THE FIVE OFFERINGS OF LEVITICUS (Like the Five Fingers of our Hands)

Main Text: Leviticus Chapters 1-6

A. Sweet-Savor Offerings (Show the Person of Christ) - Chapters 1-3

i. The Burnt Offering (Shows Christ as our Substitute - we could have gone to Hell and burn forever)

1. Offering of a Bullock
   a. The animal’s body was burnt entirely in the fire
   b. It was a free will offering (1: 2-3) - signifying yielded-ness or surrender of life and will to God. This is consecration. Christ freely gives His life - Jn.10:15-18. So must we - Rom.12: 1; 2Cor.9: 6-7.
   c. It must be without blemish - they must give something of value, not worthless (1:3). This also signifies the purity of Christ and the holy life we His people should live (Rom.12: 1; 1Pet.1: 19).
   d. It was for an atonement (1: 4). The offerer must put his hand on its head to identify with it.
   e. The animal must be killed before the Lord - As Christians, our flesh must be crucified with its corrupt affections and lusts - Gal.2: 20; 5: 24-26.
   f. It was deliberate and done meditatively by sprinkling of blood (1:4-5).
   g. It was offered at the door - as someone unworthy to enter
   h. The hide was given to the priest (1:6; 7:8)
   i. It is sweet-savor offering as it demonstrates obedience and it's acceptable to God - Rom.12: 1; 1Pet.2: 5. An offering or sacrifice may not be accepted by God e.g. Cain's sacrifice.
   j. The importance of this offering is demonstrated in the sense that no one is exempted from it. Sacrifice must be by ability and according to God's grace and abundance in our lives (Lk.12: 48). Provision is then made for those who were poor and could not afford a bullock to offer sheep or goat or even turtledoves or young pigeons.

2. Offering of Sheep and Goats (1: 10-13) Lamb without spot or blemish as Christ I Peter 1:19

3. Offering of Fowls (1:14-17) - Turtledoves or Young Pigeons

ii. The Meal or Meat Offering (Shows the Loveliness of Christ & As The Bread of Life - Jn.6: 30-35) - Chapter 2: 1-17.

1. The Meal or Meat Offering follows the Burnt Offering - this is the logical sequence for we cannot partake in the Lord's Table until our sins have been atoned for by the sacrifice of the blood of Christ.
2. This sacrifice also denote our obligation to God for His blessings as well as our good works.
3. The priest burned a portion and retained the greater balance to be eaten (2:2-3). That's why it's called meal or meat offering.
4. Guidelines for offering of unleavened cakes & wafers (biscuits, or pancakes (2:4-10)
5. Leaven and honey forbidden to be burned on the altar (2:11). Leaven and honey generally denote sin. While leaven represents pride, malice and hypocrisy, honey represents lust or sensual pleasure. None of these things was in Christ and should not be in us as Christians too.
6. Guidelines for offering of first fruits at harvest time (2:12). This shows putting God first in all things and our appreciation of the fact that all goodness and blessing come from Him (Deut.8: 18; Ps.127: 1-2; 144: 1; Prov.3: 9) and it is required that we bring things that are new, fresh and of the best
quality to God.
Same goes for our devotion and consecration to God - Ps.63: 1; Eccle.12: 1. The newer or earlier, the better! That also is the lesson of Quiet Time early in the morning.

7. Salt is required in all the Offerings (2:13). This shows that those sacrifices in themselves were unsavory (that is tasteless or unpleasant) to God unless seasoned by salt. All religious services must be seasoned with love and grace - 1Cor.13: 1-3; Eph.4: 29-32. Christianity is the salt of the earth (Matt.5: 13). Christians are the only ones who can show the world the love and grace of God - Rom.12: 14-21.

8. The grain was to be offered with frankincense and oil (2:14-16). The frankincense denotes the mediation and intercession of Christ before God for our prayers and services to be accepted - Jn.16: 23; Heb.7: 25. The Oil represents God's grace and anointing.

iii. The Peace Offering (Shows Christ as Our Peace) - Chapter 3.

1. The Peace Offerings regard God as the Giver of all good things and were offered by way of thanksgiving to God. These offerings were divided between the altar, the priest, and the owner. They were called peace-offerings because in them, God and His people, as it were had a feast together as a mark of friendship. It is offered as a means of supplication or seeking for God's favor.


3. The Peace Offerings also show us the need to offer to God the sacrifice of praise continually.

4. Peace Offerings consist of the following:
   a. Offering of the herd – male or female - bull, calf, cow or ox - (3:1-5).
   b. Offering of the flock – lamb (3:6-11)
   c. Offering of goat (3:12-16)

5. It was forbidden for the people to eat fat or blood (3:17) because they were God's part or portion of every sacrifice - they belong to God and so are sacred. This also differentiated and separated the Israelites from all other nations and also the Christians from the unbelievers who don't know any difference between common and sacred things (Matt.7: 6).

B. The Non-sweet savor Offerings (These have to do with the work of Christ on the cross - chapters 4-5). They consist:
   1. **Sin Offering** (This shows sin as a nature) - chapter 4.

   a. **Sin Offering for Committed Sins 4: 1-12**: Sin offerings are offered for sins of commission in particular. These are things which ought not to have been done in the first place but which were done. Omissions are sins too and must be judged but what is omitted at a time can be done again. A sin of commission cannot be recalled or re-done. Usually, they are sins committed through ignorance but ignorance is not an excuse at law. The law begins with the case of an anointed priest as he is human and never infallible like God.

   b. **Guidelines for Sin Offerings 4: 13-21**: The animal was taken outside the camp and burned to ashes as a sign of putting away sin as a detestable thing. This explains why Jesus Christ - our Sin Offering was offered outside the City - Heb.13: 11-13. If leaders mistakenly caused the people to sin, they must bring an offering so that God's wrath would not come upon the whole congregation. For such sacrifices, the elders were to lay their hands on the heads of the animals. The guiltless animal bears the people's sin, atonement is made and the sin is forgiven.

   c. **Leaders are Accountable also 4: 22-26**: Leaders themselves are accountable to God - the Ultimate Ruler, the King of kings, Lord of lords, the Great High Priest and Chief Shepherd of the flock - Rom.14:
12. A leader's sin committed ignorantly is made known either by his conscience or by the reproof of his friends and all of us however highly placed should appreciate and submit to such.

**Discussion:** How can we help our leaders to be accountable and practice this in Nigeria?

d. **Sin Offerings for Common People - 4: 27-35:** Ignorance is no excuse at law so the ignorant sin of a common person needed a sacrifice too. According to Matthew Henry, "The greatest is not above, the meanest is not below Divine justice." Nobody is above the law - whether great or small, rich or poor, young or old. All these laws governing the Sin Offerings helped the Israelites to hate sin and guard against it. In addition for us as Christians, they should help us to value the great and true sacrifice of Jesus Christ as our Sin Offering. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, which the blood of bulls and goats could not take away (Heb.10: 4). We must not become proud, slothful or careless to fall into sin. We therefore need frequent self-examination, with serious study of the Bible and earnest prayer for the conviction of the Holy Spirit to detect our ignorant sins, repent of such and receive God's forgiveness through the blood of Christ (Jn.16: 7-8).

2. **Trespass Offering** (This shows sin as an act) - chapter 5.
   a. **Various Trespasses - 5: 1-13:** The offences here are:
      1. Concealing the truth or half truth for fear of offending someone when as a witness you are expected to speak the whole truth and nothing but the truth
      2. Touching anything unclean either carelessly or by contempt and forgets to wash himself as required by law
      3. Rash swearing or vow to do or not to do something (e.g. Jephthah's vow - Judg.11; Shimei's broken promise - 1Kg.2: 36-46). We must watch out against such sins - Eccle.5: 1-7; Jam.1: 19; 5: 12.
         In this case, the offender must confess his sin and pray for pardon in addition to bringing his offering. His confession must be specific and not generalized (e.g. speaking in tongues).
         Provision is again made for the poor to offer either some flour or two Turtle doves. If the sinner offered two doves, one was offered as a Sin Offering and the other for a Burnt Offering to teach that we must first make peace with God before our service can be accepted before Him.
         If the sinner offered flour, it must not be made tasty by oil or be given sweet smell by frankincense.
         All this were to caution against sin knowing how expensive and troublesome it was to make atonement.
   b. **Trespasses Against the Lord - 5: 14-19:**
      A man was made to offer this sacrifice if he unknowingly used anything dedicated to God. This shows the broadness of God's laws just as occasion for sin in this world are so many.
      We need to fear and pray always so we would not fall into sin (Matt.26: 41). We must constantly confess our sins and seek forgiveness through the blood of Christ.
      Yet every pardoned sinner must know that sin is evil and so abhor and dread it (1Cor.6: 18; 10: 14; 1Thess.4: 3; 5: 22; 2Tim.2: 22).
   c. **Dealing Falsely with a Neighbor - 6: 1-7:**
      The offences here relate to frauds, thefts and deceits against neighbors.
      Although these sins relate to neighbors, they're still seen as sins against God. This is why all the laws are summarized in loving God with all our hearts and loving our neighbors as ourselves.
      It is clear here that all frauds are usually accompanied with lies and/or false oaths and they are sins before God.
      The sinner is first required to restitute and add 20% of the value of the substance involved.
      He is required to offer a Trespass Offering for the forgiveness of his sin.