

Leviticus 4:1-5:13 | Sunday March 9, 2025

Leviticus started by describing the offerings that were a pleasing aroma to God, the whole burnt offering, the grain offering, and the peace offering. Each of these offerings were an act of worship and setting something apart as holy to God. From offering the whole life, the fruit of our labor, and giving God the best, God was honored through them all. Yet, you did not start worship with these three offerings. The sin offering that is described in Chapter 4 and 5 was the first offering given as you approached God in worship. (Lev 9:7-12)

Leviticus 4:1-5:13 ESV

(1) And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, (2) “Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If anyone **sins unintentionally** in any of the LORD's commandments about things not to be done, and does any one of them, (3) **if it is the anointed priest who sins**, thus bringing guilt on the people, then he shall offer for the sin that he has committed a bull from the herd without blemish to the LORD for a sin offering. (4) He shall bring the bull to the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD and lay his hand on the head of the bull and kill the bull before the LORD. (5) And the anointed priest shall take some of the blood of the bull and **bring it into the tent of meeting**, (6) and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle part of the blood seven times before the LORD in front of the veil of the sanctuary. (7) And the priest shall put some of the blood **on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense** before the LORD that is **in the tent of meeting**, and all the rest of the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. (8) And all the fat of the bull of the sin offering he shall remove from it, the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is on the entrails (9) and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins and the long lobe of the liver that he shall remove with the kidneys (10) (just as these are taken from the ox of the sacrifice of the peace offerings); and the priest shall burn them on the altar of burnt offering. (11) But the skin of the bull and all its flesh, with its head, its legs, its entrails, and its dung—(12) all the rest of the bull—**he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, to the ash heap, and shall burn it up on a fire of wood**. On the ash heap it shall be burned up. (13) **“If the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally** and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they do any one of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done, and they realize their guilt, (14) when the sin which they have committed becomes known, the assembly shall offer a bull from the herd for a sin offering and bring it in front of the tent of meeting. (15) And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD, and the bull shall be killed before the LORD. (16) Then the anointed priest shall bring some of the blood of the bull **into the tent of meeting**, (17) and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD in front of the veil. (18) And he shall put **some of the blood on the horns of the altar that is in the tent of meeting** before the LORD, and the rest of the blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. (19) And all its fat he shall take from it and burn on the altar. (20) Thus shall he do with the bull. As he did with the bull of the sin offering, so shall he do with this. **And the priest shall make atonement for them, and they shall be forgiven**. (21) And he shall carry the bull outside the camp and burn it up

as he burned the first bull; it is the sin offering for the assembly. (22) **“When a leader sins**, doing **unintentionally** any one of all the things that by the commandments of the LORD his God ought not to be done, and realizes his guilt, (23) or the sin which he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring as his offering a goat, a male without blemish, (24) and shall lay his hand on the head of the goat and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD; it is a sin offering. (25) Then the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and **put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering** and pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering. (26) And all its fat he shall burn on the altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings. So the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin, and he shall be forgiven. (27) **“If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally** in doing any one of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done, and realizes his guilt, (28) or the sin which he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring for his offering a goat, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed. (29) And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and kill the sin offering in the place of burnt offering. (30) And the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger and **put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering** and pour out all the rest of its blood at the base of the altar. (31) And all its fat he shall remove, as the fat is removed from the peace offerings, and the priest shall burn it on the altar for a pleasing aroma to the LORD. And the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven. (32) **“If he brings a lamb as his offering for a sin offering**, he shall bring a female without blemish (33) and lay his hand on the head of the sin offering and kill it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering. (34) Then the priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out all the rest of its blood at the base of the altar. (35) And all its fat he shall remove as the fat of the lamb is removed from the sacrifice of peace offerings, and the priest shall burn it on the altar, on top of the LORD's food offerings. **And the priest shall make atonement for him for the sin which he has committed, and he shall be forgiven.**

Leviticus 5 ESV

(1) **“If anyone sins in that** he hears a public adjuration to testify, and though he is a witness, whether he has seen or come to know the matter, yet does not speak, **he shall bear his iniquity;** (2) or if anyone touches an unclean thing, whether a carcass of an unclean wild animal or a carcass of unclean livestock or a carcass of unclean swarming things, and it is hidden from him and he has become unclean, and he realizes his guilt; (3) or if he touches human uncleanness, of whatever sort the uncleanness may be with which one becomes unclean, and it is hidden from him, when he comes to know it, and realizes his guilt; (4) or **if anyone utters with his lips a rash oath** to do evil or to do good, any sort of rash oath that people swear, **and it is hidden from him**, when he comes to know it, and he realizes his guilt in any of these; (5) when he realizes his guilt in any of these and confesses the sin he has committed, (6) he shall bring to the LORD as his compensation for the sin that he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat, for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin. (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. (8) He shall bring them to the priest, who shall offer first the one for the sin offering. He shall wring its head from its neck but shall not sever it completely, (9) and he shall sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, while the rest of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar; it is a sin offering. (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. (11) **“But if he cannot afford two turtledoves or two pigeons,** then he shall bring as his offering for the sin that he has committed a tenth of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering. He shall put no oil on it and shall put no frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering. (12) And he shall bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take a handful of it as its memorial portion and burn this on the altar, on the LORD's food offerings; it is a sin offering. (13) Thus the priest shall make atonement for him **for the sin which he has committed in any one of these things, and he shall be forgiven.** And the remainder shall be for the priest, as in the grain offering.”

The Sin offering was unknown and God is introducing it. The other offerings could be practiced just with an altar, and elements from those offering are found throughout the cultures of the time. The sin offering was not revealed until the tabernacle was available.

To give the sin offering elements of the tent of meeting will be used. The offerings name is straightforward, **this offering deals with sin, and how to get rid of it, or how to de-sin.**

Leviticus 4:1-2 ESV

- (1) And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
- (2) “Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If anyone sins **unintentionally** in any of the LORD's commandments about things not to be done, and does any one of them,

The sin offering deals specifically with unintentional sins. These are in contrast to high handed sins that are done in willful rebellion to God. Practically it is the difference between manslaughter and premeditated murder. These are sins that are not defiant and not from a heart that is actively trying to rebel against God. The fact that we sin unintentionally points out a very important fact of our nature as humans.

Romans 3:9-12 ESV

- (9) What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, **are under sin,**
- (10) as it is written: **“None is righteous, no, not one;**
- (11) no one understands; no one seeks for God.
- (12) All have turned aside; together **they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”**

We are sinners by nature. There are so many absolute statements in this passage we get very uncomfortable. We would like it to say some are righteous, or most are worthless. Yet this is not the truth in the Word. Humanity is full of sinfulness and we are not righteous, but worthless sinners who do no good. Sin has spread to all.

Romans 5:12 ESV

(12) Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men **because all sinned—**

Sin came into the world through Adam and it spread to all. We all sin. Even when we don't know, or are not trying to. By our very nature we sin unintentionally. Leave us alone for too long and out comes sin. Even when we are unaware of it. The fact that the sin offering is given for unintentional sins shows that **ignorance is not an excuse for sin**. When we sin and are unaware, that sin is still deserving of punishment. We underestimate the depths of our sin and the heights of God's holiness. Our sin is so engrained into us that often we cannot even see them.

Psalm 19:12 ESV

(12) **Who can discern his errors?** Declare me innocent **from hidden faults**.

Psalm 139:23-24 ESV

(23) **Search me**, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!

(24) And **see if there be any grievous way in me**, and lead me in the way everlasting!

In both Psalms David prays for God to reveal his own heart to himself. **Meaning the hidden faults David is praying about are hidden from David**. He needs God who knows the heart to reveal them. We are so sinful that we do not even know our own sin. Our sin demands a payment, a sin offering. **No amount of change or repentance will undue our sinfulness**. When the Holy God is revealed and coming to dwell with man we are exposed as such great sinners that even our unintentional sins need a blood payment.

Leviticus 4:3; 13-14 ESV

(3) **if it is the anointed priest who sins, thus bringing guilt on the people**, then he shall offer for the sin that he has committed **a bull** from the herd without blemish to the LORD for a sin offering.

(13) **"If the whole congregation of Israel sins unintentionally** and the thing is hidden from the eyes of the assembly, and they do any one of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done, and they realize their guilt,

(14) when the sin which they have committed becomes known, the assembly shall offer **a bull** from the herd for a sin offering and bring it in front of the tent of meeting.

The instructions for the sin offering change based on who sinned. The first two groups mentioned are if the priest sins, and if the whole congregation of Israel sins. Both of these involve the whole nation. **The priest was to represent the people to God so if he sinned he brought guilt on everyone**. For both of these groups God requires the most costly of all sacrifices a bull. The specifics of the offering are the same for both.

Leviticus 4:15-20 ESV

(15) And **the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head** of the bull before the LORD, and the bull shall be killed before the LORD.

(16) Then the anointed priest shall bring some of the blood of the bull **into the tent of meeting**,

(17) and the priest shall **dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD in front of the veil**.

(18) And he shall put **some of the blood on the horns of the altar that is in the tent of meeting before the LORD**, and the rest of the blood he shall pour out at the base of

the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

(19) And all its fat he shall take from it and burn on the altar.

(20) Thus shall he do with the bull. As he did with the bull of the sin offering, so shall he do with this. **And the priest shall make atonement for them, and they shall be forgiven.**

The elders of the nation laid their hand on the bull and as it was killed the blood would be collected. The priest would then carry that blood into the tent of meeting. **This is the first offering that brought us into the tent.** The first room of the tent of meeting was also called the Holy Place. It was about **15 feet by 30 feet**. In this room was **the Golden Lampstand, the Table of Showbread, and the Altar of Incense**. There was a large veil separating the inner chamber, which was known as the Holy of Holies or Most Holy Place. The priest only enters into the Holy of Holies once a year, at the Day of Atonement, which was for a special sin offering. (Leviticus 16). For a sin offering for the priest or the whole congregation the blood would be sprinkled **“seven times before the LORD in front of the veil.”** Then the priest would put some blood onto the **horns of the altar of incense**. The blood had to be presented to God and it was the blood that cleansed sin.

Hebrews 9:6-10 ESV

(6) These preparations having thus been made, **the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties,**

(7) but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and **not without taking blood**, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people.

(8) By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened **as long as the first section is still standing**

(9) (which is symbolic for the present age). **According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper,**

(10) but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed **until the time of reformation.**

The priests would go regularly into the Holy Place. The veil stopping them from going any farther. These offerings could not perfect the worshiper. They looked forward until the time of reformation. This first section kept reminding them of the separation sin caused and the need for redemption. There are two huge principals here.

Hebrews 9:22 ESV

(22) Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.**

Hebrews 10:1-4 ESV

(1) For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, **it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.**

(2) Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins?

(3) But in these sacrifices **there is a reminder of sins every year.**

(4) **For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.**

Sins cannot be forgiven without the shedding of blood and it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin. Every time a sin offering was given it was to remind the people of their sin problem. **The blood of these animals could not take away sin.** The priest would sprinkle it in front of the veil seven times a completed action and yet they would be back doing the same thing over and over again. The sprinkling of this blood pointed to the true sacrifice of Jesus. We are washed clean because we are sprinkled in His blood.

Hebrews 12:24 NLT

(24) You have come to Jesus, the one who mediates **the new covenant between God and people, and to the sprinkled blood**, which speaks of forgiveness instead of crying out for vengeance like the blood of Abel.

We are not accepted by God because of something we can do, change or become. We approach God based on the blood. Abel's blood cried out to God for vengeance for a payment to be made against Cain's sin. Jesus Christ's blood speaks of our forgiveness. The sin offering shows the blood that our sin demands and also shows that Jesus's blood is the only that would satisfy the payment. He was willing to pay the price.

The changes in procedure and animals for the different groups is important. When a leader or common person sinned the blood was put on the horns of **the altar of burnt offering (4:25,30)**. This sin still needed to be atoned with blood but did not affect the entire nation so it was not brought into the tent of meeting. God also put in provisions for poverty and if you could not afford a female goat (4:28) you could bring a lamb (4:32), **"But if he cannot afford a lamb"** 2 birds (5:7), **"But if he cannot afford two turtledoves or two pigeons"** you could even bring flour (5:11). **God wanted the sin offering to be available to all.** We all sin and we all need access the sin offering.

1 John 2:2 ESV

(2) He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also **for the sins of the whole world.**

Revelation 7:9-10 ESV

(9) After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, **from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages**, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, (10) and crying out with a loud voice, **"Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"**

Jesus is the sin payment for the entire world. Everyone has access to what He did. In heaven we will see people from every nation, all tribes. All have access and can afford His sin offering. We need to be careful not to raise the price.

When the priest sinned or the whole congregation the body of the animal could not be eaten by those serving in the tabernacle because its blood had been offered in the tent of meeting Lev 6:30. Instead the body had to be disposed of in a unique way.

Leviticus 4:11-12 ESV

(11) But the skin of the bull and all its flesh, with its head, its legs, its entrails, and its dung—

(12) all the rest of the bull—he shall carry **outside the camp** to a clean place, to the ash heap, and shall burn it up on a fire of wood. On the ash heap it shall be burned up.

The fat of the offering would be burnt on the Altar of burnt offerings. The rest of the animal though had to be taken outside of the camp and burnt there. It was not allowed to be burnt on the Altar. In some sense the animal was viewed as becoming the sin, and was unclean. This again points to what Jesus accomplished on the cross.

1 Peter 2:24 ESV

(24) **He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree**, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.

This is not symbolic. Jesus took our sins, 2 Corinthians 5:21 even says He became sin on the cross. He became the sin offering and His body had to be burnt outside of the city.

Hebrews 13:10-16 ESV

(10) We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat.

(11) For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin **are burned outside the camp**.

(12) **So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through His own blood.**

(13) **Therefore let us go to Him** outside the camp and bear the reproach He endured.

(14) **For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.**

(15) **Through Him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name.**

(16) Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Jesus left Jerusalem, rejected by His people, left the temple, and went outside of the city to the place of the cross. He is the Sin offering. **We are called as believers to go to Him outside of the camp.** To face that same rejection, because as a believers this is not our home. **This is not our lasting city** but we look forward to being with Him in the New Jerusalem. It is through Him, that we then can worship and live in response to all He has done. Our worship should be the fruit of our lives. When we see what His blood has done for us, we should be in awe-inspired worship of the perfect sin offering.
