody asked me to take the Book of Leviticus and reduce it down to a single theme, or a single phrase even, I would have to say that Leviticus is about the holiness of God. It's as simple as that.

In fact, 3. I'll reduce it to 3. God is holy. There you go and that's it. And let me tell you something, that this is the overarching message of Leviticus and you're going to see it. We're going to see it over and over again as God communicates that message to His people and it's the answer.

People will, without understanding that theme, people will write to me or ask me questions and say, why did God give all these laws, and all these regulations, and all these rules about what they could do, and what they couldn't do, and all these prohibitions? And do you know that the answer to all those questions is that God was revealing His holiness.

He was simply communicating to the people of Israel, I Am holy. I, the Lord Am holy. That was the message. And believe me, it was an important message for them to understand. Coming out of paganism as they were living so many generations in Egypt where paganism was rampant, and the understanding of deities, multiple deities, and the way you're supposed to approach God and the way you worship the gods, this is the stuff they were exposed to for generations.

Now, God brought them into the wilderness to communicate, I Am God. I am the One and only God. I Am the God who created heaven and earth. I Am the Lord your God and I Am holy. And you can't just waltz into My presence anytime you want and begin to address Me because I Am holy. And that is, again, that's the overarching message.

Now we've talked many times in our study through the Scripture, how that's changed for you and me and wonderfully so. We still understand that God is holy but we know that God has bridged His holiness for us in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. Whereas the message under the old covenant was stay away, stay back, don't touch.

In the New Testament, it is, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, right? (Matthew 11:28) The message is come, come before the throne of grace. Come whenever and we get to do that. But people don't ever forget why we get to do that. It's not because God is any less holy or less approachable.

He is still remains the same unapproachable God who dwells in unapproachable light, but through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we have been enabled, empowered, and given the freedom to come into the presence of God. It's a wonderful, glorious thing, which the Jews did not experience under the old covenant. Only the high priest could go before the presence of the Lord and that was only once a year. Once a year for the high priest to go before the presence of God.

And so this freedom that you and I share to approach God at any time through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we understand is because of God's redemption that has been made possible for us through Jesus Christ. All right, there you go.

Chapter 1. You ready? Leviticus chapter 1. It says, *“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.”* (ESV)

I want you to notice here, the very first instruction to the people of Israel that God gives through Moses is a simple one about the bringing of offerings.

Now, this is not an uncommon idea, even frankly, for pagans, pagans made offerings. They would have understood offerings. The people knew what this was all about, but the Lord is going to talk in a different way about offerings to the people of Israel. And He's going to speak to them about 5 offerings. We'll put these on the screen for you so you can see them.

Five Initial Offerings

- The burnt offering
- The Grain offering
- The fellowship (or peace) offering
- The sin offering, and
- The trespass offering

These are the Five Initial Offerings the Lord speaks to. They are the burnt offering, the grain offering, the fellowship, or your Bible may say, the peace offering. They are the sin offering and the trespass offering.

You might wonder what's the difference between a sin offering and the trespass offering? Well, a sin can be an unintentional act and a trespass means an intentional act. When you know that something is a sin and you do it anyway. That's a trespass. (Matthew 6:12) We were taught to pray, forgive us our trespasses. Okay. Those are things we know. We knew that it was wrong. We did it anyway. Right? So those are the differences.

Now of these 5 initial offerings that the Lord is going to talk to Israel about. The first 3 are voluntary offerings. They're known as pleasing aroma offerings. You'll hear that phrase as it relates to those. And the last 2 sin offerings are required. They're mandatory offerings that the people were to bring. Chapter 1, this whole chapter is all about burnt offerings. All right.

We continue now reading. Verse 3. It says, *“If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer a male without blemish.”* Now that's another phrase you're going to hear a lot concerning offerings of animals, that they must

be “*without blemish.*” And I want you to really take a note of that. It must always be without blemish. If, in other words, if the animal was wounded, or sick, or had any kind of a physical blemish at all, it was not acceptable as an offering. And of course, the reason for this is the whole sacrificial system is a picture of the sinless son of God. Right.

And by the way, it's Peter who really, well, there were a lot of biblical writers and speakers that made the connection, or connected the dots for us. But Peter and his first letter, let me show you this on the screen said this from 1 Peter, or I'm sorry. Did I not put this on there, 1 Peter? Oh, there it is. I'm sorry.

1 Peter 1:18-19 (ESV)

...knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold,¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

... knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, (look at this) but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Peter makes that connection between the Old Testament requirement of a sacrifice without blemish and Jesus Christ. And we're going to again, see that here in Leviticus over and over.

Still in verse 3, it says, “*He shall bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the LORD.*” In other words, he's not to sacrifice this himself. He's not to go out into the wilderness and do it on his own. He must bring it before the presence of the Lord through the priesthood.

And “⁴ *He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, (which is a way of projecting, if you will, the guilt, and it says) and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.*”

And I want you to take note of the word, atonement. The Hebrew word atonement means to cover over. It means to pacify. Or if you will, to make propitiation. How many times today did you use the word propitiation? 4 or 5 probably today? Yeah. Like never. Yeah. Me neither. The word propitiation isn't a word that we use regularly, but it means to appease, or to take away wrath. Okay. To take away wrath.

Jesus, the Bible says is our propitiation. He removed the wrath of God toward us by taking it upon Himself, right? So this is what essentially the word, atonement means.

And we see this sacrificial offering, this burnt offering that the people are told to bring before the Lord is one that is there to secure forgiveness. But I want you to be careful here.

So many people look at the offerings of the old Testament and they'll say, why did God punish animals instead of human beings? I mean, why the death of all these animals? And what's God got against animals that He punished all these animals for the sins of His people?

Listen, it's very important to note God was not punishing the animal that died in the place of the individual. The blood of the animal, yeah, it was shed and the animal did die. There's no question about that. But guys, that was just a picture. It was a picture for the people of Israel to see and to understand that forgiveness, requires a substitute. You with me? Forgiveness requires a substitute.

Now, here's the point. The animal could not be that substitute. The animal was not that substitute. We learn it in the Book of Hebrews. Up on the screen from Hebrews chapter 10, verse 4. Look at this. He says,

Hebrews 10:4 (ESV)

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Animals don't do it. Animals can't take away sins, right? And as the apostle Paul reminded us in Romans chapter 3, he said.

Romans 3:25 (NIV84)

God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—

God presented him (Jesus) as a sacrifice of atonement, (by the way, that phrase, sacrifice of atonement, literally is propitiation. In other words, the One who removed the wrath of God) through faith in his blood. He did this to

demonstrate his justice, because (look at this) in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—

We've talked about this before. We've brought this passage out before. Listen, when animals died under the Old Covenant, God was not punishing the animal. Paul clearly says here in Romans, the sins committed beforehand were left unpunished. Yes. The people were forgiven, but nobody was punished.

The punishment was delayed until the sinless Lamb of God, the Son of God might come and take the collective punishment that all those people previously deserved, all the people who currently lived deserved, and all of the people who would come later would deserve. And that includes you and me.

Again, we see very clearly that animals were not sacrificed so that they might be punished for the worshipper or in place of the worshipper. It was a picture that God was communicating to the people of Israel and it was a bloody mess. I am so glad that I wasn't born a Jew back in those days from the line of Aaron. So glad because these guys were up to their elbows in blood all day long and it was it was gross, it was it was a bloody mess. This whole forgiveness process was a big fat bloody mess but it was meant to show that forgiveness is not an easy thing. It's a bloody mess.

And Jesus shed that blood for you and me and it wasn't pretty. It wasn't romantic. It wasn't sterile and convenient. It was horrible. It was horrific, and there were blood and guts all over the place in the Book of Leviticus. And I'm sorry to get so graphic, but that's the reality of the situation.

Moving on, verse 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.*

¹⁰ *“If his gift for a burnt offering is from the flock, (now we're not talking about an animal from the herd, but now from the flocks) from the (we're talking) sheep or (and) goats, (he says) he shall bring a male (again) without blemish, ¹¹ and he shall kill it on the north side of the altar before the LORD, and Aaron's sons the priests shall throw its blood against the sides of the altar.*

¹² And he shall cut it into pieces, with its head and its fat, and the priest shall arrange them on the wood that is on the fire on the altar, ¹³ but the entrails and the legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall offer all of it and burn it on the altar; (it was a complete offering to the Lord, it says) it is a burnt offering, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

¹⁴ “If his offering to the LORD is a burnt offering of birds, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves or pigeons. ¹⁵ And the priest shall bring it to the altar and wring off its head and burn it on the altar. Its blood shall be drained out on the side of the altar. ¹⁶ He shall remove its crop with its contents and cast it beside the altar on the east side, in the place for ashes. ¹⁷ He shall tear it open by its wings, but shall not sever it completely. And the priest shall burn it on the altar, on the wood that is on the fire. It is a burnt offering, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD.” Okay. That's the burnt offering of chapter 1.

Next we go to the grain offering, which is about what chapter 2 is about. Again, this is a voluntary offering and the worshiper, by the way, who would bring the grain offering was simply acknowledging the providential goodness of the Lord in providing. It's the same thing that, that you and I do when we sit down to a meal. Really. And when we sit down to a meal, what are we doing? We're just saying, thank you. That's it. And this is what the Israelites were instructed to do with the grain offering, because the grain and the things that they added to it represented what God had given them to literally sustain them. Flour made from grain and oil and things like that. Anyway, this was a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

It says in verse 1, “When anyone brings a grain offering as an offering to the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour. He shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it (that would make it smell incredible) ² and bring it to Aaron's sons the priests. And he shall take from it a handful of the fine flour and oil, with all of its frankincense, and the priest shall burn this as its memorial portion on the altar, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD. ³ But the rest of the grain offering shall be for Aaron and his sons; it is a most holy part of the LORD's food offerings.

⁴ “When you bring a grain offering baked in the oven as an offering, it shall be unleavened loaves of fine flour mixed with oil or unleavened wafers smeared with oil.”

And of course, leaven or yeast you'll remember was always a picture of the pervasive element of sin. And that was God's picture of how sin enters into our lives the way yeast or leaven is worked into a batch of dough. That's why it was not to be used in the sacrificial offering.

“⁵ And if your offering is a grain offering baked on a griddle, it shall be of fine flour unleavened, mixed with oil. ⁶ You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering. ⁷ And if your offering is a grain offering cooked in a pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil. ⁸ And you shall bring the grain offering that is made of these things to the LORD, and when it is presented to the priest, he shall bring it to the altar. ⁹ And the priest shall take from the grain offering its memorial portion and burn this on the altar, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD. ¹⁰ But the rest of the grain offering shall be for Aaron and his sons; it is a most holy part of the LORD's food offerings.

¹¹ “No grain offering that you bring to the LORD shall be made with leaven, for you shall burn no leaven nor any honey as a food offering to the LORD.” I explained leaven. We're not really sure why honey was not to be burned on the altar. I don't know. Maybe, I've never tried burning honey. Maybe it doesn't smell very good. I don't know.

Anyway, *“¹² As an offering of firstfruits you may bring them to the LORD, but they shall not be offered on the altar for a pleasing aroma. ¹³ You shall season all your grain offerings with salt. You shall not let the salt of the covenant with your God be missing from your grain offering; with all your offerings you shall offer salt.*

¹⁴ “If you offer a grain offering of firstfruits to the LORD, you shall offer for the grain offering of your firstfruits fresh ears, roasted with fire, crushed new grain. ¹⁵ And you shall put oil on it and lay frankincense on it; it is a grain offering. ¹⁶ And the priest shall burn as its memorial portion some of the crushed grain and some of the oil with all of its frankincense; it is a food offering to the LORD.”

Chapter 3. *“If his offering is a sacrifice of peace offering, (if you have a NIV on your lap today, your Bible says, fellowship offering. And I got to tell you something, I like that and I'll explain why. But it goes on here in verse 1 to say) if he offers an animal from the herd, male or female, he shall offer it without blemish before the LORD.”*

Now, the reason I like fellowship offering instead of peace offering, is when we call something here in the Old Testament a peace offering, it can leave you with the impression that this was an offering made by the worshiper so that he might have peace with God but that wasn't the purpose of this offering. In fact, that's the purpose of a sin offering that you might have peace with God.

This is an offering celebrating the fact that you already have peace with God, which is why I like fellowship offering because it's like, hey, we're just having fellowship. And this was God's way of inviting them in this sort of a way to understand that He wanted to have fellowship with His people. It was just to enjoy the fact that I have peace with God.

Sometimes I think as believers, we forget again, because we're living under the New Covenant and we take so much of what the New Covenant gives us for granted for what, because of what Jesus did. We just, we forget that one of the great benefits of what Jesus did on the cross for us, is He made peace between us and God where no peace existed because of our, the curse of sin. There was no peace between God and man.

Jesus came, bore our curse, the sin of our lives, and thus made peace between God and man. So we now have that. We enjoy that. We can have fellowship with God. We can enjoy His presence.

By the way, when's the last time you enjoyed the presence of God? I think that's a fair question. I think that in the busyness of our lives, we scarcely take time to simply enjoy God, His presence. We rush into His presence to lay out our needs and then we rush out again. And we go back into the busy craziness of life lived in this century. But when's the last time you lingered?

I think about Joshua, and we read this in Exodus, how God would speak with Moses and Moses would then leave the presence of the Lord and Joshua would stay there. He just would hang out. He'd stay and just enjoy the presence of God.

I think that one of the things we don't realize because we've never experienced it is that, in the presence of the Lord is joy forevermore. There's joy in the Lord. If you're not joyful, maybe you're not spending enough time with Him. Maybe you're not spending any time with Him. Maybe you're just doing the, here's my needs, God, throw in His face and then leave. I got to go now. I'm busy. I got things to do. I got places to go, people to see, appointments to keep. I don't have time to sit and talk or just as, or even just to sit in Your presence.

Fellowship offering. What can we do today to just say, Lord, I want to just be here. I want to just be here. I want to just hang with You. Can I just hang with You? I don't even have, I don't even have to, we don't even have to talk. Let's just hang. I think God would be okay with that. Yeah, sure, come on in. Let's hang.

Verse 2, *“And he shall lay his hand on the head of his offering and kill it at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and Aaron's sons the priests shall throw the blood against the sides of the altar. ³ And from the sacrifice of the peace offering, as a food offering to the LORD, he shall offer the fat covering the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails,”*

You guys know what fat on a fire smells like, right? If you've ever been out for a walk and somebody in the neighborhoods barbecuing. And you're like, invite me over, I want some of that. Do you know that what smells good is the fat? You go buy that 99% lean meat junk, you put it on the grill, it doesn't smell like anything. It's the fat you guys, that smells good. No wonder they called it a pleasing aroma. It is, smells wonderful. Okay. Where was I?

Verse 4. *“and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins, and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys.”* You didn't think you were going to get in a biology lesson tonight, did you? *“⁵ Then Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar on top of the burnt offering, which is on the wood on the fire; it is a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD.*

⁶ “If his offering for a sacrifice of peace offering to the LORD is an animal from the flock, male or female, he shall offer it without blemish. ⁷ If he offers a lamb for his offering, then he shall offer it before the LORD, ⁸ lay his hand on the head of his offering, and kill it in front of the tent of meeting; and Aaron's sons shall throw its blood against the sides of the altar. ⁹ Then from the sacrifice of the peace offering he shall offer as a food offering to the LORD its fat; he shall remove the whole fat tail, cut off close to the backbone, and the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails ¹⁰ and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys. ¹¹ And the priest shall burn it on the altar as a food offering to the LORD.” Now stop there for a moment.

You might be thinking, wait a minute, I thought this was a fellowship offering. This isn't about sin so why is he having to put his hand on the thing? And why is this animal having to die? Because you see under the old covenant, even to approach God required forgiveness. It's the same today.

Even to approach God, to hang out with Him. We were just talking about how we ought to do that more. We ought to just come to the Lord and say, I want to hang out with You. People, do you understand? The only reason you get to do that is because a sacrifice has been made. A death has occurred. The death of your Savior paved the way so that you could waltz into God's presence and say, I want to hang with You today.

And so they couldn't just waltz into God's presence and have fellowship as much as God may have liked that because there was this issue of sin that stood in the path.

Sin always separates us from God, always. And that's why with Jesus, even there's a perpetual sacrifice, a perpetual forgiveness. I should say a perpetual forgiveness that this one sacrifice of Jesus made that keeps on. We keep on being forgiven so we can keep on having fellowship and that's why.

Verse 12. *“If his offering is a goat, (you can see we're running through the different kinds of animals) then he shall offer it before the LORD ¹³ and lay his hand on its head and kill it in front of the tent of meeting, and the sons of Aaron shall throw its blood against the sides of the altar. ¹⁴ Then he shall offer from it, as his offering for a food offering to the LORD, the fat covering the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails ¹⁵ and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys. ¹⁶ And the priest shall burn them on the altar as a food offering with a pleasing aroma. All fat is the LORD's. ¹⁷ It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, in all your dwelling places, that you eat neither fat nor blood.”*

And of course, and these were, He didn't want them to eat the blood that was in the animal because it was set aside for the sacrifice. And He didn't want them to eat the fat because it wasn't healthy. It was made for sacrifice as well, but it also wasn't healthy. And it still isn't healthy to eat too much fat, it just smells good when you burn it.

Chapter 4. Now we get into the mandatory sacrifices, or at least we begin to specifically the sin offering. And by the way, it's important to note here that the sin offering was an offering made by God's redeemed people. And what I mean by that is, this is not a, an offering that someone would make to come to the Lord initially. This offering was for a man or for a woman who was already in a covenant relationship with God, but had sinned and was now seeking forgiveness. It's really important that you should that you understand that. And the Lord is going to give instructions for people who sin and these are going to be sins that are unintentional, all right. But He's going to talk about when a priest sins. He's going to talk about when the entire nation commits a collective sin. He's going to talk about when leaders of the people commit a sin. And then He's going to talk about when the common hobbit folk commit a sin. To use a little Lord of the Rings-ism there.

Anyway, verse 1. *“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If anyone sins (look at his) unintentionally (in other words, not on purpose) in any of the LORD's commandments about things not to be done, and does any one of them, ³ if (first of all He says, if) it is the anointed priest who sins, (in other words, the sons of Aaron or the sons of Aaron,) thus bringing guilt on the people, (notice that, remember why the sin of the priest would bring guilt on the people? Because they represent the people, that's the job of the priest, to represent the people) then he shall offer for the sin that he has committed a bull from the herd without blemish to the LORD for a sin offering. ⁴ He shall bring the bull to the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD and lay his hand on the head of the bull and kill the bull before the LORD. ⁵ And the anointed priest shall take some of the blood of the bull and bring it into the tent of meeting, ⁶ and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle part of the blood seven times before the LORD in front of the veil of the sanctuary.*

⁷ And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before the LORD that is in the tent of meeting, (this represents the prayer of forgiveness) and all the rest of the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. ⁸ And all the fat of the bull of the sin offering he shall remove from it, the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails ⁹ and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys ¹⁰ (just as these are taken from the ox of the sacrifice of the peace offerings); and the priest shall burn them on the altar of burnt offering. ¹¹ But the skin of the bull and all its flesh, with its head, its legs, its entrails, and its dung— ¹² all the rest of the bull—he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, to the ash heap, (and this is the place where sacrificial things were taken that were not offered, and it says) and shall burn it up on a fire of wood. On the ash heap it shall be burned up.

(Now) ¹³ *“If the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they do any one of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done, and they realize their guilt, ¹⁴ when the sin which they have committed becomes known, the assembly shall offer a bull from the herd for a sin offering and bring it in front of the tent of meeting. ¹⁵ And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD, (and the elders again represent the people) and the bull shall be killed before the LORD. (and) ¹⁶ Then the anointed priest shall bring some of the blood of the bull into the tent of meeting, ¹⁷ and (in a similar way) the priest (he) shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD in front of the veil. ¹⁸ And he shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar that is in the tent of meeting before the LORD,*

and the rest of the blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. ¹⁹ And all its fat he shall take from it and burn on the altar. ²⁰ Thus shall he do with the bull. As he did with the bull of the sin offering, so shall he do with this. And the priest shall make atonement for them, and they shall be forgiven. ²¹ And he shall carry the bull outside the camp and burn it up as he burned the first bull; it is the sin offering for the assembly.”

Now, verse 22 says, *“When a leader sins, (and again, remember, leaders, this is like elders who are examples to the people) doing unintentionally any one of all the things that by the commandments of the LORD his God ought not to be done, and realizes his guilt, ²³ or the sin which he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring as his offering a goat, a male without blemish, ²⁴ and shall lay his hand on the head of the goat and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD; it is a sin offering. ²⁵ Then the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering. ²⁶ And all its fat he shall burn on the altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings. So the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin, and he shall be forgiven.”*

And then finally, *“²⁷ “If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally (so these aren't priests, these aren't elders, these aren't leaders, they're just people. It says,) in doing any one of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done, and realizes his guilt, ²⁸ or the sin which he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring for his offering a goat, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed. ²⁹ And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and kill the sin offering in the place of burnt offering. ³⁰ And the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out all the rest of its blood at the base of the altar. ³¹ And all its fat he shall remove, as the fat is removed from the peace offerings, and the priest shall burn it on the altar for a pleasing aroma to the LORD. And the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven.*

³² “If he brings a lamb as his offering for a sin offering, he shall bring a female without blemish ³³ and lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and kill it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering. (and) ³⁴ Then (in a very similar way) the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out all the rest of its blood at the base of the altar. ³⁵ And all its fat he shall remove as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of peace offerings, and the

priest shall burn it on the altar, on top of the LORD's food offerings. And the priest shall make atonement for him for the sin which he has committed, and he shall be forgiven." A lot of repetition, isn't there? Welcome to Leviticus. That's just the way things go. This is the way things are going to happen.

So we're going to continue you on. Not tonight. We're going to continue on with more related to sin offerings and we will talk about that. We'll later on get into the preparation and ordination of the priesthood, and then in the latter part of Leviticus, we'll deal with the instructions for just life and worship and living. So that's what's going to be coming up. Let's pray.

Lord, as we wrap up this first study of the Book of Leviticus, we are reminded that you are a holy God. We are reminded that sin is a problem, all sin. And that it separates, causes division. It breaks fellowship. It takes away peace.

We're also reminded of just what Jesus did for us on the cross when He bore the curse of our sin, the punishment that we deserved, and took upon Himself the condemnation that would have otherwise brought destruction into our lives forever.

And having removed it and having made atonement for us, we now sit here today, the beneficiaries of such incredible blessing. Not just forgiveness. That would be enough if we were just forgiven.

But Lord, you didn't stop there. You told us that to all who received You, to those who believe on Your name, You gave us the right to become children. And not just children, but heirs, co-heirs with Christ. Lord, it's too much. It's too much. And yet, Lord, it is just who You are to give and to give lavishly.

And we are so grateful for all that has been made possible for us through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Lord, please, help us never to let go and never to take for granted what has been done for us through our Savior, our King, our Redeemer, our soon coming Lord.

We thank You and praise You for who you are and we commit our hearts to you. In the name of Jesus Christ our Savior and all God's people said together, amen.

God bless you.

Have a good rest of your evening