

171213-4 Leviticus 1, 1-9, The Bull for a Burnt Offering – Craig Thurman

The title of this book *Leviticus* is from the Greek *leitikos* (cf. Heb.7.11), which means *that which pertains to the Levites*. So, *leitikos* is the name given to this book in the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament (LXX).

Who are the Levites? They are the descendants of Levi. Levi is the third eldest son of Jacob and born of his wife Leah. The sons of Levi are Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. (Ge. 46.11) Each of these families will be appointed a certain service about the Tabernacle of the congregation.

The family of Gershon was appointed to camp on the west, behind the tabernacle. Their responsibility was with caring for and transporting the *soft* structure of the tabernacle and court (but not the veil). (Nu.3.23, 25, 26)

The family of Kohath camped on the south side of the tabernacle, and was responsible for all of the furniture and vessels that pertain to them, and the veil inside the tabernacle. (Nu.3.29, 31) It was from this family that God ordained the ministry of the Aaronic priesthood.

The family of Merari camped on the north side of the tabernacle and was responsible for all of the *hard* materials which supported the tent and court, with all the vessels that pertain to it. (Nu.3.35).

In the midst of all of these Levitical servants is a Levitical chief of chiefs. (Nu.3.32) He is called high priest. In other words the high priest is the ruler over the house of God.

Heb 10:21 And having an high priest over the house of God ...

The writer of the book of Leviticus was a Levite, named Moses.

Levi begat Kohath, Kohath begat Amram, and Amram begat Aaron, called to be high priest, and his younger brother Moses. (Ex.2.1; 6.18; 1Chr. 6.1, 2)

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Jesus said the writer of this book was Moses.

Mt 8:4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. (also, Mk.1.44; Lk.5.14)

Le 14:2 This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest:

Joh 8:5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

Le 20:10 And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

Leviticus is not necessarily a book meant to be read as much as a book which should be studied.

'To speak of Leviticus as "dull reading" misses the point of the book completely. How could we expect a book like Leviticus, which is occupied throughout with regulations, to provide exciting reading? Obviously, it is not meant just to be read, but to be *studied*. It yields little of its treasure to a mere reading; but a reasonable concentration transforms it into one of the most intriguing articles in the Scriptures.' J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, p.112

I think that this is the key feature of this book: It separates Israel from all of the other nations by the imposition of distinct religious, moral, and dietary laws. This law is used to preserve Israel for the first and final coming of the Messiah.

Chapter 1 The Burnt Offerings

1 ¶ And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

The history of Israel continues. The Lord speaks to Moses from the tabernacle on the day of its being raised. This was the 2nd year, 1st month,

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burnt sacrifice, אֶמְעֹלָה, [g]o-lah, fem. noun; KJV, *tss. burnt offering, burnt, burnt sacrifice*; the verb is עָלָה, tss. *to go up, ascend*.

without blemish, תָּמִים, ta-mim, adj.; KJV, *perfect, without blemish, whole, complete, full, without spot, sincerity, upright, undefiled, sound*.

So a male of the herd can be offered as a burnt offering. It is a bull. This is the costliest, most valuable or perhaps the most incomparable of the offerings made by fire. So in this way well represents the Son of God.

Ex 15:11 Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

1Sa 2:2 There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

Ps 86:8 Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works. 9 All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name. 10 For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone.

Isa 46:5 To whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?

The bulls is the strong, laboring beast. This refers to the work of God through Christ. He did for us what we could not do ourselves. It's not what man does, but what Christ does.

Jn.6.27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. 28 ¶ Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? 29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

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Eph.1.18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know ...19 ... what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places ...

This bull was without blemish. It was to be without defects because it represented the offering of the body of Jesus Christ for sins.

He.10.9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Heb 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Jesus was perfect within and without; He was free from sin in every way. He was God's ordained sacrifice to take away sins. He was *strong* to deliver those for whom he died from the punishment due them for sin.

1Jo 3:5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

2Co 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin ...

1Pe 2:22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth ...

Heb 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Lu 11:22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD.

*of his own voluntary will, לְרִצּוֹנוֹ, lir-tso-no, masc. sing. noun w/a pref. לְ, at, to, and a 3ps. masc. suff., רָצוֹן, ra-tson; KJV, Ge.49.6, **self will**; Ex.28.38, *may be accepted*; Lev.19.5, **at your own will**; Deu.33.16, *good will*; Due.33.25, *with favour*; Ezz.10.11, **his pleasure**; Ne.9.24, **as they would**; Ex.1.8, **according to ... pleasure**; Est. 9.5, *what they would*; Pv. 11.1, *his delight*.*

Voluntariness describes the kind of will. There are two biblical considerations that concern voluntariness. One concern is from man's perspective, and the other from God's. Both of these should be explained by Scripture.

The first biblical consideration of voluntariness that I would like to address concerns the perspective from man's point of view. The sinner is not to be compelled or forced to offer this burnt offering. Like the contributions for the building of the tabernacles which was from him that *giveth it willingly with his heart*, (Ex.25.2) so the burnt offering was to come from a *voluntary will*. And if there is a work of grace in the sinner the will to offer according to the will of God is present with the offeror.

How does a sinner become *willing* to offer that which shows what God has done for Him through Jesus Christ? The answer is that God makes him willing. Why would one Israelite offer that which demonstrates God reconciling him to Christ, and not the other? The one does not offer because he doesn't understand what God has done for him.

Later, in the sojourning of Israel through the wilderness the LORD sent into the camp serpents which bit the people. The only remedy for this bite was to look upon a replica of that serpent that Moses lifted up on a pole. Why would some look and others would not? Someone might answer, because of faith. That is partially correct. Faith explain why someone is willing, but

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it doesn't explain how they became willing. Faith doesn't beget itself. There has to be an origin to faith, and that origin is God. The natural tendency for us is to look into the person to find an answer. Perhaps he believed because of youth. Maybe it was because he was so old and nearer death. Or, perhaps it was the good training he received as a child. But what about those who seemed to be rescued from some of the most tragic circumstances of life? It must have been because of tragedy. Perhaps faith is a product of the poor. But there are some rich which come to Christ. Try as we will the origin of faith is not in any of these things. The origin is God.

Php 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

La 5:21 Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.

Ps 110:3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

Otherwise no man would come.

*Joh 6:44 No man **can** come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

Every Israelite which offered his voluntary burnt offering set forth the type of God reconciling the sinner the condemnation of sin by the death of this animal.

Every soul made willing says that the previous course of the corrupted nature has been altered by the imposition of the divine nature. (2Pe.1.3, *his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness*) The old nature is subjugated by the new. (Ro.6.14, *sin shall not have the dominion over you*) The Spirit of God precedence over the corrupt nature and directs him to Christ in faith at the preaching of the gospel. As

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long as the nature in man is only corrupt he will not come to Christ. But as soon as the Spirit of God works there is a willingness to do the will of God.

The second biblical consideration of voluntariness concerns the perspective from God's point of view. God cannot do anything that He is unwilling to do. All He does is because He wills. His love, hate, favor, condemnation, election, reprobation, mercy and hardening are all free acts of God.

Isa 46:10 ... My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure ..;

De 32:39 See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. 40 For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

Joh 5:21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

Ro 9:18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

Christ willingly offered himself for our sins.

He.10.7 ¶ Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.

Jn.10.17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power (ἐξουσία) to lay it down, and I have power (ἐξουσία) to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Ga 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father ...

4 And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.

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to make atonement, לְכַפֵּר, l^e-kap-per, the preposition לְ, to, Piel (intensive active) inf. sing. masc. of כָּפַר, ca-phar; the Piel inf. is tss. in 6.30 to reconcile, 8.15 to make reconciliation, 16.20 reconciling, Ez.16.63 when I am pacified; in Piel imp., Ps.79.9 and purge away [our sins]; Piel fut., Ge.32.20 I will appease, 2Chron.30.18 pardon; In Pual (intensive passives), Es.29.33 shall be disannulled, Nu.35.33 to be cleansed, Pv.16.6; Is.27.9 purged; in Piel pret., Deu.32.43 will be merciful. This is a very comprehensive word.

The burnt offering reveals atonement by means of a sacrificial animal. From chapter 4 and forward, often, atonement is shown to be by the mediation of the priest.

atonement*: the next time there is *atonement* is in Lev. 4. From this place forward often atonement is by *mediation*, or by the priest. (4.20, 26, 31, 35; 5.6, 10, 13, 16, 18; 6.7; 7.7; 15.15; 16.16, 24, 30, **33; 23.28)

Next, the sinner laid his hands upon the head of the animal. (v.4) This is called imputation. There is in this act a legal transaction. God shows the sinner His ordained substitution. God will have the sinner know that He has redirected the punishment of which he was worthy to the victim of His choice. It is for the sinner a legal transference of guilt; it not a real transference to the victim. The sinner was *really* guilty of the crimes committed against God, but he is *counted not guilty*. The victim was really innocent, but he is treated as if he was the real criminal. And in this type Jesus Christ suffered the just for the unjust.

Isa 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Imputation *constitutes* a sinner righteous and the Righteous a sinner.

2Co 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. (Properly, he hath made Him to be a sin offering, or to be a sacrifice for sin.)

Ro 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Isa 53:10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Atonement is made only by the substitution of God's appointed victim. God reconciles the sinner by the sacrifice of the victim. In this way His wrath is pacified, appeased, disannulled. Sin is purged, and God is merciful. These are some of the ways that the Hebrew for *atonement*, כִּפָּר, ca-phar, is translated in the Old Testament.

5 And he shall kill the bullock before the LORD: and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar that is by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

The animal is killed. The victim's death is unnatural and violent. So was Christ's death. He was killed by crucifixion.

Mt 27:35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

The animal is killed before the LORD. The LORD is the major concern. Sin is a terrible offense to God. It doesn't matter what men think of sin, God must be satisfied for the offense. There is either the death of God's

substitute or the death of the sinner. But there must be a death. *Eze 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.* Every soul that dies apart from the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ bears his own judgment before God, and is eternally separated to a fiery hell. (Mt.25.41)

The blood is sprinkled *round about upon the altar.* The altar is the *brazen altar.* It represents the place where the body of our Lord Jesus was offered up to God. The sprinkled blood was upon His own body which came from the wounds that He received as He suffered under the justice of God for our sins.

This all took place *by the door* of the tabernacle of the congregation indicating that it is *only* by the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ that reconciliation is made.

6 And he shall flay the burnt offering, and cut it into his pieces.

Flaying can typify the sufferings of Christ.

Isa 50:6 I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

Mt 27:26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

The priest that offers the burnt offering receives the skin.

Le 7:8 And the priest that offereth any man's burnt offering, even the priest shall have to himself the skin of the burnt offering which he hath offered.

In this we see in type the fellowship of His sufferings.

1Co 9:13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

1Co 10:18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

2Co 1:7 And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.

2Ti 1:8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

1Pe 4:13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

7 And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire upon the altar, and lay the wood in order upon the fire:

8 And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar:

the parts, הַנְּחָחִים, han-n^e-tha-chim, a masc. pl. noun נָחַח, ne-thach w/a pref. article, הַ, the, tss. either pieces or parts and found 12 times in the O.T.; the verb נָחַח, na-thach, is tss. cut, divide, hew, cut in pieces; perhaps the head and the fat are symbolic of Christ's sacrifice being incomparably the chiefest and the best offering.

9 But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: 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.

The offering of Christ effects a change in the sinner. First, washing the inwards could refer to the conscience of the sinner concerning sins. The Old Testament sacrifices did not cleanse from sin. These were a temporary, outward, ritual. They did not really remove judgment from the sinner. They

only pointed to the coming of God's appointed sacrifice when sins would be put away thoroughly, once for all.

Heb 10:1 ¶ For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Heb 9:26 ... but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

When the atoning work of Christ is applied to the sinner the conscience is convinced that God has forgiven all his sin.

*He.9.7 But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: 8 ¶ The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: 9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the **conscience**; [The fact of repetition reminded that God was unsatisfied.] 10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation (*διόρθωσις, lit. straightening through; meaning correction). 11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. 13 For if the*

*blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh (an outward, temporary, ritualistic cleansing): 14 How much more shall **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, ****purge your conscience** from dead works to serve the living God?*

** διορθώσῃς, gen. sing. of διορθώσις; only this once in the N.T. In the O.T. Septuagint (LXX) it is tss. in Pv.16.1, *rightly ordered*; Is. 16.5, *shall be established*; 62.7, *shall have established*; Jer. 7.3, 5, *correct*.*

***purge, καθαριέῃ, 3ps. fut. of καθαρίζω, tss. *purge, cleanse, purify*.*

The washing of the legs suggests a new way of life.

The following bold states in positive terms the purpose for our redemption:

*1Pe.1.18 Forasmuch as **ye know that ye were not redeemed** with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But **with the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, 21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; **that your faith and hope might be in God**.*

Ps.40.2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. 3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

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There is no question that Christ's death 2,000 years ago settled the sin-debt of every elect soul in time past and in time future. The issue is settled with God.

Joh 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Do you believe that He is your substitute for sin? If so, you will be willing to say so, and to live for Him.