

Leviticus - Blood and Sacrifice

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 27 February 2020

Preacher: John Winter

[0 : 00] Well, good morning, everybody. We've been, through the one-year Bible, we've been reading in Leviticus, and you read Leviticus!

and you realize what a challenge it is to read. My goodness. And so when I saw that I was on schedule, I thought, maybe I'll give Leviticus a miss.

Yes. But then I thought, well, why do that? Because there's so much which is value in it, even though it's a really tough read.

So acknowledging that it is a tough read, I then sort of set out at the start of the week to put something together, which tries to encapsulate the whole book.

So I'm trying to do a lot. And I thought, well, if I was going to summarize Leviticus up, I would summarize it in these two words, blood and sacrifice. I know there are three words there, but you know what I mean, blood, sacrifice.

[1 : 03] And then I thought, that's easy. I can sort of summarize what's in the book. But it needs careful connection with the New Testament.

And also, I thought, well, what part of it will I read to kind of try and give you a flavor of what it's like? So I thought, well, let's look at Leviticus 16. So basically, in Leviticus, in the first five or six chapters, you get the description of each of the sacrifices.

And then you get the regulations following that about how the sacrifices were to be carried out. And there's a lot of overlap that goes on. And all the various ceremonies that have to take place in terms of cleansing the priest and preparing the priest for the task and preparing the utensils and washing nose.

And it gets really complicated. So let's hope I can do it justice. Leviticus 16, the day of atonement, or what the Jews call Yom Kippur. But the Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, who died when they approached the Lord.

So if you read earlier, you saw that happening. They brought their sacrifices, but they were careless in the way that they brought them. And they didn't carry them out according to the specific requirements of God.

[2 : 24] And so they were struck down dead. Quite scary, isn't it? Glad I wasn't living in those days. Verse 2. The Lord said to Moses, tell your brother Aaron that he is not to come whenever he chooses into the most holy place behind the curtain in front of the atonement cover on the ark, or else he will die.

For I will appear in the cloud over the atonement cover. I suppose there is a temptation, isn't there, for those who minister before the Lord in this way? He's given the primary responsibility, as Aaron was, to think that, as he was the chief guy, he could do what he liked.

And they just can't. And it just reminds us, doesn't it, those of us who serve the Lord, those who have principal positions.

It doesn't mean we're special. We still have to abide by the law of God and do as the law says. I don't suppose Aaron needed much telling when God said to him, you're not just to come any way you like.

He'd lost two sons. He discovered that. I think he got that message. And that must have been really tough for him. Verse 3. This is how Aaron is to enter the most holy place.

[3 : 45] He must first bring a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. He is to put on the sacred linen tunic with linen undergarments next to his body.

He is to tie the linen sash around him and put on the linen turban. These are sacred garments, so he must bathe himself with water before he puts them on. From the Israelite community, he is to take two male goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

Aaron is to offer the bull for his own sin, offering to make a torment for himself and his household. Then he is to take the two goats and present them before the Lord at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

He is to cast lots for the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other for the scapegoat. Aaron shall bring the goat whose lot falls to the Lord and sacrifice it for a sin offering.

But the goat chosen by the lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord to be used for making atonement by sending it into the wilderness as a scapegoat.

[4 : 50] Aaron shall bring the bull for his own sin offering to make atonement for himself and his household and he is to slaughter the bull for his own sin offering. He is to take a censer full of burning coals from the altar before the Lord and two handfuls of finely ground fragrant incense and take them behind the curtain.

He is to put the incense on the fire before the Lord and the smoke of the incense will conceal the atonement cover above the tablets of the covenant law so that he will not die. He is to take some of the bull's blood with his finger, sprinkle it on the foot of the front of the atonement cover.

Then he shall sprinkle some of it with his finger seven times before the atonement cover. He shall then slaughter the goat for the sin offering for the people and take its blood behind the curtain and do with it as he did with the bull's blood.

He should sprinkle it on the atonement cover and in front of it. In this way, he will make atonement for the most holy place because of the uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites, whatever their sins have been.

He is to do the same for the tent of meeting, which is among them in the midst of their uncleanness. No one is to be put to be in the tent of meeting from the time Aaron goes in to make atonement in the most holy place until he comes out himself, having made atonement for himself, his household and the whole community of Israel.

[6 : 14] Then he shall come out to the altar that is before the Lord and make atonement for it. He shall take some of the bull's blood and some of the goat's blood and put it on the horns of the altar.

He shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times to cleanse it and to consecrate it from the uncleanness of the Israelites. When Aaron has finished making atonement for the most holy place, the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall bring forward the live goat.

He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites, all their sins and put them on the goat's head. He shall send the goat away into the wilderness in the care of someone appointed for the task.

The goat will carry on itself all the sins to a remote place and the man shall release it into the wilderness. Then Aaron is to go into the tent of meeting, take off the linen garments he put on before he entered the most holy place and he is to leave them there.

He shall bathe himself with water in the sanctuary area and put on his regular garments. Then he shall come out and sacrifice the burnt offering for himself and the burnt offering for the people to make atonement for himself and for the people.

[7 : 24] He also shall burn the fat of the sin offering on the altar. The man who releases the goat as a scapegoat must wash his clothes and bathe himself with water after what he may come out into the camp.

The bull and the goat for the sin offerings whose blood was brought into the most holy place to make atonement must be taken outside the camp. Their hides, flesh and intestines are to be burned up. The man who burns them must wash his clothes and bathe himself with water.

Afterward he may come out into the camp. This is to be a lasting ordinance for you. Etc. So notice what's happening. Aaron, a sinner, has to prepare himself to go into the presence of the Lord.

Only he can go in. He must confess his sin and make atonement for his sins so he may stand in the presence of the Lord. And he must wear the right clothes.

He then must carry out his duties not only for the sacrifice of the burnt offering for his own sin but sacrificing for the sins of the nation.

[8 : 32] He then must take the scapegoat and give it to somebody and the scapegoat carries the sin of the people outside of the camp and is set free in the wilderness. The man who does this then has to cleanse himself.

As soon as Aaron goes out of the camp he has to come back in but he has to wash himself first and then he has to go through the sacrificial system all over again. Then he must take off his garments

and put on his regular clothes.

Then he must wash himself clean again. And then the guy who went out from the wilderness he has to go through all that process again. And so it carries on. Now the whole point is that sin is so serious and so damaging that you just can't mess about.

God is holy. And cannot be contaminated by sin. Did you notice as well that it wasn't just that their sins needed to be cleansed?

The temple itself, the tabernacle itself, needed to be cleansed as well. All of the furniture in there. So the impression is that every time a human touched something the thing was in some way contaminated by sin.

[9 : 38] And even the utensils, the clothes, everything, the horns of the altar, everything had to be washed, had to be cleaned, had to be sprinkled with blood.

So this is Leviticus' way of saying sin is a big problem. Sin separates us from God. I'm thinking of Psalm 9 where it says God is angry with the wicked every day.

And we have really very little concept of this, don't we? Because, thankfully, we don't get involved in the sacrificial system. If you were a priest living in Moses' day, blood was on your job description. If you're going to faint at the sight of blood, it's not the job for you. I don't know how that worked, actually. If you were a son of Levi, you had to be a priest. There was no way out if you didn't like the sight of blood.

Maybe they weren't as queasy as us in those days. I really don't know. But when you read through Leviticus, you get some horrible sort of very graphic description in the way they sacrificed the birds and had to pull them open.

[10 : 41] But they mustn't break the bones. You know, Carol, I know this is going to be difficult for you. And probably Libby as well, working with animals as you do. So it's awful. And it's meant to be awful. That's the whole point.

It really is awful. And innocent creatures had to die in order for humans to have their sins atoned for. Now, morally today, that causes all kinds of problems for animal rights people and everything else. I get that as well. But that was the reality. That's what was prescribed by Almighty God. And it wasn't because God didn't care about his creatures.

He profoundly did. He created them. But he cared so much more for humans. Because sin separated humans from God.

And God was determined to ensure that humans can find a way back. Now, the dilemma of God, if we can speak about God having a dilemma, the big challenge for God, if you like, if we can speak about God having a challenge, is that God had to find a way to make humans right with himself.

[11 : 53] And yet, at the same time, not being accused of going soft on sin. The problem with so much of the debate around the atonement is people want to say that God is all-loving and therefore would never punish his son.

Because that would be an unloving thing to do, to punish an innocent son. That's what Steve Chalk says. That's why the Evangelical Alliance eventually said that Steve Chalk could not be a member of the Evangelical Alliance because he denied substitutionary atonement.

That's right, I think. It's not to say he's not a nice man. But substitutionary atonement is an evangelical Christian biblical doctrine. That God punished our sin in his son.

Because God could not wink at sin. He could not turn his back on it and pretend it was of no importance. The sacrificial system shows us how seriously God takes sin.

Yeah? Can't be contaminated by it. He can't admit people into his presence unless their sins are forgiven. And that involves blood sacrifice. So there's a dilemma.

[13 : 09] God is holy. Cannot turn his back on sin. Cannot pretend it does not exist. But God is love as well. Steve Chalk is right to say that.

Of course God is love. But where he's wrong is when he suggests that atoning sacrifice is the action of a cosmic child abuser.

That I think is wrong and disrespectful. You see, God is not angry at us or angry at his son so he punishes him.

God in his love finds a way of forgiving us while loving his son and accepting his son as the perfect sacrifice for our sin.

And God in his triune nature with his son found a way to do that. So there's a very important passage in Romans 3 verse 21.

[14:09] And it deals with this dilemma. But now apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been made known to which the law and the prophets testify.

This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

And all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. So you see the problem? We all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

We're all on the outside. But we are justified through faith in Jesus Christ. That brings us into the inside. These two things stand together.

Verse 25. God, this is the solution. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement through the shedding of his blood to be received by faith.

[15:14] And why did he do this? He did this to demonstrate his righteousness. Can't wink at sin or pretend it doesn't matter. Because in his forbearance, he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished.

He did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time. So as to be just. Because he has to punish sin. And the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

So the cross provides the solution for the sin problem. Jesus is punished for our sin so we can be justified by faith in him.

Jesus makes us acceptable to God because God punishes our sin in him. And that's the solution to the sacrificial system in the Old Testament.

That's why we don't have to do that every day. Because God found it a way to do it once for all time. In the most crucial moment in history.

[16:19] On that first Easter day. The first Good Friday. When Jesus was punished for our sin. And on the first Easter Sunday. When he rose again to show us that he had victory over sin and death.

And in a way, you need to know that. So you're going to understand all of Leviticus. In a way, if you read Leviticus on its own, it's terrifying. And we'll kind of just talk through some of that in a moment. Let's go to the next slide. So just a little bit about the book. That's where Leviticus stands, of course. In the Pentateuch. Pentateuch means five books of Moses. That doesn't mean to say Moses was there and writing down everything.

It wasn't at the creation. He wasn't there during Noah's flood. So that information was passed on to him. And he then finally recorded it down in five books. Over 50 times in the book of Leviticus.

You read words like, So the Lord spoke to Moses. Or the Lord commanded Moses. Moses was the kind of, The major editor of the first five books of the Bible.

[17:23] And you can see basically what they're about. It's too simplistic. Creation to birth of Jewish people in Genesis. God's deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt in Exodus.

Although there's more than that, of course. Ceremonies and instructions from the priests in Leviticus. Instructions for wilderness and conquest in Numbers. And then the final sermon of Moses, which was a very long sermon.

20, was it 30 chapters or something? Very long, long book anyway. From Moses before he died. And the book is, Leviticus therefore means pertaining to the Levites.

Because if we go to the next slide. There's an overview of Leviticus. The Levites were given the responsibility for administering the sacrificial system.

Their job was to make sure it was done properly. According to the instructions. And done perfectly. So that every detail of that instruction was carried out.

[18:25] So that the people of Israel could have fellowship with God. God is very particular about who may approach him and how. He can do that because he's God.

We can argue that we would prefer to find our own way. But that leads to death. There is a way that seemeth right unto man. But the end thereof is death. God says there is one way to approach me. And it's my way. And you have to go my way. Or there's no way. Which is why Jesus says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to father but by me. We might not like that. We might think that's unfair.

Because humans can devise very good systems. Which we call religious systems. And we can devise our own ceremonies and sacrifices. And say, these should be acceptable to God. But God says, no, they're not.

Now again, modern anthropologists might object to that and call us elitist and everything else. It's not us that are being elitist.

[19 : 20] It's God. And we just have to accept that. It's a world view, isn't it? If we accept that we will do what God says, because God is the creator of the universe.

And our creator and law giver. Then we will accept that his way is right and other ways are wrong. That is elitist. I get that. That runs contrary to modern opinion about humans.

And how wonderful humans really are. But it's not God's view. So you make your choice. So broken down, again, imprecisely.

Chapters 1 through 10. God's provision for sin. And the various offerings. Which we'll talk about in just a moment. And then something about the priesthood. And how they regulate those offerings. Then God's precepts for separation.

What does it mean to be a holy nation? Because the point of the sacrificial system was to bring humans into relationship with God. And then to say to them, because God is willing to forgive your sin.

[20 : 17] He wants you to live in a certain way. And this is the way he wants you to live. And when they fail to live that way, as we've seen in the Day of Atonement.

Then they have to have sacrifices made. Because this is the amazing kindness of God. He provides a system by which humans can be made right with him. But he doesn't say, you get one chance to put this right.

And that's the end of it. He doesn't say, you get seven chances. Or even 70 times seven. The sacrificial system was unlimited in its scope.

During the tabernacle in the wilderness and the temple when it existed. The fires never went out. And animals never failed to be sacrificed daily. So there was never a broken kind of system.

That the Jews couldn't kind of get access to. It was always there. Because God always wanted to give humans the opportunity to be made right with him.

[21 : 22] He knew that they would need daily to have their sins atoned for. And he never got tired of them coming to ask for forgiveness. And that's why we're thankful, aren't we, for 1 John 1, 9.

If anyone sins. If anyone does sin. He has an advocate with the Father. That's 1 John 2. Jesus Christ the righteous.

If we confess our sins. He is faithful and just. And will forgive us our sins. And purify us from all unrighteousness. And he says, if you pretend that you have no sin.

You're a liar. And his word does not live in your heart. There will always be a need for forgiveness. And our perfect sacrifice, Jesus, is always available for us.

So God loves us to be in fellowship with him. He knows that sin will separate us from him. So he provides a way for us to be continually made holy before him.

[22 : 26] And to be made holy in the Bible primarily means to be set apart for God. It does not primarily mean that you are morally perfect. So just relax a little bit there.

You are never expected to be morally perfect this side of heaven. You cannot be. Because you live in a world that contaminates you. And you live with influence around you that contaminates you. And you live with a pedigree that contaminates you. It's called original sin. And even if you try your very hardest not to be really naughty. Sometimes, unfortunately, you inherited a sin nature from your parents.

So blame them. And they'll blame their parents and so on. And when we say about our children, why are they like that? Kind of have a look within.

It's probably because of you in some way. Yeah. It's impossible this side of heaven to be sinless.

We will always need the blood of Jesus. But holy people are separated to God and live distinctly in the world.

[23 : 30] And then, thirdly, you get God's promise for success. And to live really well is to follow the decrees and commandments of God.

Okay. A little hint there. If you want to please God, try to live according to his will. If you want to displease God, then don't bother. But it will not make you happy or comfortable.

So whether it's to do with the Sabbath or general obedience or vows that you make to the Lord, remember you live your life every day as a sacrifice, struggling to put to death your sin nature, and seeking to live for him.

So although we will always sin, the Bible doesn't say it's okay to do it because that brings glory to God. The Bible says the opposite. You die to sin.

How can you live any longer in it? You know, if you know that God's not pleased when you beat your dog up or your wife up, then don't beat your dog or wife up. Yeah?

[24 : 36] It's as simple as that. If you know God is not pleased because you look at certain things you ought not to, or read certain things you ought not to, or behave in certain ways you ought not to, or you're dishonest and deceitful, stop doing it.

That's what the New Testament says. Why? Because it doesn't please God and it won't make you happy. It can't make you happy. Because you're really out of fellowship with God. It doesn't mean your sins won't be forgiven because of Jesus' death on the cross.

It just means that the right response to Jesus is to live a life that pleases God. It's exactly the same in Leviticus. So, let's read Hebrews chapter 10.

Next slide, Josh. Just to get a sense of key words. Key words in Leviticus are holiness, 87 times. So that tells you that God thinks holiness is a really big deal. And holiness, as we said, remember, is apartness, separateness. Part of the reason why the priest had to dress in a certain way, and wash himself in a certain way, and his offerings had to be carried out in certain ways, and only he could go in, and nobody else could go in, and they tied a bell around him because he died because he'd sinned, they'd have to drag him out.

[25 : 55] Part of that purpose was to say, I am different from you. I am separate from you. You cannot just approach me how you like because you'll contaminate my presence.

Holiness is otherness, separateness. God is holy. His people are to be holy. 89 times at least the word blood is used. So it's a big, big deal.

Blood is everywhere. And you've just got to get used to it. Atonement is used 45 times. We'll talk about that. And then sacrifice, unfortunately, I couldn't find out.

So that's why, I don't know. That's your homework. How many times in Leviticus is the word sacrifice used? I guess it's a lot. Now, remembering Noah's words, and look at that, what I think is the key verse, really captures everything.

You should be holy to me, for I, the Lord, am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine. So Leviticus is about God saying to us, this is how I want you to be mine.

[26 : 57] This is why blood, atonement, sacrifice, all of this is important, because I want you to be mine. Now, Hebrews 10, and verses 1 to 15.

Hebrews 10 says, the law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming, not the realities themselves. For this reason, it can never, by the same sacrifices, repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.

Now, if I was Jewish, and a good Jewish boy, I'd be really disappointed to read that, because I would want to think, bearing in mind that they don't sacrifice anymore, because the temple was destroyed in AD 70, and never rebuilt.

But imagine I was reading this, when the writer wrote it, and the temple was still, maybe in existence, we don't know. I would be thinking, well, that's a kick in the teeth.

I spend all my life, sacrificing for sin. And now this guy comes along, presumably it was a guy, and he says, nah, it's no good, you're wasting your time.

[28 : 06] That would upset me. I'd be offended. If there was the equivalent of the Times, or the Telegraph, I'd probably be headline news. You know?

Right that the Hebrews offends a whole religion, by telling them their religion is worthless. But that's what he does. He says, it was not, and it cannot, and it was never intended, to take away sin.

That's what he says. It was simply a shadow of the good things that are coming, not the reality. It was pointing to something important, that was to follow, but by itself, it could not take away sin.

Now a Jewish child, learned Leviticus first. Didn't learn Genesis, didn't learn Exodus, didn't learn Numbers or Deuteronomy, he learned Leviticus first, by heart.

Why? Because that was the important book to know. This was the process by which you hope to attain to salvation. This was the means by which your sins were atoned for.

[29 : 13] So you learned it first. It was the most important thing to learn. How do I get right with God? And Paul says of the most important book that a Jewish boy learned, the thing you've got to learn from it, is that it isn't your means of salvation.

You can't be cleansed from sin by it. Let's read on. For this reason, it can never by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly, year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.

Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. This is perfectly logical, isn't it?

If the sacrifice of that bull or that goat or that turtle dove or that pigeon, because it depended whether you could afford a bull or a goat, or that lamb, if that one sacrifice could cleanse you from sin, why repeat it again and again and again and again?

Clearly, the sacrifices that were offered are imperfect. They only count for that moment, and they need to be done again and again and again and again, and therefore it's not working.

[30 : 29] Because if it was working, it would only need to be done once. It's logical, isn't it? Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer feel guilty for their sins.

Notice that guilt. Again, we forget, don't we? We tend to kind of speak too simplistically about the cross, as the cross being a transactional thing, as a means to forgive our sin, and make us right with God, like transactionally.

There you go, I paid the price, now I'm free. But there's more to it than that. The cross of Jesus, the blood of Jesus, cleanses us from all sin, and removes our guilt, so that we are acceptable before God.

Now, by guilt, it doesn't mean necessarily what I'm feeling. I'm feeling bad. It means the thing that prevents us from being acceptable. The guilt that we carry, as unforgiving sinners, is removed, by the blood of Jesus.

But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins. It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said, sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me.

[31 : 46] With burnt offerings and sin offerings, you were not pleased. Then I said, here I am. It is written about me in the scroll. I have come to do your will, my God.

First, he said, sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and a sin offering. You did not desire, nor were you pleased with them, though they were offered in accordance with the law. Then he said, here I am.

I have come to do your will. He sets apart the first to establish the second. That's complex, isn't it? Okay, let's just break it down if we can. Here are these sacrifices being offered, and God said, well, I told you to do it, but they can't take away sin.

And when you get too carried away by the process, I get sick of it, and I actually say, and he did say this in the Old Testament, get away with these things.

Get away with this idea that if you offer an animal, you can be forgiven regardless of how you live. It's never going to work. If you say, well, it's all right for us to be really brutal and nasty to people, whether they be Jewish or non-Jewish people, that's fine, because God will accept us as soon as we kill an animal.

[32 : 57] God says, absolutely not, because it is clear by your attitude that you have no concept of the seriousness of sin nor the costliness of forgiveness.

And then Jesus comes and says, here I am, I came to do your will. And the writer of the Hebrews says, we have a dilemma. On the one hand, offering sacrifice through the animal system is God's will.

On the other hand, here comes Jesus to replace all that, and that's God's will. So what is Jesus doing? He's setting aside the first law by carrying out the second.

He supersedes the law and puts it away. By his will, God's purpose is accomplished.

So, he says, and by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. That means once for all time.

[34 : 01] We must not, cannot, and there's no point, of ever returning to animal sacrifice again. You'll be grateful, Carol and Libby. Because it was ineffective.

And because Christ came to pay the penalty for our sin once for all time. So he says, day after day, every priest stands and performs his religious duties.

Again and again, he offers the same sacrifices, which could never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time, he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool.

For by one sacrifice, he has made perfect forever those who have been made holy. Now, thank God for that. Because Jesus, you see, is not merely your sacrifice for sin. He is your priest who sacrifices himself for your sin, and he intercedes at the right hand of God. So he had to die, but he had to come back to life. And he had to come back to life so he could intercede on your behalf.

[35 : 07] Isn't that good? Now, if this ever dilemma ever did happen in the heavens, where God, Father says, really angry with John Winter because he's a naughty boy, if that ever did happen, to simplify it, Jesus reminds the Father that John Winter is forgiven.

He was punished in me. He cannot now be punished for his own sin. So that's atonement. Atonement is one person taken, in this case, the perfect Son of God, the perfect Lamb of God, taking away the sins of the world, your sins and mine, on himself. And notice what happens as a result. The writer of the Hebrews says there are multiple benefits of the atoning blood of Christ. Once for all, cleansing from sin, erasure of guilt from the conscience, being made perfect for all time, having God's law written on our hearts and minds, and our sins and lawless acts being remembered no more.

It's not just, Jesus, I thank you that your blood cleanses me from sin. It does much more than that. Much more than that. And so, let's just have a think about Leviticus again.

Next slide, please, Josh. So here's the Levite system, and there's the tabernacle, and there's the priest in all his finery. He wears an ephod, and he has all of the names of the tribes of Israel inscribed on stones on his chest.

[36 : 44] He wears a gold kind of crown, almost, headband, in front of his turban, and it has the words written on it, holiness to the Lord.

Because that's the big message of the book. How are we holy before God? And whenever you meet him, or whenever he stands to sacrifice, he's reminding everybody that this is the reason. This has to happen so that we might be holy, might be set apart for God. And then, this is the tabernacle system. This is when they travel around, and they set up their tent, and the tent, the tabernacle was built according to the instructions from Moses, and then the tribes of Israel all kind of come to round it, to protect it, and there in the middle were the tribe of Levi.

So by now, Joseph's tribe had been split into two, Ephraim and Manasseh, and then the Levites kind of made up the central part. And all of the Levites could be priests, but only the sons of Aaron could be high priests.

And their job was to continually bring people to God. That was their job. Continue to make atonement for sin, and continue to make people right before God.

[38 : 07] That was the arrangement. Next slide. And their job was principally atonement. Now the word atonement means to make people right, to reconcile, to cover, to placate.

to divert away anger, so that mercy could be given. The anger and the wrath of God was expressed in the killing of the animal.

Blood had to be shed, for without the shedding of blood, there is no remission, no forgiveness. forgiveness. So there is the anger when the priest took the knife and killed the innocent animal victim, and the blood was poured out, there was the anger.

The separation was removed when the scapegoat was sent in the wilderness to remind the people that sin had been removed from the camp. And then mercy was shown when the people were cleansed by the blood and made right before God.

And this, as we've seen already, is what Jesus does on the cross, sacrificing himself to make us right. Next slide, please. So there are these offerings.

[39 : 28] Quickly wanted to run through them just to kind of give you an idea of what each offering kind of represented. Because when you read them, it's really difficult to get a sense of what's going on here.

Atonement has been made, blood has been shed, but it wasn't enough to have just one type of offering. There were five. So let's think about these sacrifices.

First of all, the burnt offering. That's chapter one. The burnt offering was offered for a sacrifice for sin. All of the offering was burnt up.

It was offered by the priest to satisfy God's wrath and to make sure people could have fellowship, renewed fellowship with God again.

And it pictures for us Christ being made as a sacrifice, a fragrant offering to God. Because as the burnt offering, as the smell, the aroma of the burnt offering rose up to heaven, God smelt it and was satisfied.

[40 : 36] And there's the language there of Ephesians that God sees the death of Christ as a sweet-smelling sacrifice offered for sin.

Secondly, there was the meal offering, or the grain offering, or the flour offering. Various things were offered. Finest of flour, the finest of grains. And this was part of man's sacrifice, man's kind of bringing the best that they could to offer to God because only the best would do.

This sacrifice involved no shedding of blood. It was like, if you like, a bread sacrifice. Where have we heard of that?

The body of Christ broken for us. the meal and the flour represented in communion reminds us of this particular offering.

It could also be added with a drink offering, a libration offering of wine. Isn't that interesting? That could be poured on top of the grain offering and that reminds us too of communion, the blood of Jesus, God's Son, which is represented for us in the wine.

[41 : 53] wine. The third offering was the peace offering and unlike the first two, this was an optional one. It was an optional offering but it was referred to also as a fellowship offering because what happened here was part of the animal was sacrificed and then part of it was given to the priest who then waved it so it was called the wave offering.

So the priest got the shoulder and he waved it. This is mine, this is for me and my family to eat afterwards and then the people got the breast and they give thanks for it.

At the end of the sacrifice they ate together in fellowship. It was communion. It was like the Passover or the Last Supper and it was shown that men had a part in this.

By eating they were fulfilling their vows to God that they would live for God and please him. That's why sometimes it was called a votive offering, an offering of vows.

So there was a two-way process going on here. God was sacrificing for them and they were sacrificing out of thanksgiving for him. Then there was a sin offering.

[43 : 07] Now this was where the scapegoat was offered and the sin offering involved the transferal of the guilt from humans to the animal who was then sent into the wilderness.

And then lastly there was the trespass offering where because of human trespass and the trespass was intentional or mainly unintentional sin which still brought guilt their unintentional sin would be forgiven.

So whether they were aware or not of their trespass they had to make sacrifice just in case. Yeah? Now imagine that.

Before the reformation sorry you know it's not unimportant before the reformation the catholic church when it offered its mass offers what they think is called a non bloody sacrifice to take away sin whether intentional or unintentional because the fear was what if you sinned and weren't aware of it?

What if you died without absolution without a priest there to forgive you your sin then you would have committed a sin that would lead to hell? That was a misunderstanding a dreadful misunderstanding of what the cross of Jesus accomplishes.

[44 : 35] The blood of Jesus doesn't just cleanse us from intentional sin it cleanses us from all sin unintentional ones as well whether we know it or not so when it says that he died for our trespasses it covers those sins we willingly commit as well as those we do not know we commit those of omission where we neglect something and those of commission when we definitely do something all of these words matter the removal of guilt the removal of sin the atonement for sin the removal of our transgressions our offense against the law of God whether we know it or not are all forgiven by the blood of Jesus when we take communion it is not a sacrifice it is not a mass it is not a transubstantiation the bread and wine don't magically change they remind us merely of what Jesus did for us on the cross no sacrifice for sin remains yeah so it's not alright to say well you know it's just a difference interpretation it's not it's a huge difference in understanding of what

Jesus accomplished at the cross which is why I also think the evangelical alliance was right to say to Steve Chalk it's not just saying look how much God loves us he was willing to sacrifice his son God gave his son so that our sins could be forgiven now I might be the only one that finds this interest and I'm sorry if that's the case but let's end with this last slide I think do you remember when

Abraham was asked to sacrifice Isaac causes problems doesn't it when you tell that story in Sunday school why did God want Abraham to sacrifice Isaac at least some of my year sevens at school said because God requires humans to be sacrificed doesn't never did indeed in Jeremiah he said it never even entered his heart when religion sacrificed their children so why did he ask him Abraham the man justified by faith the man who believed

God and it was credited to him for righteousness the man who was willing to lay down his life for God was asked to give up the most precious thing in his life sacrifice to me that which is most precious to you in this case your son and so he went off to a mountain that the Lord would show the amazing thing about it when you trace it that mountain was found in what became the region of Jerusalem upon which Jesus was sacrificed and on the way on the way Isaac asked his father where is the lamb for sacrifice we've got the knife we've got the wood but where's the lamb and Abraham says God will provide a lamb and on the mountain of the Lord it would be provided and so God was called Jehovah Jehovah Jireh and just before he put the knife in God stopped him and said I see you are willing to sacrifice everything for me including the most precious thing but that's not necessary why because on the mountain of the

Lord it would be provided God did not provide a lamb for Abraham he provided a ram because the provision was not that thing there the provision of the lamb was 2000 years later when the lamb of God took away the sins of the world on the mountain where it was provided Jesus and Paul got that when he said God who did not spare his only son but gave him up for us all how will he not along with him all must also graciously give us all things and that's what Abraham didn't have to do because Abraham couldn't do it no human could do it no man could do it the only one who can forgive our sin and make us right before God is the lamb of God Jesus whom God provides and the whole point of Leviticus is to say you can do all of this and it still won't atone for you what you need is the mercy and grace and forgiveness of our

Lord Jesus Christ it's a good book it's a good book it's even better when you say it with a Geordie accent book let's pray as I close I just wanted to read for you a quote from F.B.

[49 : 48] Meyer which I think kind of encapsulates this whole idea of atonement and sacrifice and then our right prayerful response Jesus Christ has bought us with his blood but alas he has not had his money's worth he paid for all and he's had but a fragment of our energy time and earnings by an act of consecration let us ask him to forgive the robbery of the past and let us profess our desire to be henceforth utterly and only for him his slaves owning no master other than himself we thank you Lord for reminding us today that the blood of Jesus alone cleanses us from all sin we thank you for the perfect sacrifice of

Jesus who makes any other sacrifice unnecessary for forgiveness you call us now Lord to lay down our lives to offer ourselves as living sacrifices holy and pleasing to you and today once again in the light and in response to the glorious sacrifice of Jesus we offer ourselves to you amen as