

Bread of God

April 8, 2018 ~ Leviticus 1.1-9

Background (Read Exodus 40:34-38)

- ❖ They'd just finished erecting the tabernacle and God entered it
 - ✧ 400 years later God did the same when Solomon's Temple was completed
- ❖ God maintained a visible presence with the wandering Jews for 40 years
 - ✧ People often say if they could only see God they'd believe in Him
 - ✧ Yet for 40 years the Jews saw God (cloud/fire/manna) and refused to submit

v2 ~ "When any one of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall . . ."

- ❖ Animal sacrifice regulated here (*not Instituted*)
- ❖ God did not institute animal sacrifice at Mt. Sinai – it had long been practiced
- ❖ God appears to have started animal sacrifice with Adam and his sons
 - ✧ **Gen 3.21** ~ "the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them"
 - ✧ **Read Gen 4.1-5a** ~ "Now Adam knew Eve .. Cain and his offering"
 - ◆ **Lev 3.16** ~ ". . all the fat is the Lord's"
 - ✧ Man learned very early that animal sacrifice (*nothing less*) was required
- ❖ Noah exited the ark and offered animal sacrifices to God in thanks
 - ✧ **Read Gen 8.20-21a** ~ "Then Noah built an altar .. is evil from his youth"
- ❖ Sacrifice persisted well beyond the flood
 - ✧ **Abram's** contemporary / **Read Job 1.1-5** ~ "There was a .. Thus Job did regularly."
 - ✧ **Gen 15.9** ~ God commanded "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon"
 - ◆ Same 5 animals of Leviticus (cow, goat, sheep, dove, pigeon)

v3 ~ "If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd"

- ❖ There are 4 basic types of animal sacrifice (**Lev 1 – 7**)
 - ✧ "burnt offering" ~ Ascension / devoted to God ~ burnt up entirely
 - ✧ "peace offering" ~ Fellowship / offerer and priest eat (burnt)
 - ✧ "sin offering" ~ Purification / priests eat (burnt) / blood door, inside, altar
 - ✧ "guilt offering" ~ Trespass / priests eat (burnt)
- ❖ Only in the "burnt sacrifice" does no one benefit by eating meat
 - ✧ The entire animal (*except for its hide*) is burnt up for God

Xition: Let's cover 5 symbols embedded in the sacrificial system

1. v4 ~ "Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering"

- ❖ Laying on hands denotes the imparting of something
 - ✧ Elders "lay hands" on men in ordination to impart blessing (2 Tim 1.6)
 - ◇ "stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands"
 - ✧ In **Leviticus 16.21** high priest lays hands on scapegoat to impart guilt
 - ◇ This is happening here ~ Offerer is imparting his sins to sacrifice
- ❖ But there's more / the animal is a substitute for the offerer
 - ✧ Both meanings are captured in Numbers where Levites are anointed
 - ◇ **Read Num 8.5-12** ~ "Then the Lord spoke . . for the Levites"
- ❖ So laying on hands imparts sin to sacrifice and declares it to be substitute

2. v5a ~ "He shall kill the bull before the Lord"

- ❖ Offerer himself must execute the animal / It dies in place of him
 - ✧ By executing the animal the offerer admits that he himself should die
- ❖ Priest gets involved / He must capture the blood

3. v5b ~ "Aaron's sons shall . . sprinkle the blood all around on the altar"

- ❖ Blood of an innocent sacrifice stands between a just God and a guilty sinner
 - ✧ **Lev 17.11** ~ "the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul"
 - ✧ **Heb 9.22b** ~ "without shedding of blood there is no remission [of sins]"
- ❖ Blood is not only shed but it's splashed on the sides of the altar
 - ✧ Reminiscent of blood placed on doorposts while in Egypt
 - ✧ Altar burning a daily reminder of God's wrath being contained

4. v7-9 ~ "The sons of Aaron's .. as a burnt sacrifice"

- ❖ Offerer must dismember the animal (v6)
 - ✧ Only priests prepare and place the animal on the altar
 - ✧ Only priests take part in burning it as prescribed
- ❖ This is one reason the high places were an abomination to God
 - ✧ People wanted to be close to God – but on their own terms

5. Peace offering followed by meal in which offerer and priest partake

- ❖ The sin and guilt offerings only God and the priests eat
 - ✧ Everyone eats the peace or fellowship offering
- ❖ When offerings are mentioned without qualifiers they're probably of peace

Xition: What is the primary purpose of the sacrificial system?

Meaning of Sacrificial System

- ❖ God is holy and man is sinful / Rules allow God to come near to man
 - ✧ **Read Deut 23.12-14** ~ “Also you shall .. turn away from you”
 - ✧ **Read Lev 10.1-3a** ~ “Then Nadab and Abihu .. I must be glorified”
- ❖ But we can forget to ask an important question at this point . . .
- ❖ “Why is it important that God and man can come together?”
 - ✧ From man’s perspective the answer is obvious to all who seek to know
 - ◇ Man was created for God / Our purpose in existing is to serve God
 - We establish many lesser goals (family, career) – but that’s “**the**” goal
 - ◇ Augustine said, “**Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee.**”
 - ✧ “**But what about God? Why does He want to draw close to us?**”
 - ◇ **Read Deut 7.6-9** ~ “For you are a holy .. keep His commandments”
- ❖ **III: Ladyhawke** (1985) ~ Pfeiffer, Rutger Hauer (*hawk and wolf – night/day*)
- ❖ God created a means of allowing us to draw near to one another

Offering God our Very Best

- ❖ **v2b** ~ “When any one of you brings . . .” / Desire for sacrifice assumed
 - ✧ **MH Q:** “Sacrifice was an implicit acknowledgment of their having received all from God as creatures, and their having forfeited all to Him as sinners.”
- ❖ **v3a** ~ “If his offering is .. a male without blemish”
 - ✧ God expects us to offer Him our very best / bull to be young (*valuable*)
 - ✧ Yet people would do opposite (**Read Mal 1.8** ~ “And when you .. of hosts”)
 - ✧ **MH Q:** “He that considers that God is the best that is, will resolve to give Him the best he has.”
- ❖ **v3b** ~ “he shall offer it of his own free will”
 - ✧ **Lev 1-7** describe voluntary offerings from the people
 - ◇ Scripture says that “God loves a cheerful giver” (**Read 2 Cor 9.6-8**)
 - ◇ Holy Spirit offended by Ananias and Sapphira in **Acts 5** ~ done for show

God Recognizes Disparity of Wealth & Gifts

- ❖ God accepted sacrifice of cows, sheep, goats, or birds (*even grain*)
- ❖ He knows our circumstances differ and makes provision for it

v9b ~ Two phrases / “an offering made by fire” “a sweet aroma to the Lord”

Xition: Let’s look at the first “an offering made by fire”

“An Offering Made by Fire”

- ❖ This phrase is rendered differently in ESV or NIV / “a food offering”
- ❖ Why is an “offering made by fire” a “food offering”?
- ❖ **III: Fire riddle** ~ “Feed me and I live. Give me something to drink and I die.”
 - ✧ Fires are said to consume. That’s another word for eat
- ❖ In the sacrificial system, God is said to “eat” the sacrifice

“a sweet aroma to the Lord”

- ❖ Again rendered differently in ESV or NIV / “pleasing aroma”
- ❖ What is it about the sacrifice that pleases the Lord?
 - ✧ **Read Gen 8.21** ~ The obedience of man in following His directions

Sacrificial System Insufficient

- ❖ **Read Heb 10.1-4** ~ “For the law, having .. take away sins”
 - ✧ **v2** ~ Daily and annual repetition points to weakness of system
 - ✧ **v4** ~ Animal deaths were inherently inadequate
 - ✧ Even human sacrifice is deemed inadequate in Micah (**Read Micah 6.6-8**)

Abraham’s Willingness to Offer Isaac a Picture of Christ

- ❖ In **Gen 22** God commands Abraham to offer up Isaac
 - ✧ Abraham obeys but God prevents it at last second
- ❖ Isaac would not have been a sinless sacrifice - insufficient
 - ✧ The story of **Gen 22** and the entire sacrificial system shows inadequacy
- ❖ God restrained Abraham’s hand / But didn’t restrain His own

Hebrews 10.11-14 ~ “And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹²But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.”

- ❑ The rules of the sacrificial system placated God – but as a “means to an end”
- ❑ What “end” was in mind? One word – Immanuel – “God with us” (**Is 7.14**)
- ❑ God went beyond human sacrifice to divine sacrifice to restore fellowship

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,

And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

To God our Savior, who alone is wise,

Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.

Amen *pause* Go in peace . . .

1. Who instructed Moses in the details of animal sacrifice? _____
2. What were 3 visible symbols of God's presence with the Jews in the wilderness?
 - ✧ _____
 - ✧ _____
 - ✧ _____
3. What five symbolic actions were mentioned concerning animal sacrifice?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
4. What were the 5 types of clean animals prescribed for sacrifice
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
5. The laying on of hands can impart _____ or _____.
6. Do animals have spirits or souls? _____
7. Are animals made "in the image of God"? _____
8. In what ways was the animal sacrifice system inadequate in covering human sin?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
9. What makes Jesus' sacrifice sufficient?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____