

## **Burnt Offerings Begin: Leviticus 1's Call to Total Devotion**

### **Scriptures for Today: Leviticus 1:1-9**

#### **""Leviticus 1:1-9**

And the LORD called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock. 3 If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD. 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. 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. 6 And he shall flay the burnt offering, and cut it into his pieces. 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: 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.""

### **Introduction to Leviticus 1: Burnt Offerings Begin**

Before we open Leviticus, we need to remember where Exodus left us. God had delivered His people out of Egypt by the blood of the Passover lamb and by His mighty hand. They crossed the Red Sea, watched Pharaoh's army destroyed, and were brought to Mount Sinai. There, God gave them His law.

Why was the law given? To reveal God's holiness and to expose man's sin.

#### **""Romans 3:20**

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.""

Israel had been redeemed from bondage, but they were still sinners. The law showed them the perfect standard of God's righteousness and proved they could not meet it. As Galatians 3:24 says, ""Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.""

But God not only gave them His law—He gave them His presence. He commanded the Tabernacle to be built.

#### **""Exodus 25:8**

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.""

The Tabernacle was where God's glory rested and where the people could approach Him through the sacrifices He appointed. The law exposed sin, but the Tabernacle displayed God's mercy through substitution and blood.

By the end of Exodus, the Tabernacle was finished, and the glory of the LORD filled it so strongly that even Moses could not enter. That's the scene as Leviticus begins. God is no longer speaking from Sinai's thunder and fire. Now He speaks from the Tabernacle in the midst of His people, teaching them how to draw near to Him.

Leviticus introduces five offerings:

1. **The Burnt Offering** — wholly consumed by fire, showing total devotion to God.
2. **The Meat Offering** — of fine flour and oil, showing thanksgiving and dedication of daily life.
3. **The Peace Offering** — shared by the altar, the priest, and the offerer, showing fellowship with God.
4. **The Sin Offering** — for sins of ignorance, showing cleansing and forgiveness.
5. **The Trespass Offering** — for specific offenses, often requiring restitution, showing God's justice and mercy.

Each of these offerings pointed forward to Christ in a unique way. But notice where God begins: **Leviticus 1 starts with the burnt offering**. Not peace, not thanksgiving, but the sacrifice of complete surrender. The **Leviticus 1 burnt offering** was the only sacrifice wholly consumed on the altar. Nothing was left over. Every part was laid down, and every piece was burned until it was gone. It all went up as a sweet savour unto the LORD.

This is the foundation of worship: God requires everything. If a man wanted to come near to the LORD, he had to bring a burnt offering and lay it all on the altar. Not a portion. Not leftovers. All of it.

That is why we begin our study here in Leviticus 1—with the burnt offering, God's call to total devotion.

## **Outline of Exodus 40, Leviticus 1, Leviticus 2**

### **Exodus 40 Overview:**

- 1–12. The tabernacle is commanded to be reared, anointed, and consecrated.
- 13–15. Aaron and his sons to be sanctified.
- 16–33. Moses performs all things accordingly.
- 34–38. A cloud covers the tabernacle.

**Leviticus 1 Preview:**

- 1–2. The law of burnt offerings.
- 3–9. Of the herd.
- 10–13. Of the flocks.
- 14–17. Of the fowls.

**Leviticus 2 Preview:**

- 1–3. The meat offering of flour with oil and incense.
- 4. Either baked in the oven.
- 5–6. Or on a plate.
- 7–11. Or in a frying-pan.
- 12. The first fruits not to be burnt on the altar.
- 13. Salt to be used with every offering.
- 14–16. The offering of first fruits in the ear.

**Focus on Leviticus 1:1-9**

Leviticus 1:1–9 is the foundation of the Bible’s teaching on offerings. These verses declare that God is holy, that He alone determines how man may approach Him, and that fellowship with Him requires a sacrifice wholly devoted to Him. This is the true Leviticus 1 burnt offering — the sacrifice completely consumed on the altar, a picture of total surrender and devotion.

Here God sets the pattern for all worship: if you want to draw near, you must come His way, with nothing held back. The burnt offering teaches that God requires the whole, not a portion. It shows that sin must be dealt with through blood, and that only by substitution and sacrifice can man be accepted before a holy God.

If Leviticus 1 never happened, Israel would not have known how to approach God in the Tabernacle, and we would miss one of the clearest pictures of Christ’s perfect offering of Himself, wholly given for us.

**Exposition of Leviticus 1:1–9**

**“And the LORD called”**

**“Leviticus 1:1**

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

This is how Leviticus begins. Not with man reaching up, but with God calling down. Worship is always God’s initiative. Man does not decide how to approach God — God speaks and tells man the way.

Notice also where He speaks from: not Sinai in fire and thunder, but from the Tabernacle filled with His glory. God has drawn near and now invites His people to draw near through sacrifice. God must reveal Himself in order for man to approach Him. Without His Word, we are left in ignorance. True worship is not invented — it is commanded.

### **“If any man of you bring an offering”**

#### **""Leviticus 1:2**

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock.""

An offering was voluntary — “if any man.” God did not force devotion; He invited it. But notice: the offering had to be of His choosing, not man’s. Herd or flock, not any creature a man preferred. Worship is both free and restricted: free in willingness, restricted in method.

God does not accept whatever man chooses to give. He accepts only what He prescribes. Cain brought “of the fruit of the ground,” but God had no respect to it (Genesis 4:3–5). Worship must be both sincere and according to truth.

### **“A male without blemish”**

#### **""Leviticus 1:3**

If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD.""

The burnt offering had to be perfect — without blemish — pointing to the sinlessness of Christ. It had to be male, showing strength and leadership. It had to be voluntary, showing willing surrender. And it had to be offered at the door of the Tabernacle — man does not meet God in his own place, but where God appoints.

Only Christ is the true sacrifice without blemish and without spot (1 Peter 1:19). Our devotion must also be wholehearted, not polluted, lame, sick, or partial (Malachi 1:8).

### **“He shall put his hand upon the head”**

#### **""Leviticus 1:4**

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.""

By laying his hand on the head, the offerer identified with the animal. His guilt was symbolically transferred, and the animal died in his place. This is substitution. The sacrifice made atonement because the sinner’s sin was imputed to the victim.

This is the heart of the gospel. Our sins were fully laid on Christ, and He died as our substitute (Isaiah 53:6). He was accepted for us, and we are accepted in Him.

Here the sinner identified with the sacrifice. His guilt was transferred; the victim bore his punishment. This is substitution. So with Christ: "the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). Not only was His body offered, but "his soul was made an offering for sin" (Isaiah 53:10). He bore not just our death in flesh but the full wrath of God in His soul.

**“And he shall kill the bullock”**

**""Leviticus 1:5**

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 sinner himself killed the offering. You and I killed Jesus because of our sin. Worship was not distant or easy. Blood had to be shed, and it was bloody and personal. Then the priests applied the blood to the altar — to cleanse the altar on earth, purge the holy things, hallow it. The blood or life of the animal was shed.

The sinner himself slew the offering. It was personal and bloody. Then the priest sprinkled the blood. "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). Christ's blood is not symbolic — it is the actual payment. "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12). Not with His own blood on the mercy seat in heaven. By His own blood.

Notice the death of the animal is not the end of the burnt offering. The death of Jesus wasn't the end of the offering for our sins. The burnt offering is clearly showing us this. It is a burnt offering.

**“And he shall flay the burnt offering”**

**""Leviticus 1:6**

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

The animal was skinned and cut apart. Nothing was hidden, everything was exposed. Each piece was laid open before the LORD.

God sees all. True devotion is not skin-deep; it exposes the whole life. Christ was stripped, wounded, and laid bare for our sins. Christ was stripped, scourged, and laid bare for sin. He endured open shame and suffering in both body and soul. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3).

Likewise, we are called to present every part of our lives to God.

**“And the sons of Aaron shall put fire”**

**""Leviticus 1:7-8**

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 sacrifice was laid in order, piece by piece, on the fire. Nothing was random or careless. The priests arranged it exactly as God commanded. God is a God of order — not confusion. It is arranged to burn completely. Christ offered ALL OF HIMSELF. Body and soul.

Worship must be orderly and reverent. God is not honored by disorder or invention. "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40). The fire pictures God's consuming holiness. All we are must be placed under His flame.

**"But his inwards and his legs shall he wash"**

**""Leviticus 1:9**

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 inward parts and legs were washed with water before being burned, showing the need for purity inside and out. Then the whole was consumed on the altar. Nothing was kept. It all went up to God as a sweet savour.

The inwards and legs were washed, showing purity of the heart (inwards) and walk (legs). Then the whole was burned — nothing held back. This is the picture of Christ's total offering: His body given, His blood shed, His soul poured out unto death (Isaiah 53:12).

The Father was satisfied, for "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Ephesians 5:2). He is the only sacrifice for our sins.

This pictures total devotion. God wants the heart ("inwards") and the walk ("legs") cleansed. He wants all, not part. Christ gave Himself wholly, and God was pleased. Our lives, offered fully to Him, rise as a sweet savour when laid on the altar of obedience.

## **Doctrinal Truths in Leviticus 1 Burnt Offering**

1. **Doctrine of God's Holiness and Consuming Fire (Isaiah 6:3; Hebrews 12:29).**  
The fire on the altar pictures God's consuming holiness. Nothing escapes His judgment. The burnt offering teaches that God requires all, because He is holy.
2. **Doctrine of Jesus Christ's Substitutionary Death (1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:6, 10).**  
When the offerer laid his hand on the animal's head, guilt was transferred. This points to Christ, who bore our sins in His body and soul on the cross. He is the true burnt offering, wholly given for us.

3. **Doctrine of the Blood (Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22; 1 John 1:7).** The blood sprinkled on the altar shows that only blood makes atonement. It points forward to the precious blood of Christ, which cleanses us from all sin and gives us access to God.
4. **Doctrine of Salvation by Substitution, Not Works (Romans 4:25; Ephesians 2:8–9).** The sinner did not earn forgiveness by killing the bullock — the sacrifice bore his guilt. Salvation is never by works but always by faith in the substitute God provides.
5. **Doctrine of Worship in Spirit and Truth (John 4:24; Romans 12:1).** The burnt offering was wholly consumed. It was not partial. Worship today is the same — God calls us to present our whole bodies a living sacrifice, not scraps or leftovers.
6. **Doctrine of Separation & Holiness (1 Peter 1:16; 2 Corinthians 6:17).** The inward parts and legs were washed before being burned, showing purity inside and out. God requires His people to be cleansed in heart and walk.
7. **Doctrine of Providence and Order (Psalm 37:23; 1 Corinthians 14:40).** The parts were laid in order on the altar. God is not the author of confusion. Christ's sacrifice was no accident but perfectly ordered by the plan of God from eternity.

### **Practical Applications for Leviticus 1:1–9**

1. **Come to God His Way, Not Yours** — The burnt offering had to be of the herd, flock, or fowls as God commanded. Cain brought his own way and was rejected (Genesis 4:3–5). Don't try to approach God on your terms. Come through Christ alone, God's chosen sacrifice.
2. **Lay All on the Altar** — The burnt offering was wholly consumed. God doesn't want part of you; He wants all of you. Stop giving God the scraps of your life. Present your body a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1).
3. **See the Weight of Sin Personally** — The sinner killed the sacrifice with his own hand. Your sins put Christ on the cross. Not figuratively, but spiritually and judicially. He bore *your* hell in His soul and shed *His* blood for *your* forgiveness.
4. **Trust the Cleansing Power of Christ's Blood** — The priest sprinkled blood on the altar because only blood cleanses (Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22). You can't cleanse yourself. Only the blood of Jesus washes away sin — and it's enough.
5. **Order Your Life Before God** — The priests laid the parts in order upon the wood. God is a God of order, not confusion (1 Corinthians 14:40). If your life is chaos, it's because you're out of order with God's Word. Let Him reorder your life piece by piece.
6. **Be Clean Inside and Out** — The inwards and the legs were washed before being burned. God wants a clean heart and a holy walk. Don't just look right on the outside — get right with Him on the inside too.



7. **Offer a Sweet Savour to God Daily** — When the burnt offering was consumed, it rose as a sweet savour unto the LORD. Christ's sacrifice was that sweet savour (Ephesians 5:2), and your obedience and worship rise the same way when you give yourself fully to Him.

## **Warnings and Encouragements From Leviticus 1 Burnt Offering**

### **Warnings from Leviticus 1:1-9**

- **To offer God leftovers is to insult His holiness.** The burnt offering was wholly consumed — not a scrap was held back. "Cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the LORD a corrupt thing" (Malachi 1:14). God is not pleased with half-hearted devotion.
- **To approach God another way is to be rejected.** Cain brought fruit, not blood, and God had no respect to it (Genesis 4:3-5). Many today try religion, good works, or self-righteousness, but God only accepts the offering of His Son.
- **To ignore the blood is to remain guilty.** "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). If you try to bypass the blood of Christ, you will die in your sins.

### **Encouragements from Leviticus 1:1-9**

- **Christ gave Himself wholly for you.** He held nothing back — body, blood, and soul — all consumed under God's wrath. "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Ephesians 5:2).
- **God accepts the willing heart.** Whether rich with a bullock or poor with a pigeon, every Israelite could bring a burnt offering. No one is shut out. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).
- **Your life, laid on the altar, is pleasing to God.** When you surrender your all, it rises like a sweet savour. "Present your bodies a living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1).

## **The Gospel Connection in Leviticus 1:1-9**

Leviticus begins with sacrifice, and the very first is the burnt offering — a life wholly consumed on the altar. This points straight to Jesus Christ.

### **""John 1:29**

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.""

He is the spotless One, without blemish, who offered Himself willingly.



When the sinner laid his hand on the head of the animal, guilt was transferred, and the substitute died in his place. That is the gospel — our sins laid on Christ, His righteousness given to us (2 Corinthians 5:21). His blood was shed for atonement (Hebrews 9:22), and His soul was made an offering for sin (Isaiah 53:10).

The burnt offering was wholly consumed, rising as a sweet savour unto the LORD. Christ gave Himself entirely — body, blood, and soul — and God was satisfied.

**""Ephesians 5:2**

And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.""

Through Him, sinners are accepted. Where the altar once needed sacrifice daily, the cross finished it once for all.

**""Hebrews 10:14**

For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.""

**Conclusion: The Power of Leviticus 1 Burnt Offering**

From the very first chapter of Leviticus, God shows us that fellowship with Him requires a sacrifice wholly consumed. He calls, He commands, the blood is shed, the fire falls, and the whole offering rises as a sweet savour. In this, we see Christ — body, blood, and soul — given fully, with nothing held back.

**One-Sentence Takeaway:** If Christ gave all of Himself for you, then the only reasonable response is to give all of yourself to Him.

Let's pray.