

The Bible From 20,000 Feet Part 13: Leviticus ch. 1 - 10

Tuesday Night Bible Study, October 7, 2008

--OUTLINE

- LEVITICAL SACRIFICES
- LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD FOR OFFICIATING SACRIFICES
- CHRIST IS THE ULTIMATE FULFILLMENT OF THE SACRIFICES AND PRIESTHOOD

--LEVITICAL SACRIFICES

--when you read all the intricate rules and regulations regarding sacrifices that God commanded Israel to follow it may seem strange compared to our culture, but in that day and age sacrifices of all types, including human sacrifices, permeated most cultures!

--sacrifices can be traced back to that of Cain and Abel... Abel representing sacrifices that pleased God and Cain representing a perversion of God-ordained sacrifices... which eventually led to the evolution all the pagan forms of sacrifices that filled the world by the time of Moses.

--the ceremonial law contained a divine reformation of universal sacrifices. Rather than serving the corrupt imagination of the fallen world, the sacrifices of the ceremonial law pointed to the ministry of Christ...

--while the ceremonial law sacrifices were in large part a reformation of existing practices, the tabernacle and feasts God commanded Israel to follow were completely new revelation and pointed to Christ in the most dramatic way... both aspects of His first coming and His second coming!

--Hebrews 10:1: "The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming.."

--specific Levitical sacrifices can be divided into two main categories...

--**burnt, sin, and trespass** offerings... (Leviticus ch. 1,4,5)

--these offerings dealt with the key concept of "atonement"

--the English word "atonement" is translated from the Hebrew word "kaphar" and Greek "katallage".

--*kaphar* in verb form literally means to "cancel"

--*katallage* in verb form literally means to "reconcile" or "exchange"

--through atonement the life of the sacrifice is given in **exchange** for the life of the person offering the sacrifice...the sentence of death for the person offering the sacrifice was **cancelled** by the death of the sacrifice...we are **reconciled** to God through a sacrifice dying in our place.

--a closer look at atonement...

--a basic law of nature is that "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23)

--because God is holy, sinful man cannot approach God without His wrath being present, and His wrath naturally results in our death.

--God spoke of this reality to Moses when he said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." (Exodus 33:20)

--the deadly separation between sinful man and holy God was illustrated when Israel first encountered God at Mt. Sinai...

--Exodus 19:16-18: "On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. 17 Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of

the mountain. 18 Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the LORD descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, the whole mountain trembled violently..."

--the people were not even allowed to touch the mountain without being killed (Exodus 19:12-13).

--lightening is a good analogy of God's wrath and the need for a sacrifice of atonement...

--lightening bolts result when there is a large disparity in electrical charge between the clouds and the earth... this disparity can be thought of as a picture of the disparity of sin between God who is sinless and man who is sinful.

--lightening rods divert lightening bolts...so that instead of damaging property the lightening bolt goes straight into the ground.

--the atoning sacrifice is comparable to a lightening rod... when the first sacrifice was offered in the tabernacle fire (that probably resembled lightening) fell from heaven and consumed the sacrifice...rather than consuming the Israelites!

--Lev 9:23-24: "**Fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed the burnt offering** and the fat portions on the altar. And when all the people saw it, they shouted for joy and fell facedown."

--when Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu didn't follow the proper instructions for offering the sacrifices (some scholars have concluded that they were drunk when offering a sacrifice) fire fell from heaven and consumed them, thus providing another dramatic reminder of the severity of sin...and how the death of the sacrifice was literally a substitute for the death of the Israelites.

--Leviticus 10:1-3: "Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. 2 So **fire went out from the LORD and devoured them**, and they died before the LORD. 3 And Moses said to Aaron, 'This is what the LORD spoke, saying: **By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy**; And before all the people I must be glorified.'"

--sacrifices through the ceremonial law made it possible for God's wrath to be poured out on the sacrifice instead of the person offering the sacrifice... the life of the sacrifice was given in "exchange" for the life of the person!

--the animal sacrifices of the ceremonial law were merely symbolic and pointed to the ultimate sacrifice of Christ... the full wrath of God for all the sins of the world was poured out on Christ.

--**though dimensions of reality beyond our comprehension, the moment we placed our faith in Christ He literally died in our place...His life was given in "exchange" for our life...He died in a moment of time so that we don't have to die the "second death" in eternity!!**

--Revelation 20:14-15: "The lake of fire is **the second death**. 15 If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire." (NIV)

--to symbolize a person's sin being transferred from the person to the sacrifice that died in their place, they would place their hands on the sacrifice right before it was slaughtered.

--Leviticus 1:1-4: "Now the LORD called to Moses, and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting, saying, 2 'Speak to the children of Israel,

and say to them: 'When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of the livestock — of the herd and of the flock. 3 If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD. 4 **Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him...**'"

--God commanded that corporate burnt offerings in Israel be offered every morning and evening to provide a constant reminder of mankind's sinful state and need for atonement.

--**meal** (grain or meat) offerings and **peace** offerings were only possible after atonement was made... (Leviticus ch. 2,3)

--peace offerings celebrated the peace with God that resulted from atonement

--meal (meat or grain) offerings were an expression of worship and personal dedication to God as a result of having peace with God

--LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD FOR OFFICIATING SACRIFICES

--God dedicated the entire tribe of Levi to serve as the administrators of the ceremonial law.

--during the official dedication ceremony we see an example of the different types of offerings being made...

--sin and burnt offerings were first offered for atonement then peace and grain offerings were given for the dedication of the Levites...

--Leviticus 9:1-4: "It came to pass on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel. 2 And he said to Aaron, "Take for yourself a young bull as a **sin offering** and a ram as a **burnt offering**, without blemish, and offer them before the LORD. 3 And to the children of Israel you shall speak, saying, 'Take a kid of the goats as a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering, 4 also a bull and a ram as **peace offerings**, to sacrifice before the LORD, and a **grain offering** mixed with oil; for today the LORD will appear to you."

--CHRIST IS THE ULTIMATE FULFILLMENT OF THE SACRIFICES AND PRIESTHOOD

--the Levites took care of all the minute details of the ceremonial law to make atonement for Israel possible....

--the role of the Levites ultimately pointed to Christ who not only gave Himself as a sacrifice for our sins but also served as a priest to take care of all the details of making His sacrifice effective to cancel our sentence of eternal death.

--we don't have to worry about the details!! All we have to do is place our faith in Him!!

--imagine how it might be if we had to somehow learn how to take care of the details and had to perform certain technical steps in order to make His sacrifice apply to our lives....

--an analogy would be an airplane... His sacrifice is kind of like an airplane to take us to heaven...and His role as our High Priest is analogous to being the pilot of the airplane.... we don't have to learn how to fly...we just have to get on the airplane and trust that it will take us to heaven...

--on a practical level getting on the airplane is repenting of our sins and trusting in Christ!

--Luke 24:46-47: "He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

--Hebrews 9:11-15 sums up how Christ became the final sacrifice and High Priest... "Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. [*the earthly tabernacle was merely a shadow of a heavenly reality where Christ offered Himself as the final sacrifice*] 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place [*in heaven*] once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. [*redemption =*

the result of atonement... through the atonement we are redeemed or set free from the sentence of death... eternal redemption opposed to temporary redemption through the ceremonial law] 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. [*redeemed...set free from eternal death for eternal life!*]"