

The Presence: Burnt Offerings

Leviticus 1

INTRODUCTION

- So, here's the BIG picture...
 - God has saved His people out of Egypt. They have made it to Mt. Sinai where Moses has gone up to receive instruction from the Lord on what He desires for His people. While there, the people fashion an idol (golden calf) like something they saw while in Egypt.
 - God instructs them to move on and He will deliver them from all their enemies. While moving, God establishes His presence in the "tent of meeting" - a portable tabernacle where God will dwell among His people.
 - Instructions on the Tabernacle are given so that they can establish a place of worship - a place where fellowship with God is possible (End of Exodus -- less than 1 mo. later...)
 - Once built, God gives instructions and regulations to Moses so that He can dwell in the midst of His people - this is Leviticus
 - Major themes of: 1) God's holiness; 2) God's righteous requirements of His people; 3) God's provision for forgiveness
- Read **Hebrews 9:19-28**

God Speaks... (Lev. 1:1-2)

- A) By His Own Initiative
 - a. Salvation by Sovereign Grace - The Exodus
 - b. Establishing relationship with His people by Grace (makes provision for their atonement so that He can be w/ them)
 - c. **New Bible Commentary**, "regulations were for the purpose of maintaining the relationship already established by God's redemptive action, by providing an ongoing means of dealing with sin and restoring fellowship."
- B) Through a Mediator

- a. Moses was the primary voice-box of God for His people
- b. Uses priests
- c. Direct responsibility with individuals

C) To Reveal Himself

- a. His Place
 - i. **Exodus 40:34-38**
 - ii. The tent of meeting was the portable tabernacle that represented God's presence
 - iii. **John 1:14**
- b. His Character
 - i. Mt. Sinai
 - ii. **Lev.27:34**
 - iii. **Exo.19:18-19**
- c. His Requirements
 - i. When
 - 1. Infrequent
 - 2. Voluntary (1st 3 were)
 - ii. Personal responsibility (any ONE)
 - 1. Emphasis of **chps 1-7**
 - 2. Short section in **6:8-chp.7** for priestly instruction, but the emphasis is on the people and the heart of the worshipper

The Burnt Offering (Lev. 1:3-17)

- A) What is the Burnt Offering?
 - a. Voluntary offering often associated with other offerings
 - b. Abraham when he was willing to sacrifice Isaac was performing this offering

- c. It served to make atonement for the individual bringing the offering so that they could be in good standing with God the Father.

B) The Offering

- a. God demands the best, but the best is based on the worshipper's ability to give
 - i. Herd / Flock / Birds -- All were to be domesticated animals, not wild animals - personal cost involved
 - ii. That's why 10% is a standard, not so much a rule
 - iii. Do you give more to entertainment, clothes, than to God's work?
 - iv. Winston Churchill, "I am easily satisfied with the very best." But by whose standard. Yours or God's?
 - v. Each offering matters to God - so when I tell you we have a financial need, which we do and need to finish the year strong, I will tell it to the congregation...not just a few who have herds and flocks. This is for you who can only bring a dove as well. It's an act of worship.
 - vi. **Charles Simeon (1759-1836)**, *"It was to be the most excellent of its kind, in order the more fitly to shadow forth the excellencies of our incarnate God; who alone, of all that ever partook of our nature, was truly without sin. Had the smallest imperfection attached to him, he could not have been a propitiation for our sins. The utmost care therefore was to be taken in examining the offerings which prefigured him, that they might, as far as possible, exemplify his spotless perfection."*

B) The Place

- a. Tent of meeting
- b. Before the Lord
- c. At the altar
 - i. Place of death - **Lev. 6:9**
 - ii. Place of joy - **Numbers 10:10**

- iii. Like the cross - **2 Cor.2:15-17**

C) The Process (precision)

a. The worshipper

- i. Brought the offering
- ii. Identified with the offering (**v.4**)
- iii. Killed the offering
 - 1. Except the bird offering
 - 2. This personal killing would leave an impression on the worshipper
 - 3. You don't get to come to Christ and keep your hands clean (sometimes I feel that communion is just too pretty and neat) - but we must realize that the killing is done (in Christ)

iv. Atonement

- 1. This is why the offering is killed
- 2. Of the offerings, the grain and peace offerings did not make atonement
- 3. Atonement is personal and individual, NOT communal in its application
- 4. The entire offering is consumed - God lays claim on the whole of the worshipper's life (that's the problem with grace, since there's nothing we can do to save ourselves, we cannot claim that we've given enough...ALL)

b. The mediator (Aaron's sons the priests)

- i. The blood (splattered on the altar)
- ii. The body (cut to pieces)
- iii. The burning (totally consumed)
- iv. God sets aside go-betweens (these do not give way to pastors, although they are highly accountable) -- Gives way to Christ!
- v. Fulfilled in Christ - **Heb.10:5-10**

The Purpose of the Burnt Offering (Lev. 1:2,9,13,17)

- A) Act of Worship

- a. Only after all the requirements were met
 - b. Not by priests, but by the people
 - c. Please with the motivation and heart of the people, not the value of the gift
- B) To Show God's gracious dealing with His people (through atonement)
- a. This was an act of grace on God's part - **Heb.10:4**, "*For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*"
 - b. Even if not required, a voluntary offering still has requirements
 - c. Where's your heart? Minimum conscience vs. Maximum pleasure? Good enough or well done?
- C) Praise of God from His people
- a. So much bloodshed for so much pleasure in Him!
 - b. Final approval and pleasure only through Christ - **Eph. 5:2**, "*And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*"

- b. Is not Holy and needs a mediator (a priest) and atonement (a sacrifice) to satisfy God's requirement - Grace that God would make this provision

- D) Christ
- a. Is the Mediator
 - b. Is the Sacrifice
 - c. Is sufficient as man's only hope

- E) Response
- a. Obedience to trust God's Word (He has spoken)
 - b. Receive God's Provision
 - c. Desire to please God

REFLECTION & RESPONSE

- A) Non-believer, you have before you a Holy God who has spoken and revealed what He demands of you if you are to be with Him. You are not good enough. One sin means we're guilty enough to be separated from perfect God forever. Will you trust that this Holy God has provided a priest and a sacrifice in the person of Christ as your only provision to be made right with God? Will you obey His command to accept His provision, or will you continue on your own way?
- B) Believer, consider your offering before the Lord today. In view of who He is and what He's done, are you truly worshipping by what you bring?
- C) Believer, share in the Lord's Table this day remembering that Holy God has made every provision necessary for Him to dwell with you. That provision is nothing less than the atoning sacrifice of Christ on your behalf (both as priest and sacrifice). Let this be a time that you resolve, in your remembrance, to obey the voice of the Lord and proclaim His good news until He comes back for His own.

The Burnt Offerings and the Gospel

- A) The Good News...
- a. God has spoken
 - b. Revealed what's necessary for Him to dwell in our midst
- B) God
- a. Holy
 - b. Desires to meet with His people
 - c. Demands His people to be holy in order for Him to dwell with them
- C) Man
- a. Required by God to be Holy