

- Two weeks ago, we started a new quarter. We noted that we would first look at the way God told Israel to worship Him, then we will study the minor prophets, then look at the Intertestamental Period (also known as “400 Years of Silence”. We noted how towards the end of his life David made his son Solomon to be king, freeing him up to organize the people of the tribe of Levite. (1 Chronicles 23-25) Then apparently at some point during the reign of many bad kings, temple worship becomes completely neglected. King Hezekiah repaired the temple and got everyone through the land to start observing the Passover again. (2 Chronicles 29-32).
- This study covers two things: The way God instructed the Israelites to make sacrifices and how to atone for their sins. First, we will look at the way God said to make sacrifices
- God gives specific instructions for selecting, preparing and making burnt offerings. The offering could be either livestock or birds (if birds, only turtledoves or pigeons) “without blemish” and the Priests had to clean, prepare, and sacrifice it a certain way. (Leviticus 1)
- God also gives specific laws concerning grain offerings. He says they must be made with unleavened bread, they must always contain some salt, and must be sweetened with incense. He also tells them they must not use anything with honey. (Leviticus 2)
- There is some significance to these items. A little leaven in bread can affect the whole loaf, just as erroneous teaching can quickly spread. (Galatians 5:7-10) In pointing out that we can have a great effect on the world, Jesus said that we are the salt of the earth. (Matthew 5:12-13)
- God gives instructions for the peace offering too. They are very similar to the burnt offering commandments in many ways, except that birds are not sanctioned here but goats are. (Leviticus 3)
- God gives instructions for sin offerings next. There are two major differences with the sin offerings. First, God is the most detailed in the handling of these offerings, even to the point of describing which entrails to keep and which ones to discard and where; and second, God differentiates between acceptable sacrifices for different part of the population. God differentiates the acceptable sacrifices for priest, leaders, the whole congregation, and individual. (Leviticus 4)
- God continues his specific instructions on sin offerings, and covers those circumstances where a person does not tell the truth or cannot keep his word. (Leviticus 5:1-6)
- God even specifies what constitutes acceptable sacrifices for those who can’t afford to bring the normal sin offering. (Leviticus 5:7-13)
- God then makes specific provision for violating the terms of sacrifice He laid out, and how to make an acceptable sacrifice for not making an acceptable sacrifice. This is commonly known as the guilt offering. (Leviticus 5:14-19)
- God makes specific provisions to making up for ill-gotten gain (stealing from a neighbor for example). In addition to the normal offerings for sin, the penalty was full restoration of your ill-gotten gain plus 20%. (Leviticus 6:1-7)

- God gives specific instructions to the Priests on how to handle sin, guilt, grain, and burnt offerings. He says to keep fires burning all night, to burn their clothes and underwear with them, and then to smash the pots that had been used in association with them. (**Leviticus 6:8-30**)
- God is clear that certain offerings are to be consumed with fire and certain offerings are to be eaten by the priests, with the exception that they are not to eat anything that has come into contact with any unclean thing. He also says that they are to instruct the Israelites not to eat the fat from any of the livestock. (**Leviticus 7**)
- These laws and very specific dietary laws were given to the Israelites by God. Eventually, all food is going to be okay to eat, signifying that the NT Gospel (the new covenant) was not just for the Jews, but for everyone. (**Acts 11:1-10**)
- Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu were priests who decided it was okay to offer some incense at the incense altar which was apparently NOT of the type God had commanded them to offer, so they died by being burned alive immediately. (**Leviticus 10:1-2**)
- After their death, God explained in very great detail what Aaron needed to do, which included only to come into the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle one time each year. Significantly, he also used the word "atonement" here. (**Leviticus 16**)
- God instructs His people to observe a regular day of atonement. (**Leviticus 23:26-32**) This instruction by God is the basis for the Jewish festival of Yom Kippur, still celebrated today.
- Another word for atonement is reconciliation. Our sin (which we all commit) has separated us from God. (**Isaiah 59:2**) Today our atonement is through Christ's sacrifice. (**Romans 5:1-11**)

Questions

1. What animals were acceptable as burnt offerings to God?
2. Could the Israelites sacrifice animals that they knew weren't that good anyway?
3. What two things did God tell the Israelites not to use in their grain offerings?
4. What is the significance of leaven and salt?
5. What is the difference in the acceptable sacrifices between the burnt offerings and the peace offering?
6. Name two ways God's treatment of instructions in the sin offering are so different.
7. Name the four groups for which God differentiates sin offerings.
8. What are the specific conditions of sin for which God makes specific provision?
9. What is the guilt offering and how is that different from the other offerings?
10. Are we under the same dietary restrictions as the Israelites? Why or Why Not?
11. Who were Aaron's two sons who were struck dead by God and why did He do that?
12. Where could Aaron only go once a year?
13. Why is Aaron's atonement important and for what is it the basis?
14. What is another word for atonement?
15. What is atonement for our sins today?