

EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

Group Bible Study 1

VERSES TO READ:

John 1:1,14

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

John 1:29

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Read Lev. 1-7

DISCOVERY PORTION:

THE GENERAL SKETCH

Now we need to see the general sketch of the book of Leviticus. The general sketch is this: Through the tabernacle, with the offerings, and by the priests. God's redeemed are enabled to fellowship with God, serve God, and be God's holy people living a holy life, which expresses God. To fellowship with God means to feast with God, to enjoy Christ with God. This is possible

through the tabernacle, with the offerings, and by the priests, which for us today are all a matter of Christ. The issue of enjoying Christ with God is that we become God's holy people living a holy life.

In Exodus the tabernacle was built and set up. The tabernacle was set up not only for God to dwell in but also for us to dwell in. In Leviticus the offerings (chs. 1-7) with the priesthood (chs. 8-10) are ordained.

Christ as the Tabernacle Bringing God to Man, and Christ as the Offerings Bringing Man to God

Because our Christ is wonderful and all-inclusive, plain words are not adequate to reveal Him and describe Him. Types, which are actually pictures, are also necessary. Both the tabernacle and the offerings are types of Christ. Christ as the tabernacle brings God to man, and Christ as the offerings brings man to God. This indicates that there is a two-way traffic, a traffic coming and going. Christ comes to us as the tabernacle and He goes to God as the offerings.

The tabernacle is a sign, a figure, a type, of Christ. It was through incarnation that Christ came as the tabernacle. The Word, which was God, became flesh and tabernacled among us (John 1:1, 14). Christ is the very God incarnated to be a man; hence, He is the God-man, and this God-man is the tabernacle. As the tabernacle, Christ brought God to man. Christ's being on earth was a matter of God embodied in a

tabernacle. Here we have one aspect of the two-way traffic- God coming to us in Christ through incarnation.

John 1:29 tells us that the Christ who is the tabernacle is also the Lamb of God: "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" Christ as the Lamb of God is the totality, the aggregate, of all the offerings.

On the one hand, Christ is the tabernacle; on the other hand, He is the offerings. As the tabernacle, He has brought God to us. As the offerings, He is now bringing us all to God. Christ's being the tabernacle is a matter of incarnation. Christ's being the offerings is a matter of crucifixion and resurrection. Christ came in incarnation and He went through crucifixion and resurrection. This is the two-way traffic that brings God to us and brings us to God, making God one with us and us one with God.

THE CATEGORIES OF THE OFFERINGS

According to Leviticus, there are five main kinds of offerings: the burnt offering, the meal offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering. We need the pictures of the offerings in Leviticus to revolutionize our concept concerning service, worship, and the experience of Christ.

A. The Burnt Offering

The burnt offering is Christ for God's satisfaction (1:1-17; 6:8-13). The burnt offering is for God's food that God may enjoy it and be satisfied. This offering was to be offered daily, in the morning and in the evening.

B. The Meal Offering

The meal offering is Christ for the satisfaction of God's people enjoyed together with God (2:1-16; 6:14-23). The burnt offering is for God's eating, and the meal offering is for our eating. Our eating of the meal offering, however, is together with God. Christ should first be absolutely for God's enjoyment, and then He should be for our enjoyment that we may enjoy Him together with God. As Leviticus 2 shows us, part of the meal offering is for God, but the main part of this offering is for us. This indicates that Christ is for our enjoyment that we may enjoy Him together with God.

C. The Peace Offering

The peace offering is Christ as the peace between God and God's people for their co-enjoyment in fellowship (3:1-17; 7:11-38). The burnt offering is Christ for God's enjoyment, the meal offering is Christ for our enjoyment together with God, and the peace offering is Christ as the peace between God and God's people. As such an offering, Christ becomes the co-enjoyment of God and God's people. In this enjoyment there is fellowship.

D. The Sin Offering

The sin offering is Christ for the sin of God's people (4:1-35; 6:24-30). God's intention is that there be co-enjoyment, enjoyment for Him and for us. His intention is that we may have peace with Him to enjoy Christ with Him in fellowship. However, we need to remember that we still have sin in our nature and trespasses in our conduct. Both our sin and our trespasses are condemned by God. Therefore, we need the sin offering, which is Christ for the sin in our nature. Concerning this, Christ has made propitiation.

E. The Trespass Offering

The trespass offering is Christ for the sins of God's people (5:1-6:7; 7:1-10). Christ has made propitiation for our sins, our trespasses, as well as for our sin. With Christ as the sin offering and as the trespass offering, we no longer have any problems with God. We may now be at peace and in peace enjoy Christ with God.

CHRIST-THE UNIQUE OFFERING

Christ today is the reality of the offerings. According to Hebrews 10:7-9, Christ came in the flesh to do the will of God, which was to replace the Old Testament offerings with Himself. Verse 9b says, "He takes away the first that He may establish the second." The "first" denotes the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament, and the "second" denotes Christ as the unique sacrifice, the unique offering. In the Old Testament there were many offerings, but

in the New Testament there is one, unique offering-the wonderful person of Christ.

According to the book of Hebrews, Christ, the ascended God-man, is our High Priest. In the Old Testament, the duty of the high priest was to offer something to God, either a sacrifice or a gift, not only to make propitiation but also to please God. As sinners with a sinful nature and sinful deeds, we had a problem with God, and God had a problem with us. There was no peace between us and God. Something had to be done to appease the situation between us and God. Christ has appeased this situation by making propitiation for us. Moreover, Christ has done something to make God happy. Before we were saved, God loved us, but He was not happy with us. Therefore, Christ offered Himself not only as a sacrifice for sin but also as a gift to please God and thereby make Him happy. As the unique offering, Christ has made propitiation for us, and He has made God happy.

All the offerings are types, pictures, of Christ. One of the main purposes of the offerings is that they are food for God and also for His serving ones. In the books of Exodus and Leviticus we see that the priests, who served in and around the tabernacle, ate the priestly food. What was this priestly food? It was the different kinds of offerings. The offerings are not only for propitiating our situation and not only for pleasing God and making Him happy. The offerings are also for satisfying God and for satisfying, strengthening, and energizing God's serving ones.