



LESSON 28

God ordains the sacrificial system

LEVITICUS 1:1-7:38



God's holiness requires a sacrifice for sinful man.



"He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him" (Lev 1:4).

Supporting Truths

1. Innocent blood atones (pays) for sins.
2. Sin must be forgiven in order to be right with God.
3. We need a perfect sacrifice in order to belong completely to God.
4. We need a perfect sacrifice in order to enjoy peace with God.
5. Jesus fulfills all the sacrifices.

Objectives

1. Describe how a person put his hand on a perfect animal as he killed it.
2. Describe the sin offering.
3. Explain the burnt offering.
4. Explain the fellowship offering.
5. Compare Jesus in His death to a few of the sacrifices.

STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God ordains the sacrificial system • Leviticus 1:1–7:38



Lesson Summary

After the completion of the tabernacle, God gave Moses instructions about the sacrifices. These sacrifices—the burnt offering, grain offering, fellowship offering, sin offering, and guilt offering—were the way God graciously allowed for Israel to be forgiven, to enjoy fellowship with Him, and to worship Him. The sin and guilt offerings first removed the offense of sin, then the burnt offering dedicated the person to God. Only then could the fellowship offering be enjoyed.

Spotlight on the Gospel

All the sacrifices point to Christ and have value only on the basis of what Christ's sacrifice accomplished. He is the guilt offering who paid our debt, the sin offering who died to forgive our sins, the burnt offering who purchased us with His blood, the fellowship offering who reconciled us to God, and the grain offering whose body gives us eternal life. But Jesus' sacrificial death only saves those who come to Him in repentance and faith.

LAST WEEK



**God's presence fills the
tabernacle**

*Exodus 33:1–34:35;
40:1–38*

THIS WEEK



**God ordains the sacrificial
system**

Leviticus 1:1–7:38

NEXT WEEK



**God establishes the
priesthood**

Leviticus 8:1–10:7

DELIVERANCE

Lesson Commentary

God's holiness requires a sacrifice for sinful man.

Sacrifices were not new to God's people. Abel, Noah, and Abraham all offered sacrifices, and Israel offered the Passover Lamb and the covenant sacrifice (Exod. 24:5–8). But now, after the construction of the tabernacle, God gave the Israelites specific sacrifices so that they could enjoy the presence of their holy God. Leviticus tells us firstly what the offerer should do (1:1–6:7). Secondly, it describes what the priests should do (6:8–7:7). After that, there are details about what to do with each part of the offering (7:8–34). For a Sunday school lesson, though, it's simpler to look at each of the five sacrifices in order.

The burnt offering showed that a person belonged completely to God (1:1–17; 6:8–13; 7:8)

The burnt offering was offered to show that a person was completely set apart for God. It was an animal sacrifice because connection with God requires **atonement** (1:4): a person's life must be ransomed by the death of a substitute. A bull, sheep, goat, dove, or pigeon could be offered, but only perfect animals, without any flaws (1:3, 10, 14).

The person offering the sacrifice did most of the work. First, he put his hand on the animal's head as he cut its throat (1:4). This allowed him to feel the animal die, vividly reminding him of the reality and deadliness of sin. It also symbolized the animal being killed in the person's place. They skinned it, cut it up, and washed the insides. They did not just show up and watch the priest do everything. So each believer today is to actively engage in worshiping, serving, and fellowshiping with God (1 Pet 2:9; 4:10).

The priest's job was to sprinkle the blood on the altar and burn the entire animal except the skin (Lev 1:5, 7–8; 7:8). The sprinkled blood looked forward to the blood of Christ that would sprinkle many nations (Isa 52:15). Burning the whole animal reminds us that a person belongs entirely to God.

Jesus fulfills the burnt offering. He was a fragrant offering to God (Eph 5:2), the sinless substitute who died to replace sinfulness with righteousness.

Because He is the burnt offering, believers are freed from sin in order to belong to God (Rom 6). By His death He purchased believers for God (Acts 20:28).

The grain offering showed dependence on God's goodness (2:1–15; 6:14–23; 7:9–10)

The grain offering was not for atonement; instead, it was a gift to honor God. It showed dependence on God's goodness by giving back to Him some of the food He had provided. A special grain offering was the offering of first fruits (Lev 2:14–15), when the people brought the first of their crops at harvest time. The grain offering was usually offered along with an animal sacrifice (1:2; 14:20).

The grain offering was fine flour with oil, frankincense, and salt (2:1, 11–15), with frankincense representing prayer (Rev 5:8), and salt reminding of God's permanent covenant (2 Chr 13:5). The grain could be cooked in various ways, but it could not have any yeast or honey (Lev 2:4–7, 14). Yeast and honey could lead to fermentation and decay, and yeast often represents sin (1 Cor 5:8). This shows that a person cannot worship God while also clinging to sin (Ps 66:18). One handful of the offering would be burned on the altar, but the rest was food for the priests (Lev 2:2–3).

Jesus is greater than the grain offering. He is the bread of life (John 6:32–35), and His body is like bread broken as an offering to God (Matt 26:26). His death glorifies God as the one who provides eternal life.

The fellowship offering showed peace between God and man (3:1–17; 7:11–34)

The **fellowship** offering celebrated a peaceful and joyful relationship with God (Lev 3:1, 5). It also became a time to enjoy fellowship with family and friends. The fellowship offering was an animal killed like the burnt offering.

THINK ABOUT IT

God never delights in any sacrifice unless it comes from an obedient, repentant, and humble heart (1 Sam 15:22).



STUDY THE BIBLE LESSON

God ordains the sacrificial system • Leviticus 1:1–7:38



But instead of completely burning up the animal, only the fat, the best part, was burned for God. The priest then ate part of the meat and the person offering the animal enjoyed the rest in a feast with his friends and family.



THINK ABOUT IT

Believers are called to offer sacrifices of praise to God (Heb 13:15).

The fellowship offering was usually offered after the burnt offering, because peace with God only comes after a person has had their sins atoned for (Rom 5:1). It was offered to give thanks for a specific blessing, to

fulfill a vow, or as a freewill offering to celebrate God's general blessing (Lev 7:12–15). Depending on the type of fellowship offering, it had to be eaten on the first or second day after its presentation to God (7:15–17).

Jesus fulfills the fellowship offering. He made peace between God and man (Col 1:20). He died to bring sinners back to God (1 Pet 3:18). So whoever feeds on Him has eternal life (John 6:54), which is to know God (John 17:3). But this fellowship may be enjoyed only by those who repent of their sin and uncleanness (Acts 3:19).



THINK ABOUT IT

"Unintentional" does not mean completely unknown; it means a person strayed into sin but then confessed it (Num 5:6).

The sin offering shows forgiveness and purification from sin (4:1–5:13; 6:24–30)

The sin offering was to make atonement so that confessed sins could be forgiven (Lev 4:20, 26, 31, 35). It is the

opposite of unrepentant rebellion against God (Num 15:30).

The sin offering was like the burnt offering, but it was required in order to atone for sin. The type of sacrifice required depended on who sinned (Lev 4:1–5:13; Jas 3:7). After the priest offered the animal on the altar of burnt offering, the rest of the animal was taken outside the camp to be burned, symbolizing the removal of sin from the people (4:8–12).

Jesus is greater than the sin offering. His blood was shed to forgive sins (Matt 26:28). He was the perfect substitute who became sin for us (2 Cor 5:21). He was crucified outside the city (Heb 13:12), so that through Him sins are paid for and washed away (1 John 1:7).

The guilt offering was for sins that needed to be made right (5:13–6:7; 7:1–10)

The guilt offering, like the sin offering, was not voluntary. It was for sins that could be made right through **restitution**, through paying a person back for the harm done to them. These sins could be sins against God's holy things or against another individual. For example, if a person stole a sheep, he would have to return or replace the sheep, plus pay the person 20% extra (Lev 6:5). In addition to making restitution, the person then sacrificed a spotless ram to make atonement and have his sin forgiven (6:6–7). The guilt offering shows that a person cannot find forgiveness from God unless he seeks to make things right with those he has harmed (Matt 5:23–24).

Jesus is greater than the guilt offering (Isa 53:10). He paid man's debt to God, a debt we could never pay (Matt 16:26). Because Jesus frees believers from their debt of sin, believers are called to forgive others as well (Matt 18:23–35).

The sacrifices were offered in a particular order: 1) sin offering, 2) then burnt offering, 3) then fellowship offering. First our sins must be paid for and forgiven, then we must be set apart as belonging entirely to God, and only then do we enjoy peaceful fellowship with God. Animal sacrifices did not have power to save in themselves, but they looked forward to Jesus Christ, whose sacrifice atoned for the sins even of Old Testament believers (Rom 3:25). Jesus is greater than every sacrifice for those who repent and trust in Him (Matt 5:17).

THINK ABOUT IT

The fire on the altar burned continually demonstrating God's perpetual readiness to receive confession and offer forgiveness.



Lesson Outline

God's holiness requires a sacrifice for sinful man.

AGES 3–5 LESSON OUTLINE



1. **Main Point:** The burnt offering showed a person belonged to God (1:1–17).
2. It paid for sins so that a person could be friends with God (1:3–4).
3. It was a perfect bull, sheep, goat, or bird (1:3, 10, 14).
4. The person put his hand on the animal's head as he killed it (1:4).
5. The priest sprinkled the blood on the altar then burned the whole animal (1:5, 7–8).

AGES 6–11 LESSON OUTLINE



1. **The burnt offering showed a person belonged completely to God (1:1–17; 6:8–13; 7:8).**
 - It was freely offered for atonement and to please God (1:3–4, 9, 13, 17).
 - The offering was a perfect bull, male sheep or goat, or a dove or pigeon (1:3, 10, 14).
 - The offerer laid his hand on the animal's head, then killed, skinned, cut up, and washed the animal (1:4, 6, 9).
 - The priest sprinkled the blood on the altar then burned everything except the skin (1:5, 7–8; 7:8).
2. **The grain offering showed dependence on God's goodness (2:1–15; 6:14–23; 7:9–10).**
 - It was freely offered to remember God's goodness and to please Him (2:2).
 - The offering was fine flour with oil, frankincense, and salt (2:1, 11–15).
 - The offerer could cook the flour into bread or bring raw grain (2:4–7, 14).
 - The priest burnt a handful on the altar, then the priests ate the rest (2:2–3).
3. **The fellowship offering showed peace between God and man (3:1–17; 7:11–34).**
 - It was freely offered to celebrate fellowship with God and to please Him (3:1, 5).
 - It was like the burnt offering, except the priest got some of the meat while the offerer ate the rest with his family and friends (3:1–4, 6, 12; 7:15–18; 32).
4. **The sin offering shows forgiveness and purification from sin (4:1–5:13; 6:24–30).**
 - It was required to make atonement and have sins forgiven (4:20, 26, 31, 35).
 - It was like the burnt offering, but the kind of sacrifice depended on who sinned (4:1–5:13).
5. **The guilt offering was for sins that needed to be made right (5:13–6:7; 7:1–10).**
 - It was required to make atonement, have sins forgiven, and make restitution (6:5, 7).
 - It was like the sin offering, except it included a payment to make things right.
 - The offering was a perfect ram, plus a payment to the one sinned against (5:14–16).

TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God ordains the sacrificial system • Leviticus 1:1–7:38



Lesson Questions

Use these questions to teach or to review this week's lesson.



Ages 3–5 Lesson Questions

- 1. What is the first offering called?**
The burnt offering.
- 2. What kind of animal could be offered?**
A perfect animal. A bull, goat, sheep, or bird.
- 3. Where did the person sacrificing the animal put his hand?**
He put his hand on its head to show that his sin was going onto the animal.
- 4. How is Jesus the great sacrifice?**
Jesus died to pay for sins once for all. If we repent and believe, our sins are forgiven and we belong to God.



Ages 6–11 Lesson Questions

- 1. Why was the first offering called a burnt offering?**
It was a burnt offering because it was completely burned up on the altar, showing that a person belonged completely to God.
- 2. What did the person offering the animal do?**
He put his hand on its head to picture his sin going onto the animal, then he cut its throat, skinned it, and washed its insides.
- 3. What did the priest do?**
The priest sprinkled the blood on the altar, showing that blood is necessary to forgive sins and be purchased by God.
- 4. Why was there a grain offering?**
To honor God as the One who gives food and life.
- 5. What was the fellowship offering for?**
The fellowship offering was the way to enjoy peace and friendship with God. It was also the way to enjoy fellowship with other people of God.
- 6. What was the sin offering for?**
It was for forgiveness of sins.
- 7. What was the guilt offering for?**
It was for forgiveness of sins after making restitution (after making a payment to fix the harm caused by the sin).
- 8. How does Jesus fulfill _____ (choose one of the five) offering?**
See the part of the commentary that talks about this offering.

Lesson Activities

Choose from the following ideas to introduce, illustrate, and apply this week's lesson.

AGES 3–5



INTRODUCE

PRIESTLY JOB

Dress up as a priest and tell the children (from your perspective as a priest) about the special job God gave priests to do. Explain that your job was to serve God in the tabernacle by offering sacrifices and praying on behalf of the people. Your attire as a priest may include a 1) robe (Exod 28:31–35), 2) breast piece (28:15–30), and 3) turban (28:36–38). Additional items are described in Exodus 28:1–43.

WHAT IS A SACRIFICE?

Help ready the children for the lesson by defining “sacrifice” and by explaining God’s purpose for sacrifices. Explain that a sacrifice is a gift given to God. In the Old Testament, God commanded the people to sacrifice the blood of cattle, lambs, goats, doves, or pigeons in order to pay for their sins against God. These sacrifices showed that one day Jesus would come as the perfect, final sacrifice for sin (Ex 12:17; 1Sa 15:22; Ro 12:1; Heb 9:28; 1Jn 2:2). Consider using pictures or props to help the children better understand sacrifices: an altar, ashes for burnt offerings, stuffed animals for animal sacrifices, flour for grain offerings, and plates and picnic utensils for the peace offering.



ILLUSTRATE

BREAKING THE CHAIN

Sin breaks the relationship link between man and holy God. The Lord has declared a sacrifice necessary for forgiveness and repairing of the relationship. Illustrate this for the children by breaking or removing a link from a paper chain. Repair the chain by inserting a red paper link. Explain that by offering the sacrifices God desired, Israel, though sinful, could maintain their relationship with God.

COVERING SINS

Materials: large pictures of lips or a tongue, hands, and a light bulb; three red cloths (handkerchiefs or hand towels). Define the word atonement, used in Leviticus 1:4, as meaning “to be covered or cleansed.” To demonstrate the meaning of the word, show the class the three pictures. Explain that the lips or tongue represents the sin of lying, the hands represent the sin of stealing, and the light bulb represents the sin of evil thoughts. One at a time, cover the pictures with the red cloth while explaining how Christ’s blood covers our sins. Close the discussion by reading Psalm 32:1 to the class.



APPLY

SIN COVERED

See Year 1 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheet, pipe cleaner, hole punch, crayons, scissors, and silver glitter glue.

Directions: Pre-cut outlines of boy from craft sheet including the verse references. Print the verses on blue cardstock and cut out. Punch a hole in the top right corner of each cutout. Have children glue the verses to the back of each corresponding cutout. Color the Rom 3:23 cutout black to represent the sinner and the Heb 9:22 cutout red to represent Christ’s sacrificial death. Fill in the 2 Cor 5:21 cutout with silver glitter glue to represent the righteousness of Christ applied to the believer.

*Sin Covered
See Year 1 Craft Book, Book 2.*



TEACH THE BIBLE LESSON

God ordains the sacrificial system • Leviticus 1:1–7:38



AGES 6–8



SIN'S DEBT

Bring to class play money or large jar of pennies. Ask the children if they know what the word debt means. Illustrate a debt by pretending to loan someone play money. Explain that we all owe a huge debt to God because of our sin. We can never pay this debt, not even a penny, but God sent His Son to pay our sin's debt for us. Explain that in today's lesson, they will learn how God instructed Israel to pay for their sin debt before Jesus died on the cross.

MORNING AND NIGHT

Bring a toothbrush and toothpaste to class. Brushing our teeth is one of the few things that we typically do every morning and every night. We do this because our teeth need continual cleaning. Ask the children if they can think of anything else we do twice daily. Explain that God commanded the Israelites to offer two burnt offerings every day: one in the morning and one at night (Exod 29:38–39). These offerings were a daily reminder of the people's need for cleansing from sin. Use this as an opportunity to talk about how Jesus is the once-for-all-sacrifice for sin (Heb 7:26–27).



SUBSTITUTE SACRIFICE

Bring a bull, goat, or lamb stuffed animal to class. Lay your hands on the head of the animal and tell the children that God commanded the Israelites to lay their hands on the head of the animal while it was killed before God as a sacrifice (Lev 4:4). Explain that this action pictured the transfer of the sacrificer's sin to the animal. Tell the children that Jesus' blood was shed to forgive sins (Matt 26:28). He was the perfect substitute who became sin for us (2 Cor 5:21).

UNBLEMISHED SACRIFICE

Tell the children that the burnt offering had to be a male "without defect" (Lev 1:3). Explain that this was because no animal with any deformity or defect was acceptable to God. A male without defect was required because it was the choicest offering. Illustrate this by bringing in two kinds of fruit, some ripe and unblemished and others bruised, rotten, or discolored. Ask the children which piece of fruit they'd like to eat, the unblemished or blemished?



SIN OFFERING

See Year 1 Craft Book, Book 2.

Materials: Craft sheets, tan cardstock, red tissue paper, tape, crayons, scissors, and glue.

Directions: Have children cut out the altar template and fold and tape it together. Glue red tissue paper on the top of the altar to represent flames and tape the altar to a sheet of tan cardstock. Color and cut out pictures from craft sheet and glue them around the altar as shown below.



Sin Offering
See Year 1 Craft Book, Book 2.

AGES 9–11

**INTRODUCE****SACRIFICES REVIEW**

The first example of sacrifice found in the Bible is in Genesis 3:21. Because of Adam and Eve's sin God killed an animal to cover their nakedness. In Genesis 4, Cain and Abel brought their offerings of sacrifice to the Lord. Noah, after coming off the ark, worshiped God by making an altar and sacrificing some of the clean animals to the Lord (Gen 8:20). Abraham's faith was confirmed through his willingness to sacrifice his son. God graciously provided a ram caught in the thicket to take the place of Isaac as the sacrifice. God designed sacrifices to teach and prepare people for the coming, ultimate sacrifice: Jesus Christ.

CHECKBOOK

Bring in a checkbook or checks to class. Tell the children that the sacrifices are like a check. In and of themselves checks are not worth anything. A check is just a piece of paper. However, because of the money in the bank that backs the check, it is valuable and an acceptable form of payment. The Old Testament sacrifices didn't completely and finally take away sin. However, the sacrifices were acceptable to God because they looked forward to and were backed by the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus.

**ILLUSTRATE****DEATH: THE CONSEQUENCE OF SIN**

Bring to class a picture of a cemetery, tombstone, or bulletin from a recent funeral or memorial service. Tell the children that the sacrificial system was a vivid picture of one inescapable reality: sin requires death. Death was everywhere in the sacrifices. Explain that death was also part of Jesus' sacrifice for sinners (Isa 53:5). It is through His sinless life and substitutionary death that sin is forgiven.

CHARTING THE SACRIFICES

See Year 1 Craft Book, Book 2.

Make one copy of the chart for each child to take notes on during the lesson. Use the chart to summarize the major points of the five types of sacrifices God ordained in Leviticus 1–7.

**APPLY****SIGNIFICANT REPETITIONS**

Read the following select passages from Leviticus (1:9, 13, 17; 2:2, 9; 3:5, 16; 4:31), and lead the group to discover the repeated phrase "Offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord." Help the children understand that the smell of burning meat was pleasing to the Lord because of the individual's obedience and the penitent heart behind the act, making it acceptable.