



Parashah 24: Vayikra

Leviticus 1:1 - 6:7

“He called”

“. . .an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to YHWH.”

Leviticus 1:17

1. The Burnt Offering - 1:1-17

- a) What process was followed to bring a burnt offering to YHWH? What was the purpose of the action described in verse 4? What was done with the blood?

A burnt offering was presented to the priests at the entrance to the tabernacle. The offerer placed his hands on the animal's head, symbolically transferring his sins to the animal. The animal was killed and its blood was sprinkled around the altar as proof of its death, the required payment for sin.

- b) How much was consumed by fire? Who did it? Why did they wash it?

The entire animal was consumed by fire. The priests prepared the offering, washing the entrails and legs so only that which is clean is presented to God.

- c) What animals could be offered? Why different ones? What do you think the purpose was for this offering? Was it a required offering or was it voluntary?

Normally, the burnt offering was a male from the herd or flock (bull or ram). If the offerer wasn't wealthy enough to bring this, he could offer a dove or young pigeon. Thus any one could make atonement for their sin. This was a voluntary offering made for repentance of sin symbolizing the total commitment of the offerer.

2. The Grain Offering - 2:1-16

- a) What were the ingredients in this offering? What freedom did the offerer have? What restrictions?

The grain offering was made from fine flour, either raw or cooked (baked or fried) with oil. It could not contain yeast or honey but must contain salt.

- b) Can you see any significance to forbidding yeast & honey? What about adding salt?

Yeast is typically symbolic of sin, honey may represent temptation. Many possibilities exist. Verse 13 suggests that salt reminds us of the covenant.

- c) What do you think the primary purpose was for this offering? Was it voluntary?

This voluntary offering expressed thanksgiving for the sustenance of life as well as for the bread of life, his word. The lack of blood sacrifice meant it was not for atonement.

3. The Fellowship Offering - 3:1-17

- a) What kind of animals could be offered for this offering? How was this offering different than the burnt offering?

Either a male or female from the herd or flock (without blemish, as with all sacrifices) was offered. The offering was not totally consumed by fire.

- b) Do you see any significance to the parts of the offering that were offered to God? What kind of atmosphere do you think surrounded this sacrifice?

The “fat portions” were to be burned on the altar. “All the fat belongs to YHWH” (3:16). These were considered the choicest part and smelled like an outdoor barbecue. It was probably a festive occasion.

- c) This offering was also known as a Peace Offering. What do you think the purpose was for this offering? Was the offering voluntary?

Symbolically, this voluntary offering meant “sharing a meal with God in fellowship.” It was often shared with invited guests of the offerer. In Hebrew, this offering is called shelem, because it represents peace between God and the offerer. Colossians 1:20 shows that Yeshua’s sacrifice acted as a fellowship offering on our behalf.

4. The Sin Offering - 4:1 - 5:13

- a) In verse 2, most Bibles use the word “unintentional” or “inadvertent” to describe the sin to be atoned for with this sacrifice. What do you think this means? What does it imply about our attitude toward sin? What about repentance?

The Hebrew root is shagah which means to wander away, to go astray (Strong’s 7686). This implies that we will sin unintentionally as we go through life even though we try to obey God’s teachings, i.e., “we all will fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). God knows this but yet, the sin must be dealt with. It is assumed that the sinner has already repented.

- b) Describe the different offerings that were to be brought as sin offerings? Is there any significance to the order in which they are presented here? How was this offering different than the others we’ve seen so far?

Sin offerings began with a young bull (most valuable for sins of the high priest or the entire nation) moving down to a dove or pigeon for sins of the poor and a tenth ephah of flour for the very poor. The offering was mandatory.

- c) Chapter 5 lists sins for which a common person might be required to make a sin offering. What do you think of this list? What offerings must the sinner provide?

The sins listed indicate that God takes all of our conduct very seriously.

5. The Guilt Offering - 5:14 - 6:7

- a) What was the required sacrifice for the guilt offering? What specific sins were atoned for with this offering?

The guilt offering must be a ram or male lamb “of the proper value in silver.” (Yeshua was a male lamb of proper value in silver.) This offering atoned for sins against God’s property or against the property of others.

- b) How was the Guilt Offering different than the Sin Offering? Why do you think both offerings were necessary?

This offering required restitution: the value of the property plus 20%. The sin offering atoned for sin before God whereas the guilt offering “paid the price for our sin.”

Digging deeper

1. Make a table comparing offerings. What interesting things can you see from this table? Can you see how Yeshua has fulfilled each of these sacrifices?
 - *Yeshua fulfilled the burnt offering as he was a male without defect who voluntarily gave his life to be completely consumed as an atonement for sin.*
 - *Yeshua fulfilled the grain offering in that he was the living Torah, the bread of life provided by God for life to mankind.*
 - *Yeshua fulfilled the peace offering because through him we have peace and fellowship with God (see Romans 5:1-2).*
 - *Yeshua fulfilled the sin offering as he was above and beyond the required sacrifice for the nation (God’s own son was infinitely more valuable than the most valuable bull in Israel.)*
 - *Yeshua fulfilled the guilt offering by paying the price for our sin in “the proper value in silver, according to the sanctuary shekel.” (Lev 5:15) (See Matthew 26:14-16)*
 - *Hebrews 10:1-14 shows that Yeshua’s sacrificial death has “fulfilled” the ceremonial law. (“I have not come to abolish the Law and the Prophets but to fulfill them.” - Matt 5:17)*
 - *God’s Moral and Civil Law can only be “fulfilled” by Yeshua living in us.*

2. An often repeated phrase in this Torah portion is “. . .an aroma pleasing to the Lord.” What do you think this means? What types and shadows does it suggest to you?

The phrase “an aroma pleasing to the Lord” appears 40 times in the Torah, and 17 times in the book of Leviticus alone. In the Kings James version, it is translated as “a sweet savor to the Lord.” The Hebrew word translated savor is rayach which is from the Hebrew root ruach which means spirit or breath, as in Ruach HaKodesh, the Holy Spirit. God obviously attaches a spiritual significance to the death and burning of the offering. Second Corinthians 2:15-16 reads, “For we are to God the aroma of the Messiah among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life.”

3. It can be seen that the essential part of every offering to God was sacrifice. What do we offer to God as a sacrifice today?

*Most significantly, we offer **ourselves** as sacrifices to God: Romans 12:1-2 reads, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is - his good, pleasing, and perfect will.”*

*Also, our **worship** is to be sacrificial. Hebrews 13:15 says, “Through Yeshua, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise - the fruit of lips that confess his name.” Also, verse 16 shows the need for **service to others**.*

Finally, we offer our *service to others*. *Ephesians 5:1-2* reads, “Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Messiah loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

Levitical Offerings

Burnt Offering

- Voluntary act of worship
- Atonement for sin
- Expression of devotion, commitment & surrender to God
- Bull, ram or male bird without defect
- Totally consumed

Grain Offering

- Voluntary act of worship
- Recognition of God’s goodness and provision
- Expression of devotion to God
- Grain, fine flour, olive oil, incense, salt
- Baked, fried or uncooked
- No yeast or honey
- With Burnt & Peace Offerings

Fellowship or Peace Offering

- Voluntary act of worship
- Thanksgiving & fellowship w/ God (included a communal meal)
- Any animal from herd or flock without defect
- Variety of breads

Sin Offering

- Mandatory atonement for specific sin
- Confession of sin
- Forgiveness of sin
- Cleansing from defilement
- Bull for High Priest and nation
- Male goat for leader
- Female goat or lamb for person
- Dove or pigeon for the poor
- Tenth ephah flour for very poor

Guilt Offering

- Mandatory atonement for specific sin
- Cleansing from defilement
- Make restitution
- Pay 20% fine
- Ram without defect