

**YOUTH UNIT I: Tabernacle, Sacrifices, and Atonement**  
**YOUTH GENERAL LESSON TITLE: Offering a Sweet Aroma to God**  
**YOUTH TOPIC: Love and Sacrifice**

**LESSON 4**  
**DATE: March 23, 2025**

**BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Leviticus 1:1-17; 6:8-13**  
**PRINT PASSAGE: Leviticus 1:3-17**

**KEEPIN' IT CURRENT! (5 Minutes)**

***"Give It All You've Got"*** - Think about the last time you went all-out for something you really cared about. Maybe it was perfecting a dance routine for a big performance, spending hours getting your gaming setup just right, or pulling an all-nighter to make a project perfect. When we truly value something or someone, we give it our absolute best. That's exactly what the burnt offering was about in ancient Israel. It was the way of showing total dedication to God, holding nothing back.

In our world of quick likes and instant posts, it might seem strange to think about a religious ceremony that required such careful attention to detail--choosing a perfect animal, following specific steps, and burning the entire sacrifice. But imagine if you were trying to connect with someone you deeply respected and admired. You wouldn't just send a quick text or casual emoji. You'd probably put thought into every word and gesture. The burnt offering was like that, but on a much deeper level. It was about approaching the Creator of the universe with the respect and dedication He deserves.

What makes this ancient practice particularly interesting is how God made it accessible to everyone. Whether someone was super wealthy or barely getting by, there was a way for them to bring their best to God. It's like how today, a heartfelt handmade card might mean more than an expensive store-bought gift. God cared more about the attitude behind the offering than its monetary value. At the same time, He expected people to give according to their means--not pretending to be broke when you could actually afford more.

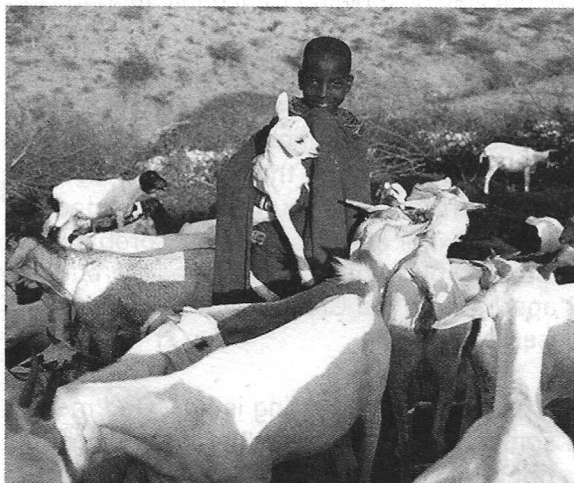
This system of sacrifice might seem distant from our modern lives, but it actually teaches us some pretty deep lessons about dedication, sincerity, and approaching God with our whole heart. As we dig into the details of how these offerings worked, we'll discover principles that are still relevant today--whether we're thinking about our relationship with God, how we treat others, or what it means to be truly dedicated to something bigger than ourselves.

## KEEPIN' IT REAL! (5 Minutes)

- When we look at how ancient Israelites had to bring their absolute best offering based on what they could afford, how does this challenge the way we approach our relationship with God today? Do we give God our leftover time and energy, or do we bring our best like the Israelites did with their sacrifices?
- The burnt offering was completely consumed by fire, symbolizing total dedication to God, so what would it look like in your life to be 'all in' for God? Are there areas where you're holding back, and what might change if you approached your faith with that same level of complete commitment?

## KEEPIN' IT BIBLICAL! (20 Minutes)

**KEY VERSE:** The priest shall turn the whole into smoke on the altar as a burnt offering, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the Lord. Leviticus 1:9.

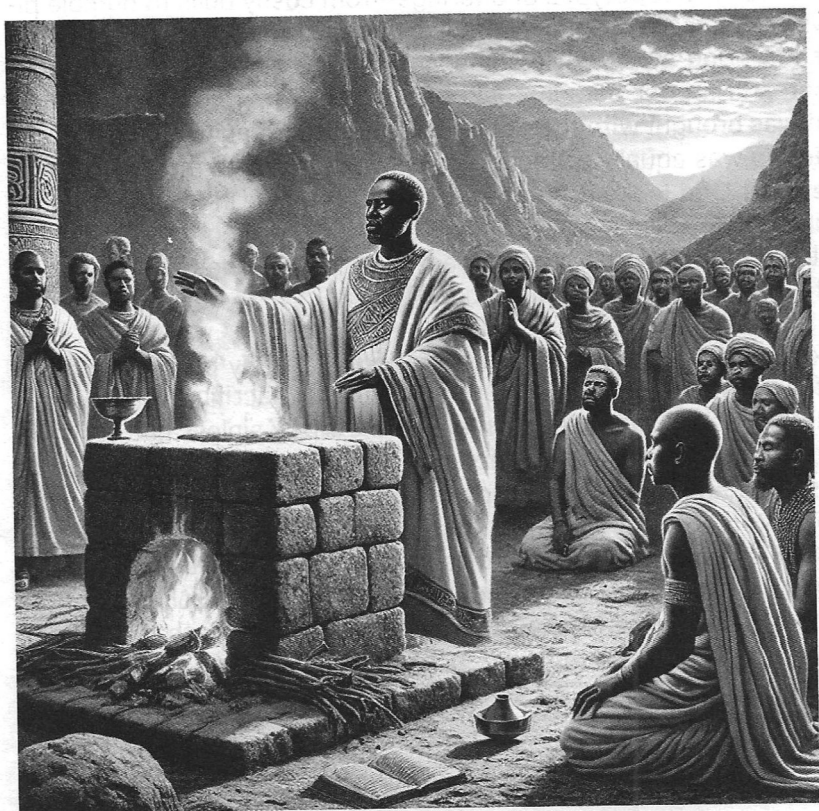


<sup>3</sup> "If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it at the door of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before the Lord; <sup>4</sup> he shall lay his hand upon the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. <sup>5</sup> Then he shall kill the bull before the Lord; and Aaron's sons the priests shall present

the blood, and throw the blood round about against the altar that is at the door of the tent of meeting. <sup>6</sup> And he shall flay the burnt offering and cut it into pieces; <sup>7</sup> and the sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar, and lay wood in order upon the fire; <sup>8</sup> and Aaron's sons the priests shall lay the pieces, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire upon the altar; <sup>9</sup> but its entrails and its legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the Lord.

<sup>10</sup> "If his gift for a burnt offering is from the flock, from the sheep or goats, he shall offer a male without blemish; <sup>11</sup> and he shall kill it on the north side of the altar before the Lord, and Aaron's sons the priests shall throw its blood against the altar round about. <sup>12</sup> And he shall cut it into pieces, with its head and its fat, and the priest shall lay them in order upon the wood that is on the fire upon the altar; <sup>13</sup> but the entrails and the legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall offer the whole, and burn it on the altar; it is a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the Lord.

<sup>14</sup> "If his offering to the Lord is a burnt offering of birds, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves or of young pigeons. <sup>15</sup> And the priest shall bring it to the altar and wring off its head, and burn it on the altar; and its blood shall be drained out on the side of the altar; <sup>16</sup> and he shall take away its crop with the feathers, and cast it beside the altar on the east side, in the place for ashes; <sup>17</sup> he shall tear it by its wings, but shall not divide it asunder. And the priest shall burn it on the altar, upon the wood that is on the fire; it is a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the Lord.



The burnt offering was one of the most fundamental sacrifices in ancient Israel's worship, marking the beginning of Leviticus' detailed instructions about approaching God. Unlike other sacrifices where portions were shared or

eaten, the burnt offering was completely consumed by fire on the altar, symbolizing total dedication to God. This offering wasn't new to Israel. Sacrifice had been practiced since the time of Adam and was known throughout ancient cultures. However, God now provided specific, detailed instructions for how these sacrifices should be performed at the newly completed tabernacle, ensuring that worship would be conducted according to His standards rather than human preference.

The procedure for the burnt offering reveals important principles about approaching God. The animal had to be male and without blemish, demonstrating that God deserves our best, not our leftovers. The person bringing the sacrifice had to personally lay hands on the animal's head and kill it themselves, creating a vivid understanding of sin's consequences and the need for a substitute. This wasn't meant to be a detached religious ritual, but was designed to be deeply personal and meaningful. The priests would then handle the blood, sprinkling it around the altar, and carefully arranging the pieces of the sacrifice on the fire in a specific order. Every detail mattered because each aspect taught something about the proper way to approach the Holy God.

God's provision for different types of offerings--from costly bulls to humble pigeons, shows His concern for people of all economic levels. A wealthy person was expected to bring a bull, while someone of modest means could bring a sheep or goat, and a poor person could offer birds. Regardless of the offering's size, if it was brought with the right heart and according to God's instructions, the offering was equally accepted as "a sweet aroma to the LORD." This demonstrates that God looks at the heart behind the offering rather than its monetary value, while still expecting people to give according to their means. The fact that even the smallest offering had to be without blemish reinforced that God's standards of holiness apply equally to all.

These detailed instructions for the burnt offering ultimately point forward to Jesus Christ, who would become the perfect and final sacrifice. The requirement for an unblemished sacrifice foreshadowed Christ's sinless nature, while the total consumption of the offering pictured His complete devotion to God's will. The personal nature of laying hands on the sacrifice and the sprinkling of blood anticipated how each believer must personally identify with Christ's death. The New Testament specifically tells us that Christ fulfilled this type of sacrifice, offering Himself as "a sweet-smelling aroma" to God (Ephesians 5:2). Understanding the burnt offering helps us better appreciate both the serious nature of approaching God and the magnificent perfection of Christ's sacrifice on our behalf.



## KEEPIN' IT TOGETHER (5 Minutes)

These ancient sacrifices teach us something powerful about what it means to approach God. Just like those Israelites had to make a personal choice to bring their offering and physically place their hands on the sacrifice, our relationship with God today needs to be intentional and personal. We can't just go through religious motions or let others do the spiritual work for us. God wants our genuine, wholehearted dedication. This isn't about following a set of rigid rules, but about understanding that when we come to God, He deserves our best, not our leftovers. Whether we're talking about our time, talents, or attention, the principle remains the same: true dedication means giving our absolute best according to what we have.

Most importantly, all these detailed instructions about sacrifices point us to something - or rather, someone - greater. Just as the Israelites needed a perfect sacrifice to approach God, we understand today that Jesus Christ became that perfect sacrifice for us. But here's the amazing thing. While those ancient worshippers had to bring repeated sacrifices, Jesus' sacrifice was once and for all. This doesn't mean we can be casual about our relationship with God, though. Instead, understanding the seriousness and dedication shown in these ancient practices should inspire us to respond to God's perfect sacrifice with our own total commitment. When we realize the incredible price paid for us, it should motivate us to live lives that are fully dedicated to God - not out of obligation, but out of grateful response to His amazing love.

## iTHINK! (5 Minutes)

- Pull out your phone and look at your calendar or schedule for tomorrow. Circle or highlight the time of day when you're at your absolute best - maybe it's early morning when your mind is fresh, or right after school when you have the most energy. Then make a specific plan for how you'll use that "prime time" to connect with God tomorrow, whether through prayer, Bible reading, or worship. Just like the Israelites had to bring their best animal, not a sick or injured one, commit to giving God your best time, not just what's left over.
- In the next five minutes, everyone takes something from your backpack or pocket that represents something you really value (like a phone, favorite pen, or special keychain). Write a short note explaining why this item matters to you and how giving up control of it, even briefly, helps you understand what real sacrifice feels like.