

The Burnt Offering

In the book of Leviticus we find listed five offerings. Listed below are the five major offerings of Israel. There were other important offerings (such as the drink offering), but when most people discuss the offerings of Israel they most often mention the offerings that are in Leviticus 1-5.

The burnt offering --- shows us the way to God through Christ (1:1-17).

The meat offering --- shows us the character of Christ (2:1-16).

The peace offering --- shows us the finished work of Christ (3:1-17).

The sin offering --- shows us Christ as our Substitute (4:1-35).

The trespass offering --- shows us Christ's blood atonement (5:1-6:7).

The details of the burnt offering are found in Leviticus 1 and it is there we learn that man can only come to God *in a manner prescribed by God*; all other ways are null (vs. 1-2).

I. The Offerer of the Burnt Offering

There are several things we learn in Leviticus 1 about the person who comes to God.

(A). The sinner comes to an open door but can't go past the altar (v.3).

The altar of brass was near the door of the tabernacle, facing it. This was the first thing that met the worshipper's eye as he approached the tabernacle. Here the priest met him and led him with his sacrifice to the altar. The object in bringing the sacrifice was to obtain access to God. The door of access had been blocked by sin. It could not be opened without a sacrifice. Christ is that Sacrifice for sin by which the way has been opened for sinners to come to God. He points to his blood atonement and says to needy sinners, "*Behold, I set before you an open door*" (Rev. 3:8). "*I am the door*" (John 10:9). Jesus Christ is an open door.

(B). The sinner comes to the door with the sacrifice and a "*willing heart*" (v.3).

God demands a willing heart. And God gives the willing heart. This is the warrant of the gospel: -- "*Whosoever will, let him come.*" There must be a willing heart. Else, God is not worshipped. It is true, none are willing to come to Christ, none are willing to trust his atoning work, except those who are made willing by him in the day of his power. This is wonderful. Are you willing to go to yonder Altar? Are you willing to trust Christ? Do you reply, "Yes, I am willing to be saved by Christ alone"? God demands a willing heart. That makes it your responsibility. Only God can give a willing heart. That makes this a work of divine sovereignty and grace (Rom. 9:15-16).

(C). The sinner comes to the door with the sacrifice to find acceptance (v.4).

Not only was the worshipper required to acknowledge his need of a sacrifice to gain acceptance with God, he must personally identify himself with the sacrifice.

"He shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering."

The word used for "*put*" is a very strong word. It means "*lean*". -- "*Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?*" (Song. 8:5). Atonement carries with it a very deep meaning. Sins are covered (Lev. 6:7) from Jehovah's face. God's wrath is not felt because sin is gone! (Romans 5:8-11).

II. The Offering of the Burnt Offering

There were several specific requirements for the offering called the Burnt Offering.

(A). It must be a male from the herd (v.3).

This portrays Christ, the second Adam, the God-man, by whom righteousness has been brought in and by whom sin has been put away. – Being from the herd, he is a sacrifice of God's own providing – (Cain and Abel).

(B). It must be a sacrifice without blemish (v.3).

If he would make atonement for sin, our Sacrifice must be holy. He is the holy Lord God; and he is the holy Man. As such, he is able to offer a sacrifice to God worthy of God's holiness, justice, and truth. The Lord Jesus Christ, if he would present his church as his spotless bride, holy, unblameable, and unproveable before God, must himself be without blemish.

(C). It must be offered "before the Lord" (v.5).

A holy, blameless life is not enough to make atonement for sin. A holy life could never open the door of access to God for poor sinners. No! Blood must be shed. Christ must die before the Lord. Our Savior's death was God's work.

His was a sacrifice made to God, before God, and for God.

(D). The blood must be sprinkled around the altar (v.5).

The blood represents the death of the soul. For the life of the flesh is in the blood. The sprinkling of the blood around the altar is a picture of Christ's death for us. The blood sprinkled in heaven is **redemption accomplished** (Heb. 9:12). The blood sprinkled upon the heart is **redemption applied** (Heb. 9:14).

(E). The offering is flayed, cut into pieces, washed, and burnt (v.5-9).

This corresponds to the horrific death of Jesus Christ at Calvary. He was flayed, bruised, and had a crown of thorns crushed upon His head. But the real agony was the fire of God's wrath poured out upon Him. Christ endured God's wrath for me. The sinless, pure sacrifice (the washing), died a sinful, cursed death.

Instructions are given in the latter part of this chapter for people who present a lamb for a burnt offering, or in the case of the poor, pigeons and doves. This shows us that it was not the animal that was important, but what the animal represented --- the coming Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

III. The Outcome of the Burnt Offering

"And the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD" (v.9).

"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Ephesians 5:1-2).

A person who seeks to please God apart from faith and trust in the person and work of Jesus Christ will find it impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6). To ignore the gift of God for sinners, His Son Jesus Christ, is to place your soul in the direct path of the wrath of a holy God. *"Kiss the Son, lest He be angry" (Psalm 2:12).*