

## Sacrifices and Offerings

Once the tabernacle and its furniture were made, God explained how the people should make sacrifices and offerings at the tabernacle. These offerings were designed to teach everyone about the work of Jesus Christ and what they themselves must do to be saved. The first six chapters of Leviticus describe the five types of sacrifices and offerings the people could offer in their worship of God: 1) burnt, 2) meal, 3) peace, 4) sin, and 5) trespass offerings.

### *Burnt Offering*

Leviticus 1 explains that male bulls, goats, lambs, turtledoves or pigeons could be offered as burnt offerings. The person making the offering had to kill the animal himself. Just about everything except the skin was placed on the altar and burned as a pleasing odor to God.



In the burnt offering, God tried to teach the offerer that he must give God his whole life. God didn't want the skin on His altar because He is not interested in our outward appearance, but instead He wants us to develop our hearts and minds so we will be His true children.

The animals represented the evil desires we have that lead us away from God. The offerer killed the animal himself so we would learn to try to conquer our bad desires and dedicate our lives in service to our God. The apostle Paul wrote an exhortation built on this lesson of animal sacrifice in his letters when he said "*put to death therefore what is earthly in you: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*" (Col. 3:5)

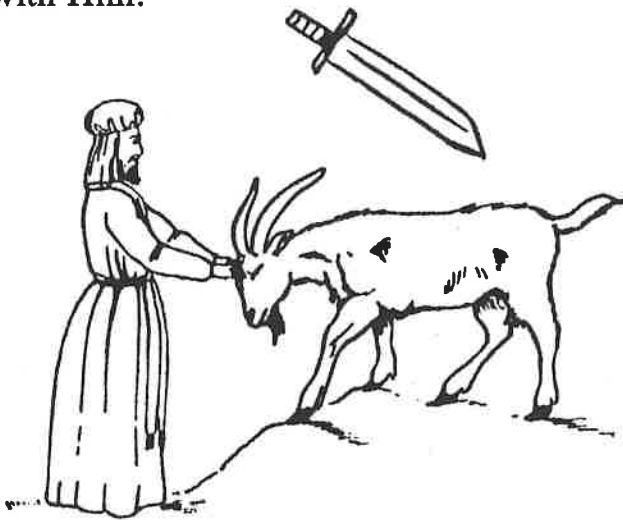
### *Meal Offering*

Leviticus 2 describes the various ways that flour could be mixed with oil and then burned on the altar as a meal offering to God. The grains that were ground into flour would have taken many months of hard work to produce. God was trying to teach the offerer that he must be willing to consistently work for God in order to be saved.

## Peace Offering

In Leviticus 3 God described the rules for a peace offering. You could offer a male or female bull, goat or lamb. This offering was quite different in that the animal was split up and divided between God, the priest and the offerer. The fat was burned on the altar to God. The priest helping with the offering was given the breast and the right thigh. What was left of the animal was given back to the offerer and his family so they could sit down and eat a meal of fellowship with the priests in the presence of God in the tabernacle area.

The main lesson God wanted to teach through the peace offering was that if we let God work in our lives, He can conquer Sin in us and forgive us of our mistakes. This will put us at peace with God and allow us to experience the wonder of fellowship with Him.



## Sin Offering

Leviticus 4 explains that when a person sinned, but didn't know it, and then later became aware of his sin, he was required to make a sin offering. They used either a bull, male or female goat, or a female lamb, depending on who was making the offering. The animal was killed, and the priest took some of the blood into the tabernacle and sprinkled it seven times before the Lord in front of the veil. The rest of the blood was then taken to the altar of the burnt offering. Some was placed on the four horns and the rest was poured out at the bottom of the altar. The fat of the animal was then burned on the altar and the rest of the animal was burned on some wood at a spot outside the camp of Israel.

There were many lessons from this offering. The blood represented the life of the offerer. God would provide a way for us to pass through the veil and join Him in immortality, but we must be willing to pour out our lives now in service to Him. If we do admit our sins and join with Jesus Christ in trying to do God's will, God will forgive our sins and one day give us immortality.

This animal was burned outside the camp because God wanted to let the Israelites know that it would take something beyond the Law of Moses (that is, the work of Jesus Christ) to provide forgiveness of all sins and eternal life. The apostle Paul referred to this when he told the Hebrews, *"For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood."* (Hebrews 13:11-12)

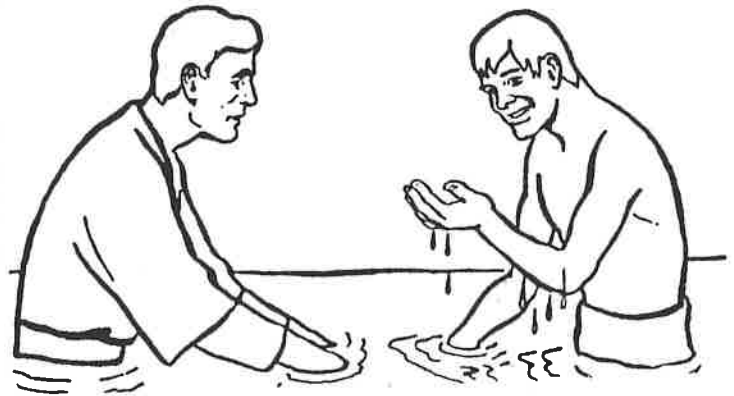
## *Trespass Offering*

Leviticus 5-6 describes the trespass (or guilt) offering a person should offer if he wanted forgiveness for violating the rights of another person or God. The offering was always a ram, and the offerer also had to restore anything he might have taken or damaged, and then also pay an extra one-fifth (20%) of its value as a penalty.

God was trying to teach in this offering that when we make mistakes against others, we must go overboard to pay them back for the mistake we have made. It is not good enough to just pay the exact value of the mistake. We must go beyond that and add an extra one-fifth to help fix the situation.

## **The Sacrifices Predicted the work of Jesus Christ**

Besides teaching all the various lessons about what God requires from us to be saved, the sacrifices also predicted the great work that God would accomplish in the life of Jesus Christ to save him. Like us, Jesus also had the bad animal desires in his body, but *he always put them to death by not giving in to them and gave his life to His Father all the time*. He willingly poured out his life to God in sinless obedience and then was raised up to eternal life. His life and death have become the basis for us to approach God and receive the forgiveness of our sins. *We must join with Jesus in putting to death our evil desires, by trying to do the will of God instead.*



We no longer live under the Law of Moses with its animal sacrifices, but we still must live by the principles in that law. Instead of animal sacrifices, *we need to be baptized into Jesus Christ*. We join with him in a death like his by putting our old way of life to death and living like him instead. We confess our sins and ask for forgiveness on the basis that we admit that Jesus' way of life was the right way to live and we will try to join with him in service to our God.

Rather than offer animal sacrifices, after we are baptised we take the bread and wine on Sunday to remind us of the life of Jesus Christ and our commitment we made at our baptism to join with him by the way we live. In this way God reminds us weekly of our own failures and the promise we made to Him that we will join with Jesus in fighting sin, so one day God can take us into the Most Holy place beyond the veil by giving us eternal life.