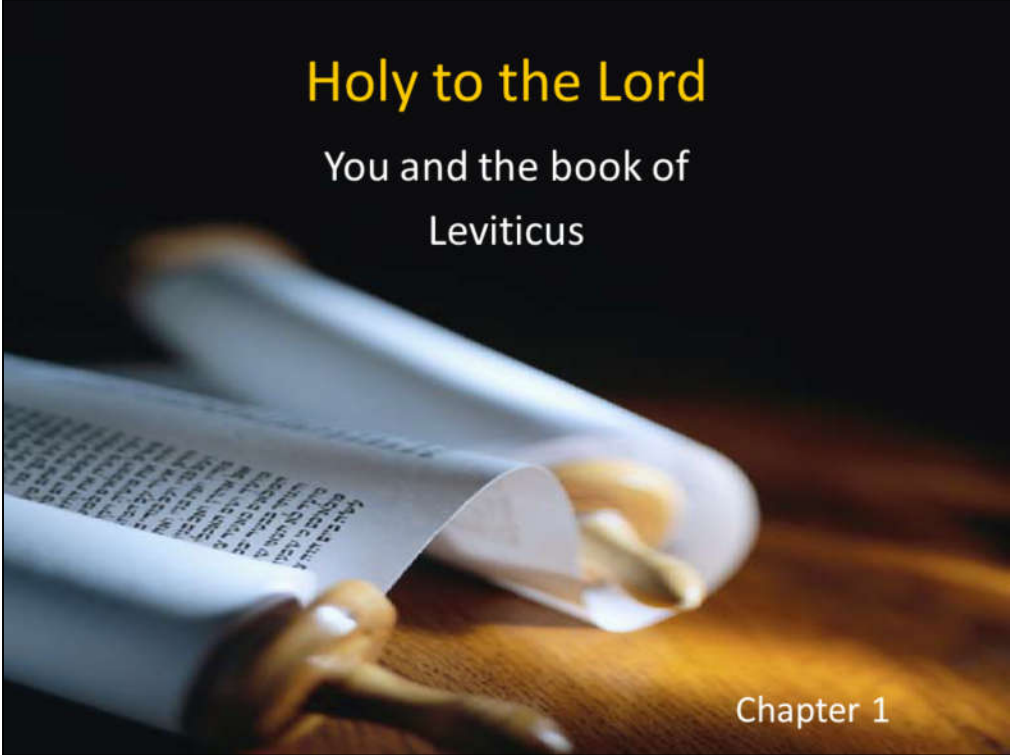


Holy to the Lord

You and the book of
Leviticus



Chapter 1

Psalm 119:103



Read Ps 119:103 How does this verse relate to the book of Leviticus?

Leviticus is much like a pond or slough, looks boring from a distance, but up close is a fascinating ecosystem.

Talk about how the rabbis would smear honey on the tablets of young student before they began their learning of the Torah.

-the Word of God is as sweet a honey.

Lev. Chapters 1-7



Chapters 1-7 of the book of Leviticus is a set of divine speeches that lays out the burnt offerings of the Israelites.

Lev. Chapters 1-7



The location of these speeches is the tent of meeting, or what we more often call the Tabernacle.

It is important to point out that unlike the Babylonians, the Israelites were not temple slaves of their God.

The sacrificial rituals and the rites associated with the tabernacle were for the *benefit of the people*, not the benefit of God or His priests.

-this is an important concept to the book of Lev.

Lev. Chapters 1-3



3
Most
Common

Chapters one to three deals with the regulations for the 3 most common types of sacrifices done in ancient Israel.

They are listed in the order that they were placed on the altar in the daily sacrificial ritual.

-the meat was always set on the altar before the flour for the grain offering.

Livelihood



The material for these offerings was to be taken from their personal food supply. It was an important part of their livelihood: meat from their own animals, grain from their crops, oil from their olive groves, syrup from their fruit trees.

There is a personal connection between the people and the offering they bring to their God.

Lev. 1:1

- “Called” “summoned”
- Ex. 3:4
- Ex. 19:3
- Ex. 24:16



This is not a word that is used ordinary language.

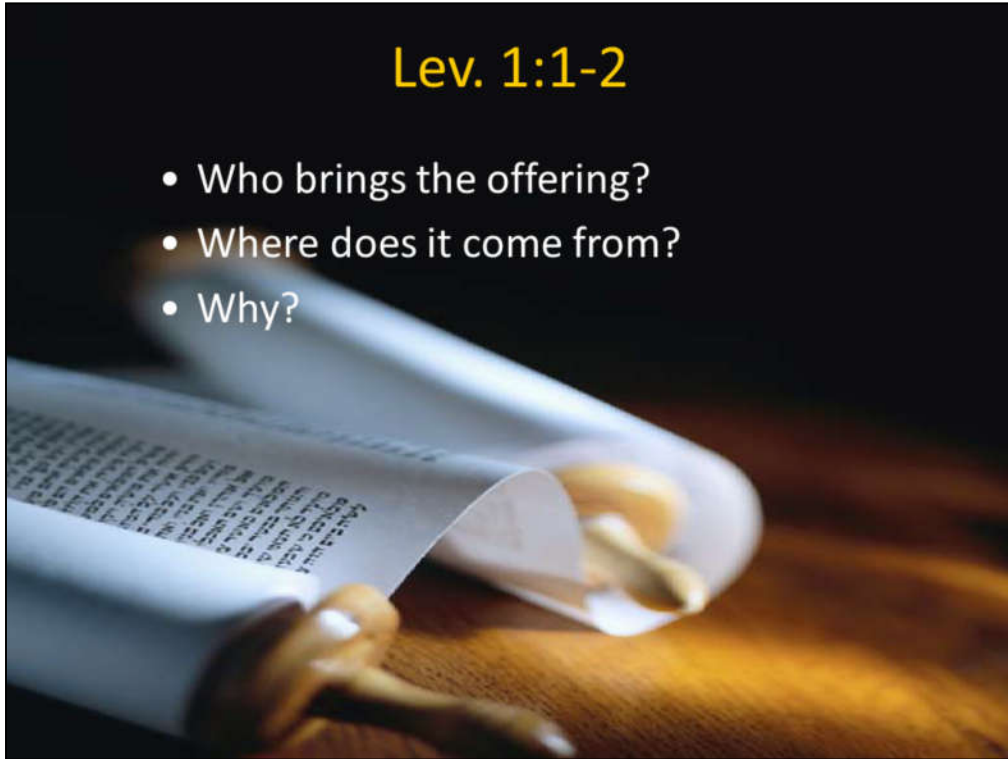
It can only be found three other places in the Bible and each of them have almost a “liturgical” sense to them.

Why are each of these passages significant? (In each God is “calling” to lead the people or speak on His behalf)

(Much like when a congregation “calls” a person to be their pastor. It has special significance to it.)

Lev. 1:1-2

- Who brings the offering?
- Where does it come from?
- Why?



Anyone. Any lay person can bring an offering to God

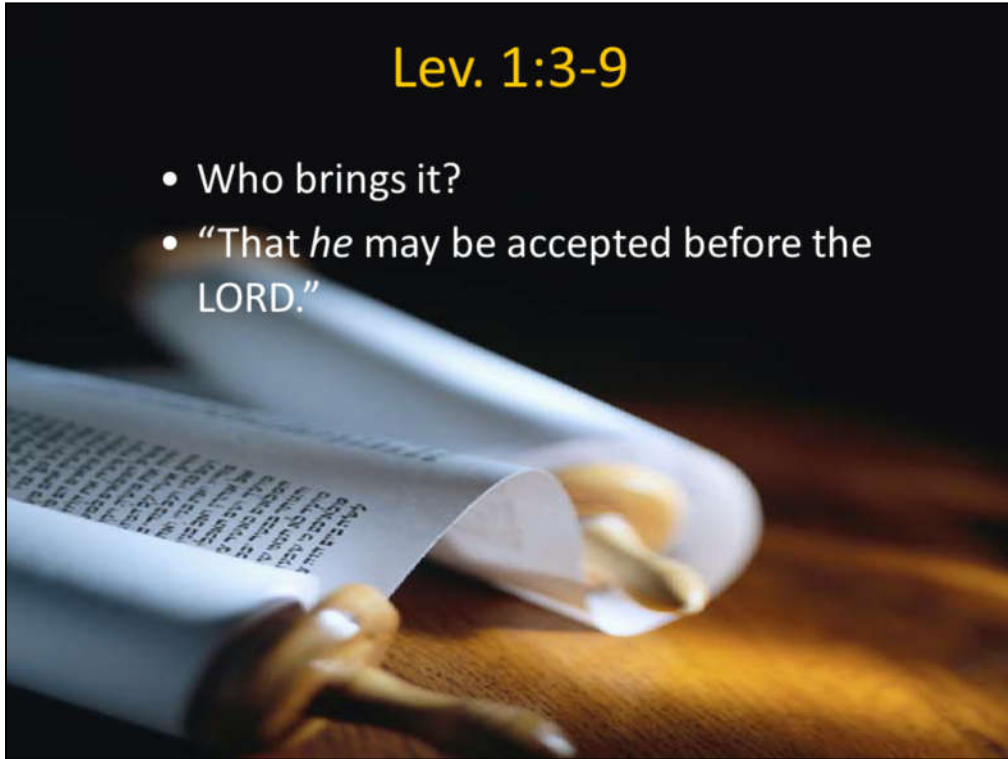
From one's own herd or flock. (again, this shows the personal connection between the one who offers it, and the offering itself)

The animal represents the family that it comes from. Since it is connected to them, they receive the benefits from the sacrifice.

-Much like in the Lord's Supper when the words, "Shed *for you*, for the forgiveness of sins." are spoken. Makes it personal

Lev. 1:3-9

- Who brings it?
- “That *he* may be accepted before the LORD.”



“He” does. Likely the head of the household. Why?

Why is this phrase in here? Shouldn't it be that the offering is accepted? (The offering takes the place of the person and family)

Lev. 1:3-9

- Why lay the hand on the head?



To show ownership. This animal belongs to the family. It represents the family in this sacrifice.

Lev. 1:3-9



We always have a picture of a nice clean shiny altar. Why would that not be the case? (Bloody from the priest throwing the blood against it. v. 5)

Lev. 1:7-8



Why are priests like boy scouts? Always keeping the fire going. Arrange the parts of the sacrifice so they are turned to smoke.

Lev. 1:9a



-Read verse 9a

Why wash the entrails and legs? (These parts would be the dirtiest, covered in dirt and manure.)

Why is that a problem? (this is to be a **holy** sacrifice.)

What would be an equivalent for our service? (dirty chalice?)



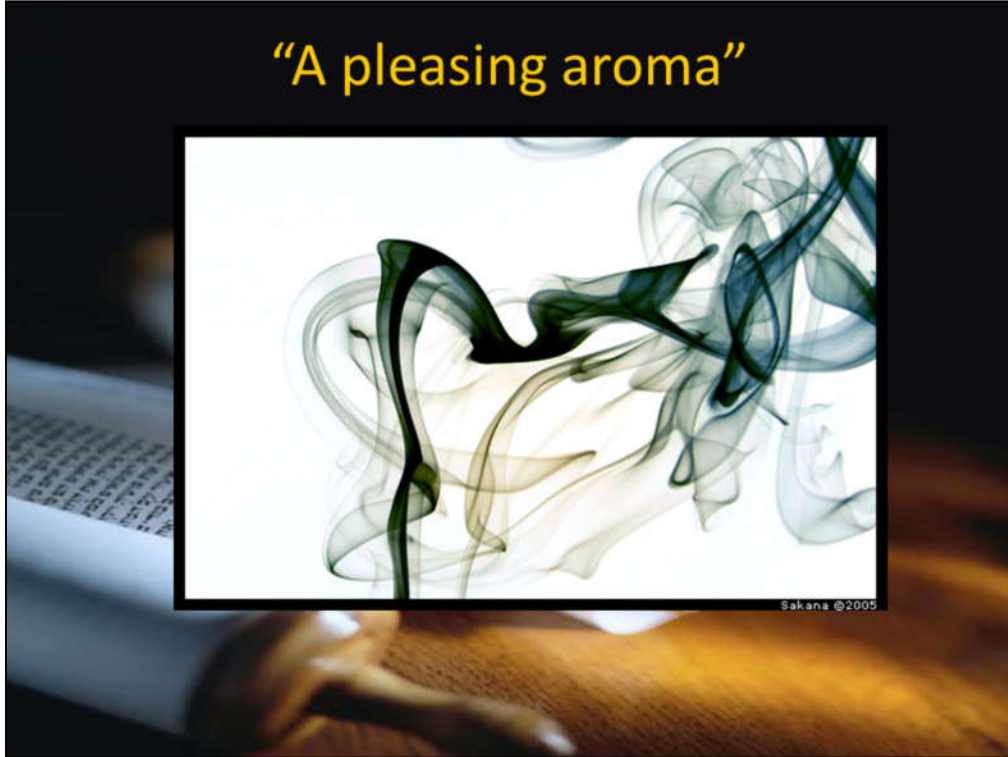
-Read verse 9

In verse nine we have a phrase that reoccurs throughout this section. The repetition of this phrase heightens it's important in the book.

Most English translations render it “Burn it,” or “burn it up” but literally the phrase is to “Make smoke.” How does this change how the reader or the listener pictures what is going on here?

{In the first case we focus on the verb, (burn) in the second we focus on the noun (smoke). How does that change the emphasis and why does it matter?}

“A pleasing aroma”



What does God mean when He says, “And the priest shall burn all of it on the altar, as a burnt offering, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord.” (Leviticus 1:9)

In the process of being turned to smoke, the offering leaves the human domain and rises to the heavenly realm. It ascends to God as a fragrant aroma that is pleasing to Him. When those who brought the offering saw it's ascent into the sky and smelled its sweet aroma, they were assured by the LORD that it was received by Him and accepted.

Psalm 141:2



Read Psalm 141:2 What is the imagery here and how does it connect with Leviticus?

Isaiah 65:1-5



Is smoke always pleasing to God? Why not? Read Is 65:1-5

Human beings do not determine which gifts are acceptable to the Lord, nor can they decide by themselves if He is indeed pleased with them.

The LORD Himself decides. His Word not only establishes which offering is to be presented, and how, but it also announces what He himself promises to accomplish through it.

Gen 4:1-4



Why was Able's sacrifice a pleasing aroma, but not Cain's?

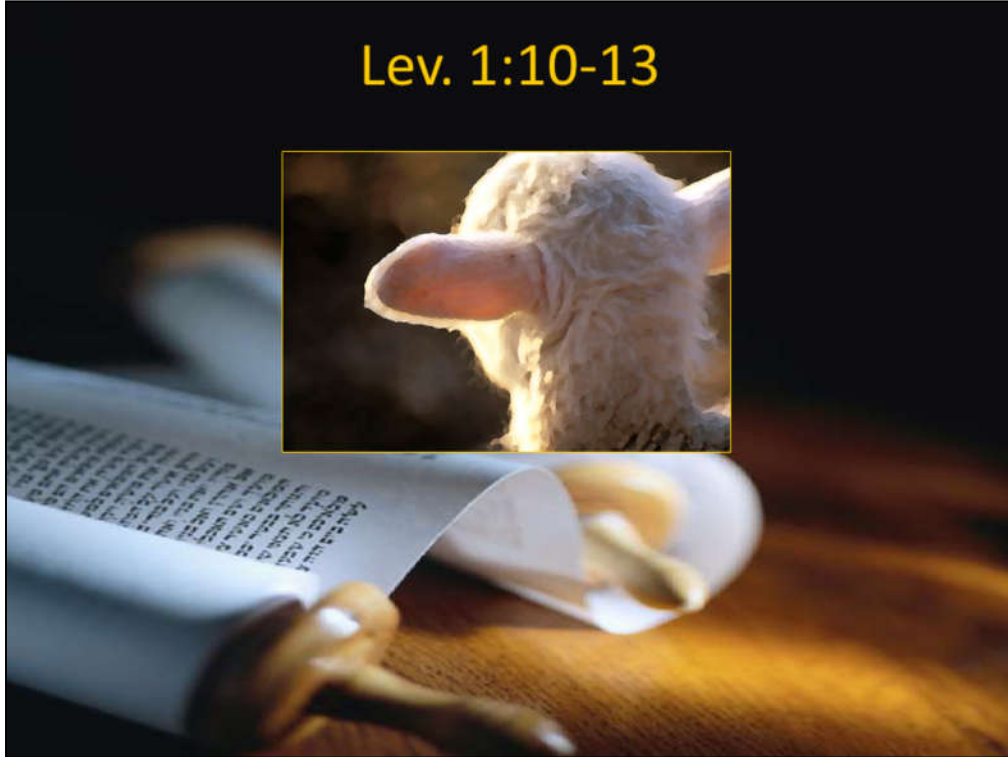
A clue can be found in how the author explains each offering:

Cain's is simply "fruit of the ground"

Able's is "*firstborn* of his flock and of their *fat portions*."

The two sacrifices seem to reflect the manner in which they are given. One is given out of obligation, the other out of gratitude. See also Heb 11:4

Lev. 1:10-13



Read verses 10-13 These deal with the slightly smaller animals; sheep & goats.

Why a male animal? Male signifies headship. Males aren't as essential for breeding. Possibly it also prefigures Christ the ultimate sacrifice.

Verse 13 has the "make smoke" phrase once again.

Lev. 1:14-17



What does the priest do with it? (make smoke)

Why would you offer a bird instead of a lamb or cow? (This enabled even the poor to offer a sacrifice –much like Joseph and Mary in Luke 2:22-24)

Why is there no laying on of the hand with the bird? (There already is a connection to the owner since he would bring it in his hands)

Who is involved?

Ex. 29:43-46



Who is involved in this sacrifice? How many people does it take to “make smoke?”

3. Who are they? 1) layman, 2) priest, 3) God (check out his nostrils –ready for smoke)

Too often we in the sacrifice we focus on what the people are doing (offering a sacrifice). But the primary function of the burnt offering was so that the Lord would graciously meet with His people. This is made clear in Ex 29:43-46 where God tells that He meets and sanctifies His people.

Who is involved?



How does that compare to our Lord's Supper? How many are involved?

Layman, priest/pastor, God (Christ)

Like the burnt offering sacrifice, the primary reason for the ritual is so that God can meet with His people and sanctify them.

Next week:

Stook the fire.



Next week we look at grain offerings.