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# **Burnt Offerings**

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

## Burnt Offerings.

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### Topics.

- Noah and Abraham's, and Isaac and Abraham's burnt offering.
- Individual and national burnt offerings.
- The difference between burnt offerings and sacrifices.
- Three types of burnt offerings.
- The New Testament and the burnt offering.

### OLD TESTAMENT TYPES OF BURNT OFFERINGS:

- Regular burnt offerings.
- Burnt offerings for cleansing.
- General information.

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## NOAH AND ABRAHAM'S BURNT OFFERINGS

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We should keep in mind, Old Testament Israelites understood the burnt offering in the light of what they knew about it, not in terms of what we know today. If we look at Noah's and Abraham's burnt offering, we get some insight into what they would have understood the burnt offering to signify.

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**Noah's burnt offering:** after all life had been destroyed by the flood (except what was in the ark), and after the water had subsided, we read:

- Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. <sup>21</sup> And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. <sup>22</sup> While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." (Gen. 8:20-22).

Here we see the expression, "burnt offering" (v8) is the same as that found in Leviticus chapter one, and we read of Noah offering, "clean" animals and birds (Gen. 8:20), and the offering is said to be a "soothing aroma" to God (Gen. 8:21), both these expressions are frequently found in Leviticus (esp. Lev. 1:9, 13, 17). The burnt offering Noah offered was the basis for God's covenant promise that He would never again destroy every living thing by a flood (Gen. 8:21). The Israelites would have seen Noah's burnt offering signified a means of avoiding God's wrath and of obtaining His favour.

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## ISAAC AND ABRAHAM'S BURNT OFFERING

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God spoke to Abram saying:

- Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you. (Genesis 22:2).

Abram was willing to sacrifice his only son because he believed that God would raise him from the dead.

- He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. <sup>20</sup> No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup> fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. (Rom. 4:19-21).
- He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. (Heb. 11:19).

God stopped Abram from slaying his son, and provided a ram in his place.

- Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. (Gen. 22:13).

The following promise and covenant God made with Abram involved the death and resurrection of Abraham's offspring.

- **Genesis 12:1-3:** Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonours you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

The sacrificial animal (the burnt offering) died in place of the man; the reason Isaac did not die was because God provided an animal to take his place. Understanding this truth, the burnt offering would have signified to Old Testament believers the following two things:

1. Every time they placed their hand on the head of the sacrificial animal, they would have known that the animal was dying in their place, in the same way that the ram died in the place of Isaac.
2. The death of Isaac, which was prevented by the sacrifice of the ram, signified something far greater would take place in the future.

Obviously, all of this is clear to us today, but it was obscure to Old Testament Israelite.

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## INDIVIDUAL AND NATIONAL BURNT OFFERINGS

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Burnt offerings are one of the most common offerings, and are not only offered on a vast variety of occasions, but also often offered with another sacrifice or offering. The primary purpose of Leviticus chapter one is to instruct the people of Israel how the burnt offering was to be offered, and when it was to be offered. In Scripture there are two types of burnt offerings, individual and national:

**Individual burnt offerings:** are personal offerings, that are offered voluntarily by individual Israelites.

- **Leviticus 1:2:** Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of livestock from the herd or from the flock.

From this verse onward, "he" is used, referring to an individual male Israelite, who comes with his burnt offering. It appears that the man would make these offerings to the LORD on behalf of his family, as Job did for his family:

- **Job 1:5:** When the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and consecrate them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, “It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.” Thus Job did continually.

**National burnt offerings:** though there are burnt offerings made on behalf of the nation, they are nevertheless viewed as a personal and individual offering. Much like a church may take up an offering from their congregation to gift to brothers and sisters struggling in third world countries, would be viewed from God’s eyes as personal and individual offerings, for it is a multitude of individual people giving that makes up the final total amount.

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## THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BURNT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES

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**Burnt offerings:** the burnt offering was a whole burnt offering, which was totally consumed on the altar. Neither the person offering it, nor the priest ate any part of the meat, for it was all burned in the fire. However, the hide of the animal was the priest’s remuneration (Leviticus 7:8).

**Sacrifices:** in addition to being pleasing to God, most of the sacrifices benefited the person offering it and in most cases the priests. The sacrifice (short for sacrifice of well-being) was partly burnt, and most of it eaten, by the person offering it, and the priest at a sacrificial meal.

**The value of a sacrifice:** all animals were to be a male without blemish, it could be:

- A bull.
- A sheep.
- A goat.

These were all livestock of considerable value, unlike the birds. The animal was to be young, not old, and unproductive, which means it would begin to pay for its keep. To offer up an animal that the owner had raised that was about to be productive would be a great sacrifice, especially since it was without blemish, for this means the animal would be in pristine health and such animals were greatly valued for they were fit for years of work.

**The offering process:** the person making the offering, generally puts the animal to death and cuts it up, making it a very personal experience and no doubt made a lasting impression on the mind and heart of the person making the sacrifice. The priest handled the sprinkling of its blood and its burning on the altar of sacrifice.

**Purpose of burnt offerings:** the purpose of the burnt offering was to make atonement for the sin of the Israelite offering it, and by it gain God’s acceptance. The Israelite offering it laid his hands upon the animal, identifying his sins with it, so that when the animal was slain (by the hand of the Israelite offering it), it died for the sins of the person offering it. The burnt offering was not so much for the offerer’s specific sins (these are dealt with by other sacrifices), but rather for the offerer’s general state of sinfulness. Burnt offerings were not so much about gaining forgiveness for a particular and specific sin, but to remind the Israelite offering it of their depravity, and make atonement for his sinfulness in the flesh (i.e., sinful human nature). This is because it is not a single specific sin that separates us from God, but our individual sinful fallen state, it seems that the burnt offering provided a divine solution for man’s fallen sinful condition.

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## THREE TYPES OF BURNT OFFERINGS

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**NOTE:** a burnt offering was offered as a gift, the following covers the following three burnt offerings:

1. A bull.
2. A sheep or a goat.
3. A bird (a turtle dove or pigeon).

**1. A burnt offering of a bull from livestock was to be:**

- A male without blemish from their own herd or from the flock.
- The man was to take the offering to the entrance of the tent of meeting, so he would be accepted before the LORD.
- The man was to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering and the offering would be accepted to make atonement for him.
- Then the man was to kill the bull before the LORD (i.e., before the entrance of the tent of meeting).
- Aaron's sons the priests were to take the blood and throw it against the sides of the altar, that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting in the outer court.
- The man was then to flay the burnt offering and cut it into pieces.
- Aaron's sons the priests were to arrange the head and fat on the wood that was on the fire on the altar.
- The man was to wash its entrails and legs with water.
- The priest was then to burn all of the head, fat, entrails, and legs on the altar, as a burnt offering, and food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD. (Lev. 1:1-9).

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**2. A burnt offering from the flock of sheep or goats was to be:**

- A male without blemish.
- The man was to kill it on the north side of the altar before the LORD.
- Aaron's sons the priests were then to throw its blood against the sides of the altar.
- The man was to cut it into pieces, with its head and its fat.
- The priest was to arrange the head and fat on the wood that was on the fire on the altar.
- The man was to wash the entrails and the legs with water.
- The priest was then to offer all of it, and burn it on the altar, for a burnt offering, and food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD. (Leviticus 1:10-13).

**3. A burnt offering of birds (turtledove or a pigeon)**

- The man was to bring a turtledove or a pigeon to the priest.

- The priest was to take the turtledove or pigeon to the altar and wring off its head and burn its head on the altar, then drain its blood out on the side of the altar.
- The man was to remove its crop with its contents and cast it on the east side of the altar, in the place for ashes, then tear it open by its wings, careful not sever it completely.
- The priest was then to burn it on the wood on the fire that was on the altar, for a burnt offering, and food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD. (Lev. 1:14-17).

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## THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE BURNT OFFERING

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From the very beginning of Jesus ministry John, the Baptist indicated Jesus was the ultimate fulfilment of the burnt offering, when he greeted him with the following words:

- The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29).

Now that Christ has come as the Lamb of God and died “once for all” there is no longer any need for the burnt offering.

The burnt offering (and the others) was symbolic in the sense that it:

1. Represented and portrayed, in advance, the ultimate burnt offering, the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Symbolized the faith of Old Testament believers in God’s provision for their sins, and for access to Him.
3. Symbolized the Old Testament believer’s faith in God, and their intention to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

The Israelite’s worship often deteriorated to ritualism when they offered their sacrifices. When this happened, the prophets rebuked the Israelites for their hypocrisy. The prophet Micah said:

- With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? <sup>7</sup> Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” <sup>8</sup> He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:6-8).

We must be careful we do not fall into the same trap, whereby our faith just become a routine of practicing religious customs and traditions and adhering to church attendance. The only burnt offering for us today that can atone for sin has been made by Christ. Though this is true there are lessons that applied to an Israelite offering a burnt offering during the Old Testament, that they were to learn, and that we can learn today, following are some of these lessons:

1. We should keep in mind our own depravity (i.e., our fallen human nature, also called the flesh), because we need to examine our motives and actions. For though we are saved we will not be free from sin’s presence until we are in the presence of God, with transformed immortal bodies. Our present sinful condition is the whole reason we must die, and be raised in in a different form. (1 Cor. 15).

2. God was very meticulous in laying down rules and regulations for the burnt offering, and it was only by the tabernacle, the priesthood, and the sacrifices that they could approach God. Today, we can only approach God through the Lord Jesus Christ. He made this truth very clear, saying:

- I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6).

Whoever wishes to approach God, can only do so only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, for there is no other way that is acceptable to God.

3. The highest goal of those offering a burnt offering sacrifice was to gain God's acceptance. They counted making such a sacrifice worth the price to gain God's favour. The lesson for us to learn here, is that seeking God's approval and pleasing Him should be our highest goal regardless of the sacrifice.

4. Those offering a burnt offering sacrifice offered it to gain God's acceptance, this was their highest goal, and they counted making such a sacrifice worth the price to gain God's favour. The lesson for us to learn, is that seeking God's approval and pleasing Him should be our highest goal regardless of the sacrifice.

5. The sinful state of man can only be dealt with by the shedding of innocent blood, and man's sin can only be atoned for by a sacrificial victim.

6. The person who benefited from the death of the sacrificial animal had to identify themselves with the animal by placing their hand on it, symbolising that the innocent animal was killed in their place. Other than identifying with the sacrificial animal in this way, there was no benefit to the person offering it. From this we learn that we must personally identify ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ to be redeemed, and atonement made.

7. The whole burnt offering was a complete sacrifice, meaning the entire animal was burnt and offered up to God. The only thing the person offering it gained was that they were found acceptable to God. The lesson we can learn from this, is that the type of sacrifice we should make, when we give ourselves to God, is to give our whole life and heart, and not just a part of them.

**NOTE:** it is interesting to notice the words of John the Baptist since he did not say,

- Who takes away the sins (plural) of the world.

But rather:

- Who takes away the sin of the world.

The burnt offering, was not limited to specific sins, but rather dealt with the following three aspects of sin:

1. The depravity of man (i.e., sin in the flesh).
2. Sinfulness in general.
3. Specific sins.

Likewise, Christ as the Lamb of God, deals with the same three aspects of sin, which means that there is no sin that cannot be covered by the blood of Christ.

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## OLD TESTAMENT TYPES OF BURNT OFFERINGS

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### REGULAR BURNT OFFERINGS

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Regular burnt offerings were to be offered, on the following occasions:

Every day, in the morning and the evening.

- **Exodus 29:38–42:** “Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day regularly. <sup>39</sup> One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight. <sup>40</sup> And with the first lamb a tenth measure of fine flour mingled with a fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering. <sup>41</sup> The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it a grain offering and its drink offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the LORD. <sup>42</sup> It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there.
- **Numbers 28:3:** And you shall say to them, This is the food offering that you shall offer to the LORD: two male lambs a year old without blemish, day by day, as a regular offering.
- **Numbers 28:6:** It is a regular burnt offering, which was ordained at Mount Sinai for a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the LORD.
- **2 Chronicles 2:4:** Behold, I am about to build a house for the name of the LORD my God and dedicate it to him for the burning of incense of sweet spices before him, and for the regular arrangement of the showbread, and for burnt offerings morning and evening, on the Sabbaths and the new moons and the appointed feasts of the LORD our God, as ordained forever for Israel.

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Each Sabbath Day.

- **Numbers 28:9–10:** “On the Sabbath day, two male lambs a year old without blemish, and two tenths of an ephah of fine flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, and its drink offering: 10 this is the burnt offering of every Sabbath, besides the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

An additional burnt offering was to be offered at the beginning of each month.

- **Numbers 28:11:** “At the beginnings of your months, you shall offer a burnt offering to the LORD: two bulls from the herd, one ram, seven male lambs a year old without blemish;

At celebration of Passover on 14th day of the 1st month. (Num. 28:16).

- **Numbers 28:16:** “On the fourteenth day of the first month is the LORD’s Passover,

With new grain offering at Feast of Weeks.

- **Numbers 28:27:** but offer a burnt offering, with a pleasing aroma to the LORD: two bulls from the herd, one ram, seven male lambs a year old;

At the feast of trumpets, on sacred day in the 7th month.

- **Numbers 29:1:** “On the first day of the seventh month you shall have a holy convocation. You shall not do any ordinary work. It is a day for you to blow the trumpets,

At the celebration of the new moon.

- **Numbers 29:6:** besides the burnt offering of the new moon, and its grain offering, and the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offering, according to the rule for them, for a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the LORD.



Many burnt offerings were offered with another sacrifice, some of these were:

The guilt offering.

- **Leviticus 5:7:** “But if he cannot afford a lamb, then he shall bring to the LORD as his compensation for the sin that he has committed two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.
- **Leviticus 5:10:** Then he shall offer the second for a burnt offering according to the rule. And the priest shall make atonement for him for the sin that he has committed, and he shall be forgiven.
- **Leviticus 5:17–18:** “If anyone sins, doing any of the things that by the LORD’s commandments ought not to be done, though he did not know it, then realizes his guilt, he shall bear his iniquity.<sup>18</sup> He shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish out of the flock, or its equivalent, for a guilt offering, and the priest shall make atonement for him for the mistake that he made unintentionally, and he shall be forgiven.

The sin offering.

- **Leviticus 5:7:** “But if he cannot afford a lamb, then he shall bring to the LORD as his compensation for the sin that he has committed two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.
- **Leviticus 6:25:** “Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering. In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before the LORD; it is most holy.
- **Leviticus 9:2–3:** and he said to Aaron, “Take for yourself a bull calf for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, both without blemish, and offer them before the LORD.<sup>3</sup> And say to the people of Israel, ‘Take a male goat for a sin offering, and a calf and a lamb, both a year old without blemish, for a burnt offering,
- **Leviticus 9:7:** Then Moses said to Aaron, “Draw near to the altar and offer your sin offering and your burnt offering and make atonement for yourself and for the people, and bring the offering of the people and make atonement for them, as the LORD has commanded.”
- **Leviticus 12:6–8:** “And when the days of her purifying are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting a lamb a year old for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering,<sup>7</sup> and he shall offer it before the LORD and make atonement for her. Then she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, either male or female.<sup>8</sup> And if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean.”

The votive (i.e., freewill offering).

- **Leviticus 22:18:** “Speak to Aaron and his sons and all the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of the house of Israel or of the sojourners in Israel presents a burnt offering as his offering, for any of their vows or freewill offerings that they offer to the LORD,

The sheaf offering.

- **Leviticus 22:12:** If a priest’s daughter marries a layman, she shall not eat of the contribution of the holy things.

The new grain offering.

- **Leviticus 23:15–22:** “You shall count seven full weeks from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering.<sup>16</sup> You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath. Then you shall present a grain offering of new grain to the LORD.<sup>17</sup> You shall bring from your dwelling places two loaves of bread to be waved, made of two tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour, and they shall be baked with leaven, as firstfruits to the LORD.<sup>18</sup> And you shall present with the bread seven lambs a year old without blemish, and one bull from the herd and two rams. They shall

be a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD. <sup>19</sup> And you shall offer one male goat for a sin offering, and two male lambs a year old as a sacrifice of peace offerings. <sup>20</sup> And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. <sup>21</sup> And you shall make a proclamation on the same day. You shall hold a holy convocation. You shall not do any ordinary work. It is a statute forever in all your dwelling places throughout your generations. <sup>22</sup> “And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.”

- **Leviticus 23:18:** And you shall present with the bread seven lambs a year old without blemish, and one bull from the herd and two rams. They shall be a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the LORD.

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## BURNT OFFERINGS FOR CLEANSING

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The burnt offering was also to be offered in the cleansing of:

A woman’s uncleanness as a result of child-bearing (both a sin offering and a burnt offering were required).

- **Leviticus 12:6–8:** “And when the days of her purifying are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting a lamb a year old for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering, <sup>7</sup> and he shall offer it before the LORD and make atonement for her. Then she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, either male or female. <sup>8</sup> And if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean.”

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A leper.

- **Leviticus 14:19–20:** The priest shall offer the sin offering, to make atonement for him who is to be cleansed from his uncleanness. And afterward he shall kill the burnt offering. <sup>20</sup> And the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be clean.

A man with a discharge (with a sin offering).

- **Leviticus 15:14–15:** And on the eighth day he shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and come before the LORD to the entrance of the tent of meeting and give them to the priest. <sup>15</sup> And the priest shall use them, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him before the LORD for his discharge.

A woman with an abnormal discharge (with a sin offering).

- **Leviticus 15:30:** And the priest shall use one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. And the priest shall make atonement for her before the LORD for her unclean discharge.

A Nazarite who was unintentionally defiled by contact with a dead body.

- **Numbers 6:11:** and the priest shall offer one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering, and make atonement for him, because he sinned by reason of the dead body. And he shall consecrate his head that same day
- **Numbers 6:14:** and he shall bring his gift to the LORD, one male lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb a year old without blemish as a sin offering, and one ram without blemish as a peace offering,

A congregation that unwittingly failed to observe one of God’s commands, and was thereby defiled, a burnt offering was required for the purification of the congregation.

- **Numbers 15:22–26:** “But if you sin unintentionally, and do not observe all these commandments that the LORD has spoken to Moses, <sup>23</sup> all that the LORD has commanded you by Moses, from the day that the LORD gave commandment, and onward throughout your generations, <sup>24</sup> then if it was done unintentionally without the knowledge of the congregation, all the congregation shall offer one bull from the herd for a burnt offering, a pleasing aroma to the LORD, with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the rule, and one male goat for a sin offering. <sup>25</sup> And the priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the people of Israel, and they shall be forgiven, because it was a mistake, and they have brought their offering, a food offering to the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD for their mistake. <sup>26</sup> And all the congregation of the people of Israel shall be forgiven, and the stranger who sojourns among them, because the whole population was involved in the mistake.

Aaron.

- **Leviticus 16:3:** But in this way Aaron shall come into the Holy Place: with a bull from the herd for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.
- **Leviticus 16:5:** And he shall take from the congregation of the people of Israel two male goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.
- **Leviticus 16:24:** And he shall bathe his body in water in a holy place and put on his garments and come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people and make atonement for himself and for the people.
- The Levites.
- **Numbers 8:12:** Then the Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, and you shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering to the LORD to make atonement for the Levites.

In addition to this, there were special times when the burnt offering was appropriate, and times when this sacrifice could be offered voluntarily.

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**NOTE:** this sacrifice was the most common of all sacrifices in Israel:

The reason for describing the burnt offering first is that it was the commonest of all the sacrifices, performed every morning and evening, and more frequently on holy days.

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

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Details of burnt offerings:

- They were the first offering, and one of the most significant.
- They are described (along with the others) in (Leviticus chapters 1-7).
- They were offered on the bronze altar of burnt offering in the outer court.

God gave the plans for the bronze altar of burnt offering to Moses.

- **Exodus 27:1–8:** “You shall make the altar of acacia wood (shittim wood in KJV), five cubits long and five cubits broad. The altar shall be square, and its height shall be three cubits. <sup>2</sup> And you shall make horns for it on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze (brass in KJV). <sup>3</sup> You shall make pots for it to receive its ashes, and shovels and basins and forks and fire pans. You shall make all its utensils of bronze (brass in KJV). <sup>4</sup> You shall also make for it a grating, a network of bronze (brass in KJV), and on the net you shall make four bronze (brass in KJV) rings at its four corners. <sup>5</sup> And you shall set it under the ledge of the altar so that the net extends halfway down the altar. <sup>6</sup> And you shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood

(shittim wood in KJV), and overlay them with bronze (brass in KJV). <sup>7</sup> And the poles shall be put through the rings, so that the poles are on the two sides of the altar when it is carried. <sup>8</sup> You shall make it hollow, with boards. As it has been shown you on the mountain, so shall it be made.

- **Exodus 38:1–7:** He made the altar of burnt offering of acacia wood (shittim wood in KJV). Five cubits was its length, and five cubits its breadth. It was square, and three cubits was its height. <sup>2</sup> He made horns for it on its four corners. Its horns were of one piece with it, and he overlaid it with bronze (brass in KJV). <sup>3</sup> And he made all the utensils of the altar, the pots, the shovels, the basins, the forks, and the fire pans. He made all its utensils of bronze. <sup>4</sup> And he made for the altar a grating, a network of bronze (brass in KJV), under its ledge, extending halfway down. <sup>5</sup> He cast four rings on the four corners of the bronze (brass in KJV) grating as holders for the poles. <sup>6</sup> He made the poles of acacia wood (shittim wood in KJV) and overlaid them with bronze (brass in KJV). <sup>7</sup> And he put the poles through the rings on the sides of the altar to carry it with them. He made it hollow, with boards.

The bronze altar of burnt offering was square, it was 5 cubits in length and in breadth, and 3 cubits in height. It was made of shittim (acacia) wood, and was overlaid with brass (bronze). Taking a cubic to be 450mm long, the length and width of the bronze altar of burnt offering would be 2.25 metres, and its height would be 1.350 metres. Upon entering through the gate of the courtyard toward the tent of the tabernacle the altar of burnt offering would be the first item to be seen. On the left of the bronze altar of burnt offering was the ash heap (where the ashes from the altar were placed).

- **Leviticus 1:16:** He shall remove its crop with its contents and cast it beside the altar on the east side, in the place for ashes.

Between the altar and the tabernacle doorway was the bronze laver where Aaron and his sons cleansed themselves.

- **Exodus 30:17–21:** The LORD said to Moses, <sup>18</sup> “You shall also make a basin of bronze (brass in KJV), with its stand of bronze (brass in KJV), for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it, <sup>19</sup> with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet. <sup>20</sup> When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to the LORD, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. <sup>21</sup> They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It shall be a statute forever to them, even to him and to his offspring throughout their generations.”
- **Exodus 38:8:** He made the basin of bronze (brass in KJV) and its stand of bronze (brass in KJV), from the mirrors of the ministering women who ministered in the entrance of the tent of meeting.

The bronze altar of burnt offering was located before and near to the entrance of the tabernacle, and the sacrifices offered on the altar enabled those offering them to draw near to God whose presence dwelt within the tabernacle, which is why it is often said, they were offered before the LORD.

### **The law of the burnt offering is found in the following verses:**

- **Leviticus 6:8–13:** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>9</sup> “Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering. The burnt offering shall be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it. <sup>10</sup> And the priest shall put on his linen garment and put his linen undergarment on his body, and he shall take up the ashes to which the fire has reduced the burnt offering on the altar and put them beside the altar. <sup>11</sup> Then he shall take off his garments and put on other garments and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place. <sup>12</sup> The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not go out. The priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and he shall arrange the burnt offering on it and shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings. <sup>13</sup> Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.

The first burnt offering was offered by Noah of every clean animal, after the waters of the flood had subsided.

- **Genesis 8:20:** Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

God instructed Abraham to offer up Isaac as a burnt offering.

- **Genesis 22:2:** the LORD said, “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”

The ram that Abram offered in Isaac’s place was offered as a burnt offering:

- **Genesis 22:13:** And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son.

When Moses told Pharaoh that Israel must take their cattle with them into the wilderness to worship their God, it was because they needed their cattle to offer burnt offerings.

- **Exodus 10:25–26:** But Moses said, “You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God. 26 Our livestock also must go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we must take of them to serve the LORD our God, and we do not know with what we must serve the LORD until we arrive there.”

When Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, heard of all the goodness, God had done for Moses, he offered a burnt offering to God.

- **Exodus 18:1:** Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses’ father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people, how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt.
- **Exodus 18:12:** And Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and sacrifices to God; and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses’ father-in-law before God.

The Israelites offered up burnt offerings in conjunction with their meeting with God and receiving His covenant on Mt. Sinai.

- **Exodus 20:24:** An altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you.
- **Exodus 24:5:** And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD.

When the people of Israel worshipped the golden calf, they offered up burnt offerings as a part of their false worship.

- **Exodus 32:6:** And they rose up early the next day and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play.

It is very likely these earlier burnt offerings provided the Israelites with the key to understanding the meaning and significance of the burnt offering recorded in Leviticus chapter one.

- A burnt offering was entirely burnt on the altar, because it was a tribute to God.
- A burnt offering was a whole burnt offering, the sacrifice was offered to God, and totally burned on the altar.
- A burnt offering is called burnt offerings because they are offerings, that are offered by fire.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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