

## Title: The Cost of Sacrifice

Grant Hill, Garden Gathering, 6/9/2024

This *message* goes right along with what Brandy brought last week, “No Mud Huts.” Coming out of a sin consciousness into the victory that you have in Christ Jesus and the blessing of His blood. I am going to be doing a series on the sacrifice in the blood of Jesus. It will go through at least the next three weeks. To get into what the Lord wants to reveal to us in this House, we have to build an understanding of sacrifice. You have to understand sacrifice in order to know the “Sacrifice.”

### Romans 12:1 NKJV

We are here to offer a living sacrifice, which is actually an oxymoron. Sacrifices are dead. But, God is beseeching through the Holy Spirit for the Christian to offer themselves as a living sacrifice. Holy, meaning “set apart or special, and not common anymore.” Holy means that this is not common. This is not a “normal spoon.” This is a “holy spoon.” This is not a “normal piece of paper.” This is a “holy piece of paper.” It has been set apart. It has been touched by God. It was for God and God alone. That is what it means to be holy. Whenever a sacrifice becomes common to us, it loses its holiness. It loses its fear. This is integral to understanding what a sacrifice truly is. What does it mean to sacrifice? What does it mean to sacrifice oneself to God? We have to begin in the Old Testament understand this. The Old Testament was a covenant between God and His people. In it God established five types of offerings.

### Leviticus 1

There were five top types of sacrifices or offerings. The first one was the “burnt offering,” sometimes called the “ascension offering.” The second one is the “grain offering,” sometimes called the “gift offering.” The third one is the “peace offering,” but it is sometimes also called the “fellowship offering.” The fourth one is the “sin offering,” sometimes called the “purification offering,” and the fifth offering was the “sacrifice, or guilt offering” which is also called the “reparation or the restitution offering.”

I am telling you all of these, and the definition of them. Sometimes it is different because the translation of the titles is up for grabs. It is hard to put into English in one word what those sacrifices meant. We just call them “burnt offerings,” and often we read in the Scriptures about “the sacrifices and the offerings,” the “offerings of bulls,” or the “offerings of lambs or goats.” But, in the context of the Hebrew language, each one had a physical and a spiritual meaning. The first one was the one that was the most costly, then the ones after that were less costly. The first one was the “burnt offering,” and we are going to read about that in Leviticus chapter one. This will be our focus for today. The Bible Project says, “*You can see the translations of the titles of these offerings is up for grabs, because it is hard to put into one English word the richness of what each of these sacrifices symbolizes.*” We need to build here in Leviticus to feel the holiness of God.

### Leviticus 1:1-4 NKJV

### Romans 12:1

Do you remember that? We have already run into the language here. Have you seen it? You are to “come of your own freewill,” before God. In the Old Testament, you had to come of your own freewill and bring one of your livestock or your herd before the Lord. You were to put your hand on it. As saying, “This is my will, and I am choosing to do this to be accepted before you, God.” Who was the sacrifice brought before? You might think the priests, but in verse three it states, “If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish, and

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he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord.” That is what separates it. Because, you are not doing this for the priests. You are not doing this for the religion. You are not doing this for the faith. You are doing it “before the Lord.” This is between “me and you, God.” That is it.

Then Romans 12 says, “holy.” Holy, what is God, and what is not. Holy is what is God. What is unholy or common and clean, is what has not been touched by God.

#### Leviticus 1:5-17

If you were to continue in chapter two, you might see in your heading, “the grain offering,” which is also the “gift offering.” If you had just received atonement from the burnt offering. It was very common to give a “gift or a thanksgiving offering,” on top of it. Once their sin had been atoned for, often the worshipper would want to give more as a gift, and it was often, “a grain offering.” Then if you kept going, there was the “peace offering,” which is often called the “fellowship offering,” and is actually a feast where the priests and your family eat together with that offering on top of the last two. Then you go on to the sin offering. We will get into that and the guilt offering. This is a lot. Yes, it is.

Let's dig into it from the commentary by Wayne Stiles. He explains the purpose of each of these offerings to the Lord. *“The burnt offering teaches that God is pleased to accept anyone who comes to Him through His prescribed sacrifice. The whole animal was consumed on the altar and it atoned for the worshippers' sin. It satisfies God's wrath against the sin and made fellowship possible between a holy God and a sinful person.”*

*“Then the second offering, the “grain or the gift offering,” was by someone that was now accepted by God, in His grace through the “burnt offering,” and could respond in gratitude through a “grain or a cereal offering.” It was usually an offering of flour and oil in which a handful was burned, and the priest ate the rest. It was a gift to God from the best of the worshipper's agricultural produce, in an act of thanksgiving for the sins that were just forgiven.”*

*“An additional offering, “the drink offering or libation,” was poured on top of the “grain offering,” as a symbol of joy for the thanksgiving and the praise that I have been forgiven of my sin.*

*“The “peace offering,” unlike the other sacrifices, was optional. Given in addition to the “burnt offering,” the “peace offering,” closed with a meal in which the priest, representing God, and the worshipper and his friends, all ate together. The sacrifice had to be eaten in one or two days. There were three primary ways one could give a voluntary “peace offering.” One was as thanksgiving. It was an act of freewill in an act of thanksgiving to God. In this instance, it could be an imperfect animal. It did not have to be perfect and without blemish. Or, a “wave offering,” where the priest's portion of the “peace offering,” was waived before the Lord as a special act signifying that “all of this is Yours.”*

*A “votive offering,” was a free will offering given because of a vow taken, or in relation to a favor that God has done something for you, or a simple “voluntary act of worship.”*

*The fourth and the fifth sacrifices were first the “sin or purification,” the second one was “guilt.” It focuses not just on the worshipper, but on the atmosphere and the place where the worshipper had come from, or dealt with, or been a part of. It is not just your sin that affects*

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*you. It is because you have sinned, and now you have affected those around you. Including nature around you, the city, or the community.*

*That is what these two sacrifices came to atone for. "Purification is often called the "sin offering." The better translation is a purification. It dealt with two issues, the necessity of forgiveness from unintentional sins and cleansing from ceremonial uncleanness. The purpose of the "sin offering," was to cleanse the tabernacle from human defilement, thus making possible the continuing fellowship and presence of God among His people."*

*"The fifth one was the, "reparation or the guilt offering," that caused the individual to look beyond the sin to the damage that the sin has caused. The "guilt offering," is called "reparation," because the person not only sought forgiveness for his acts, but that he is adding an additional price or percentage on top of it to pay for the "guilt," that it caused."*

*We are focusing today on the first one, the "burnt offering." It is also called the "ascension offering," because in Hebrew, it means "to go up." So, the very first sacrifice that God has put in the word, is "come up here," or "to go up, to ascend." But, you cannot ascend.*

#### Psalms 24

This is a psalm that we speak here all the time. "Who can ascend upon the hill of the Lord? He who has clean hands and a pure heart." The "burnt sacrifice," was to show you that you cannot come up here. You do not have "clean hands or a pure heart." There must be something to atone for the separation, because the wages of your sin is separation from Me, in death. Separation from God is death. So, you had to bring something to pay for that sin. Life, for your life. That was it. If you could do that, then the smoke would be burning in front of you, ascending to the heavens. The fire in front of you was burning. The atonement, the burning of the sin, would be ascending to the God of Heaven. It was a symbol. It was prophetic in nature. Do you see that out of all the five offerings, the "burnt offering," was representing the most costly.

#### Leviticus 6:8-13

Now we have a whole series on the tabernacle and the temple on our website. It is a great series on understanding what the tabernacle and all of its artifacts and utensils were and what they were prophetically for. I am not going to get into that. Just know that when you would come into the tabernacle or into the temple, there was this open courtyard. There was a bronze altar you would go before, that stood before the actual door of the temple or the tabernacle. There was something between you and the door to God. Fire, constantly burning, stood before you and the door to God.

We read in Revelation that before the throne of God is a floor of fire. It is a representation of what is going on in Heaven. But, God told the priests, that "every day and every night, there will be a burnt offering. Every day and every night there will be a burnt offering on here and it will take that long to burn." They would keep adding to it of course, but that would burn. So, He is saying the sin of people is going to be consistently before you. You will see it, priests. You will see their sin being consistently burned before you. That is what it is going to take. It is not going to stop after the night. It is going to go all night. Then all day and all night and again...

Out of the five offerings, the "burnt offering," was a representation of the most costly in its endeavor. Nothing of the sacrifice was left for the good of the priests. Remember, you could give a "grain offering or a gift," and the priests got some of that as it went for the good of the temple. You could have a "thanksgiving offering," and it was a feast for everyone. The House of the Lord received provision by your sacrifice and your gift. It was not just all burned up.

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All of them helped others, except for the burned sacrifice. When you gave away a “burnt offering,” it was all given away *to God* with no return.

I want you to write these down. There was a division of labor between the worshipper and the priest in the “burnt offering.” There were five things that the worshipper must bring, and there were three things that the priest had to do. One, the worshipper had to bring an animal. It was not the priest’s responsibility nor the Hebrew religion to provide the atonement. You had to bring your own atonement. Two, you had to kill your own animal. Three, the worshipper had to skin the animal. Four, he had to gut the intestines out of the animal. If you have ever done any butchering, you know what we are talking about. Five, you had to butcher the animal. Why? You had to know what your sin cost.

The priest was responsible for these three things. The priest had to prepare the wood for the fire, and make sure that there was always fire. Think about what that means in the House of God. You have to always be kindling the fire as a priest in His House. Two, the priest had to sprinkle the blood of the atoned animal on the altar. The priest had to take care of the blood. The worshipper did not touch the blood, but the priests did. That is a representation of our High Priest who takes care of the blood and sprinkles it where it needs to be. Three, the priest had to take the butchered animal and every part of it. Take it from the hands of the worshipper and put it on the fire. The priest had to assist the worshipper to burn it. You can see that if those in the House know what we are talking about.

The animal to be sacrificed had to have the four general characteristics. The animal had to be ceremonially clean with no blemish and it had to be a male. It had to be usable for food or sustenance and it had to be domesticated. It had to obey the master’s will more or less and be endearing to the worshipper. Although some wild game animals were permissible for food, no game animal was permissible for sacrifice. Except young pigeons, since the very poor could capture these with their hands.

The sacrifice had to be costly. The animals selection was based upon the social economic status of the individual Jewish member of the Commonwealth. If you remember, there were five different animals that could be used for the burnt sacrifice, a bull, a sheep, a goat, a turtle dove, or a young pigeon. You had to give according to how much you could afford. So, the rich had to give up a bull. The middle class had to give up a sheep or a goat. The poor had to give up turtle dove or a young pigeon. Because, you had to feel the cost of it. If the individual were wealthy, he had to offer an expensive sacrifice. If he were poor, he could offer a less expensive sacrifice. Nevertheless, it would have to be costly, relative to his social economic status.

If you were to just get something wild, then you have no connection to it. In this lifestyle at this time, for the Hebrews, their whole livelihood was on what livestock they had. So, for us it would be, like picking a car. Which car are you going to sacrifice? Your car that is your way to work or used to acquire wealth? Pick a car to sacrifice and burn, because you have sinned before God. You are not getting that car back. Pick. That is what God is saying. You feel the cost of that when God talks about cars. But, we blow over it when we talk about sacrificing bulls, sheep, or goats. But, we feel it when it is something that costs us something relative to us today.

That is what God is trying to bring out of us here. Because, in our society today, the sacrifice doesn't mean as much. We are after Christ. We have already understood this. Jesus paid the price. He is the sacrifice for our sins.

But, you do not understand the cost of what it should have felt like when you have raised this calf from birth. You probably pulled that lamb out of the mama. You probably bought a ton of hay. You probably put a lot of costs into raising up this bull, and it is without blemish. It had to

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be perfect. So, this is your best one. When you kill that bull, all its genetics are not going into your future livestock, because of your sin. It is your fault that now you have to kill your future. Not only that, but you can't just give it and then turn your back from it to allow somebody else to kill it. You have to put your hand on it, grab your knife, and stab it in the neck to kill it. You feel the blood squirt while you continue to chop it up into pieces and hand it to the priest. He will look you in the eyes as he takes it from you, and puts it on the fire to burn.

That is what God was saying is the cost of your sin. That is the heaviness of the burnt offering. That is the heaviness of it. It is calculated that every year the priests of the Hebrews were to sacrifice a minimum of 113 bulls, 32 rams, and 1086 lambs. Then they would have offered more than a ton of flour, and thousands of bottles of olive oil and wine. That is the minimum.

This constant reminder of sin grows wearisome. This sin consciousness and guilt consciousness, was continually before the priests. They say, "I do this every day. My people cannot stop being unclean. They cannot stop sinning. Is this doing what is supposed to do?"

#### Hebrews 10:11

They have done this day and night, night and day. This minimum of 113 bulls, 32 rams, 1086 lambs and more than a ton of flour, thousands of bottles of olive oil and wine has been offered each year, daily, which "can never take away sins." For thousands of years, they do this repeatedly. You see the hopelessness of the situation.

When you read in Ecclesiastes about King Solomon, who is looking at the sacrifices. He is saying, "What is the point? Unless God comes up with a better plan, this is not helping mankind. It is just showing us how much we fall short every single day. It is showing us that we have to have a better savior than this. Because, when I dedicated the temple to God, 22,000 bulls were sacrificed. I gave many 1000s of lambs. So much blood was shed on the day that the temple was opened in my reign, but it didn't even last my lifetime in their hearts to the Lord. It is vanity. It is vanity. It is grasping for the wind to do this of your own accord. God has to have a better plan than this," Solomon says in Ecclesiastes. These sacrifices could never make totally right and totally white, the sin and the guilt within your soul.

I want you to write this down. "Convenience cheapens the sacrifice." Now you know there is a severe cost that was applied to sacrifice. We use this in our society a lot. We say, "Oh, I've sacrificed. I've sacrificed. This is a sacrifice. That is a sacrifice." Yes, but, "convenience actually cheapens the sacrifice." "Convenience pollutes the heart of a sacrifice. Convenience reduces the sacrificial cost." Sacrifice is not supposed to be easy. It is supposed to be costly.

There are two moments where we see anger in the New Testament. You can go and find these. One of the very first ones is of Jesus in the temple. What was He angry about? What really riled Him up? It was when they went to church on Sunday, and you could go through your courtyard, buy the turtle dove, or the lamb, or the goat, or the bull, as you are walking in. Then, immediately you just paid for it, grabbed it by a rope, then took it right to the priest, where you put your hand on the animal and you kill it. What riled Him up is, "you have lost the heart." That didn't cost you. You did not know that animal. You did not know the life that just took your life's place. You do not understand where this animal came from. It was supposed to come from your sustenance. It was supposed to come from your heart. It was supposed to be attached to you. But, the convenience of you just being able to buy it five minutes before you killed it, takes the heart out of the sacrifice. It riled Him up so much. He drove the merchants out of the courtyard.

He was saying, "No, you go back to your farm. You drag that animal all the way to Jerusalem. That is what He is saying. You go and find those pigeons. You go and find that cost that it

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takes to understand why this is needed. Why am I here?" "Convenience cheapens the sacrifice."

We now live in an American society that is full of convenience. So, it has cheapened our understanding of sacrifice. Oftentimes we associate sacrifice as, "I will do something, and I will get something back. I will give this, and it will come back." Yes, I know that is biblical, but that is not sacrifice. That is just giving. That is just giving to God. Everything He is, He gives, and it comes back to Him. That is just the common Kingdom mindset principle. But, that is not sacrifice. Sacrifice truly means that I am going to give this away. I am not going to get anything back. It belongs to God. It is His. It is holy. I have a fear of the Lord on it. It is up to Him to do whatever He wants with it, but I was the one that fell short. In giving it to Him, I do not expect anything back. That is the heart of it.

The second example of God's anger in the New Testament is where we see a woman who came before Jesus. She just starts bawling at His feet. Then what does she do? She takes out a flask of perfume and she burns through it. I am using that term to paint a picture. She didn't just pour out a dabble. She pours it all out and burns through the whole bottle on His feet. But, what did the disciples and others in the room think and say? "That is wasteful." If you are a priest you might think, "I do not know where my next meal is going to come from. Oh, here comes somebody who might give a free will offering to me. But, Oh no, it is a burnt offering. I do not get any of it."

The priest and those in the House can look upon the heart of worship wrongly and say, "that is so wasteful. You are pouring it all out for God. I got nothing. You burned your whole bowl, and I didn't get anything." The House or the Church of God has that mindset sometimes in Christianity. They say, "we didn't get any of that, because you gave it all for Jesus. You did that for Him? What about the family?" When she was on the ground pouring it all out before Him, they said, "Some of that could have been sold for the poor. Some of that could have been given for the benefit of the House." She poured it all out for this moment, for this time, for this place. "That was counted to her as righteousness," Jesus said. This is the heart of sacrifice. This is the heart of worship.

Now you are understanding the heart of true sacrifice is actually the heart of love. To truly love, you must understand true sacrifice. To truly love and be loved by God, you must understand His heart as a sacrifice for you. But, to truly love God back, you must carry that same heart of sacrifice for Him. It was "counted for her as righteousness."

This reminds us of a widow that went to the temple. There was a voluntary gift given. Those that had a lot gave a portion into the temple offering box. Jesus stood there watching with His disciples, and the widow comes and puts in two half pennies and walks on. The next person comes gives \$10,000 and the next person gave \$1,000. The disciples hear Jesus say, "That woman gave way more than everybody else." They ask, "how?" Because, she took the leap of faith, saying, "I have nothing left. I have absolutely nothing left. If I give this to God, I have no idea how I am going to get anything for tonight. I have no idea what I am eating tomorrow. But my sacrifice is all His." The heart of worship that He saw is, "When you have to take that leap of faith where, "I do not know if I am going to land. I do not know what is going to happen next." That is the heart of worship God is looking for in sacrifice. Yes. You see it?

The pure heart of worship is costly before God. True sacrifice has nothing to do with you getting anything back. True sacrifice is giving a piece of your soul away. Giving a piece of your sustenance away, or giving a piece of your livelihood away to another. Not expecting to ever get it back. You are burning all away for another.

Mark 12:29-34

This is a Jew, a scribe, and someone who studied the law. He is saying, "Yes, love is actually sacrifice." He puts two and two together. "You could have read that, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, He is one, and you shall sacrifice to the Lord your God, with all your soul, with all your heart, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment. The second commandment like it, you shall sacrifice yourself to your neighbor, as you would to yourself." "I am going to burn it all away for you." There is no commandment greater than these. He says, "Yeah, to do those things, to love and to sacrifice, are the same and it suffices all of them. It suffices all five offerings."

Now we are picking up on something. Because, if love, true love and laying down your life for love, satisfies all five of the sacrifices in Leviticus, then somebody might be able to do it. Somebody might be able to fulfill all five of the sacrifices, and all five of the burnt offerings. All five of them might be able to be fulfilled, if you can love that way. This is leading us to "the Sacrifice," right?

John 15:13

Romans 12:1

You pay this price without expecting anything back in return. You say, "Did God do this?" Actually, He did. The Father did this with Jesus. Jesus did it with His own life.

Isaiah 53:7

The Father actually did do a sacrifice, just like it says in Leviticus, and we read about it here. Remember, when John the Baptist first saw Jesus? What did He say? "Behold the Lamb of God."

"He was led as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before it shears is silent, so He opened not His mouth."

But, now listen who is leading Him? Who is leading Him to the shearer? Who is leading Him? He said, "Not my will, but your will be done, Father," as He was sweating drops of blood in Gethsemane. So, "not my will but yours. I will follow you." He was being led up the hill by His own Father, by the Spirit of the Father. Yes. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter by His own Father and as a sheep before it shearers is silent, so Jesus opened not His mouth."

Isaiah 53:8-9

"He was cut off from the land of the living." He was killed.

Isaiah 53:10-12

Listen to this, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him." It was required of the worshipper to put his hand on the atonement, on the lamb, on the bull, on the goat, and then strike it. Jesus was struck to death by His own Father's wrath against Him.

The Father of the faith was Abraham. Abraham was asked by God to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. He carried Isaac, and he put the wood and the burden upon Isaac. He led them to Mount Moriah, which is in present day Jerusalem. He built an altar and he set the wood that was on the back of Isaac, on the altar. He got the fire prepared. Then he took the strings that were on the wood, and he put his son on the altar, and then tied his son to it. He put his hands on Isaac, it says. He grabbed the knife to strike his own son, and God says, "Now I know that your heart for Me is real. It is an act of true worship. It is the sacrifice that you were willing to give.

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Abraham was giving away his only son, whether he was going to get another son or not. Sarah was way past the age when he had this one. He had no idea if he would ever get another son. But, it was worth it, because it was not about him. "It is about you, God, and I will give it all away." The Father says, "No, I will provide, and the Lord Jehovah Jireh was the name that God revealed of Himself there.

Jesus and the Father went all the way. The Father led Him to the cross. The Father put Him on the cross. At that moment, when His soul was stricken, He cries out, "Why are you forsaking me, Father?" God struck Him with His wrath.

Now this is the key. When Jesus allowed that to happen by the hand of God. He was paying the price for all mankind. It says, "He bore the sin of many," but we have a free will. We do not have to choose that payment for our sin. It is your choice. You have to tell Jesus, "I receive the payment of your sacrifice for my sin."

He did that and He paid that price, not expecting anyone to actually ever receive it. He hoped, yes, for the joy set before Him. He hoped that all mankind would be saved. It says in the New Testament, "God longs that all should be saved." But, He gave the sacrifice. He died saying, "I will pay the price for mankind's sin, whether they want it or not. Whether you want it or not, I will pay it, and it is an option for you, because I love you. No other reason. I just I love you enough, that I will make a way out. If you want that way out, I am here. I have the blood. I have the blood that will make you have hands and a mind that is pure and clean, so that you can ascend to my Father." Amen. This is part one. We will continue next week.

Jonathan David Helser wrote, "The Father bankrupted Heaven, to save mankind." It is so true. Because, the Son is the Inheritor of the Kingdom. So, if you think about it that way, God took His own Son, and His own Inheritor of the Kingdom, and killed Him. He bankrupted His future. He bankrupted Heaven's future for mankind to be saved. Why? Because, He loved His family on the Earth so much to have them back. Amen.

Let's stand and praise the Lord for His sacrifice. "Lord, you paid the price, even if no one would accept it or receive the payment for their own sin. You were willing. You said, yes. Because, you loved with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength. God show us and give us revelation of the cost of sacrifice. We live in a land of convenience God, that cheapens true sacrifice. That makes it convenient to pay, but not have the heart to disassociate what we are actually having to be asked to do. Lord, open our eyes to see. Open our ears to hear what you have done on the cross for us. What it really means to truly live as a living sacrifice. Holy and acceptable unto the Lord which is our reasonable service. We thank you, Jesus, for this revelation. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.