

Leviticus Chapters 6b-7 – John Karmelich

1. I have good news for those who have been with me so far in Leviticus: This is the end of the barbeque-pit section of this book. ☺
 - a) This section of Leviticus reviews all of the offerings described so far in Leviticus.
 - b) What is significant about this lesson is the perspective.
 - i) The focus of this lesson changes from the person making the sacrificial offering to the priest who assists the person in making the offering.
 - ii) In other words, the focus of this lesson is on the duties of the priest.
 - iii) My emphasis on this lesson is on the Christian duties in helping other Christians.
2. Let's review a little about Old Testament and New Testament "priests".
 - a) All of the Israelites were divided up into 12 tribes. Of the 12 tribes, only one (The Levites) was picked to be the priests. Those were the sons of Levi. Because Leviticus focuses on the role of the priests, we get the English title of "Leviticus" based on the tribe of Levi.
 - b) God picked Moses' brother Aaron to be the first high priest. Aaron's oldest son would be the next high priest, and so on. Levites who were not the direct descendants of Aaron's were still required to be priests, but they had less significant duties than Aaron and his sons, who were in charge of helping people with their sacrifices.
 - c) The point I'm getting at is the Levites were "chosen" by God. They were picked to be priests whether they liked it or not. The same applies to Aaron and his sons. They were "chosen" and "called". They didn't have a say-so in the matter.
 - d) In the New Testament, all Christians are called to be priests. All Christians are "chosen" and "called" by God. God is perfect, and therefore knows all things. Therefore, God knew in advance who was dedicating their lives to serving Him.
 - e) One of the greatest misunderstandings among Christians is that only "some" people are called into the full-time ministry. If you have dedicated your life to serving Jesus, you are in the full-time ministry. A commitment to Jesus is a total commitment of one's life. That means that every moment of one's life is a full commitment to Jesus. This is separate issue from professional ministers. This is about the realization that every moment of one's life as a Christian now belongs to God. We are His witness all the time.
 - i) "But you (all Christians) are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." (1st Peter 2:9-10, NIV)
 - f) One of the keys to reading Leviticus is that there are applications to all Christians in our roles as priests. The word "priest", or its synonym "minister", is that God calls all of us to help and support other Christians.
3. Getting back to Leviticus, these early chapters are all about sacrifices to God.
 - a) A sacrifice is about giving up something for someone else. These sacrifices teach us about "giving up" our lives in order to please God.
 - b) Another aspect is to read Leviticus from the perspective of the priests. Their job was to assist the person making the sacrifice. Part of our role as "priests" is to help other Christians grow in their relationship with God.
 - c) I can't think of a greater way to use one's time in this life than to help others grow in their relationship with God. I can't think of anything more satisfying in this life. Examples include sharing the gospel with strangers. This includes helping one's spouse and children growing in their relationship with God. This includes helping one's friends grow closer to God. This includes writing bible study lessons, but I digress. ☺

- d) There is a wonderful sense of satisfaction seeing those around us grow closer to God. Knowing that God used us to help them grow gives us satisfaction that I can't compare to any other rewards in this lifetime.
 - e) Much of the text in this lesson covers the same sacrifices already discussed in Leviticus, but from the perspective of the priest. It is designed to teach us (and not just the "professional minister") how to better help other Christians grow as Christians.
 - f) OK, we have a lot of animals to sacrifice in this lesson. Let's get cooking! ☺
4. Chapter 6, Verse 8: The LORD said to Moses: ⁹ "Give Aaron and his sons this command: `These are the regulations for the burnt offering:
- a) As I stated earlier, much of this lesson is review. For example, this paragraph is about the burnt offerings. The burnt offering is covered in Leviticus Chapter 1.
 - i) I'm not going to review the details of what entails a burnt offering. The emphasis on this lesson is what is "different" about this paragraph versus Chapter 1.
 - b) The reason I'm starting in Verse 8 is because I covered Verses 1-7 in the last lesson.
 - i) The bible chapter breaks were not added until the 11th or 12th Century. They were not part of the original text. In other words, don't make a big deal about the chapter breaks. They are there for our reference so we can find text easier.
 - ii) I purposely want to cover from Verse 8 to the end of Chapter 7 in one lesson. In this section, God, through Moses reviews different types of sacrifices covered so far in Leviticus, again, only this time with an emphasis on the role of the priests.
 - c) Notice the word "command" in Verse 9. It is the first time it is used in Leviticus.
 - i) It was commanded that Aaron and his sons perform these priestly duties exactly as God commanded them to do.
 - ii) Don't misunderstand: For the Israelites, most of the sacrifices were mandatory in order to have a relationship with God. The use of the word "command" here is to emphasize the importance of the role of the priests and their duties in helping the "average Israelite" with his sacrifices.
 - iii) The point is if we give our lives to Christ, then God commands us to help others. How do I know that? Because the only new commandment Jesus ever gave was to "love one another" (John 13:34). If we are love other Christians then we are to help them grow in their relationship with God the Father and Jesus, the Son of God. The word-pictures here in Leviticus teach us how to serve one another.
 - d) Back to this text: This paragraph is all about the priests' duties in the burnt offering.
 - i) To recap, the burnt offering is about giving one's all to God. It is similar to when a Christian first commits their life to God or "recommits" their life to God if they have turned away for a long time.
 - e) I should also mention that the text in Chapters 6 and 7 don't necessarily follow the same order they do in the first five chapters of Leviticus. The order in the first five chapters follows a progression in the life of the believer:
 - i) One decides to give their "all" to God (via a burnt offering) in Chapter 1.
 - ii) One commitments of one's substance to God (via a grain offering) in Chapter 2.
 - iii) Then comes the peace of God (via a peace offering) in Chapter 3.
 - iv) One still has to deal with sins after we have committed our lives to God. We are not perfect and make mistakes. When we make mistakes, we confess them. Those are symbolic of "sin offerings". That is covered in Chapters 4 and 5.
 - v) In this lesson, some of these same offerings are covered, but the order is different. The order appears to be based on "frequency of the offering" as opposed to types of offering. In other words, the most common thing the priest had to deal with is burnt offering, so this is discussed first.

5. Verse 9 (cont.): The burnt offering is to remain on the altar hearth throughout the night, till morning, and the fire must be kept burning on the altar. ¹⁰ The priest shall then put on his linen clothes, with linen undergarments next to his body, and shall remove the ashes of the burnt offering that the fire has consumed on the altar and place them beside the altar. ¹¹ Then he is to take off these clothes and put on others, and carry the ashes outside the camp to a place that is ceremonially clean. ¹² The fire on the altar must be kept burning; it must not go out. Every morning the priest is to add firewood and arrange the burnt offering on the fire and burn the fat of the fellowship offerings on it. ¹³ The fire must be kept burning on the altar continuously; it must not go out.
- a) Just to warn you, I'm going to cover this lesson in big chunks of text at one time. This paragraph is about the burnt offering. The next paragraph is about the grain offering.
 - i) The burnt offering was covered in more detail in Leviticus Chapter 1.
 - ii) The emphasis here is on the role of the priests in their duties of the burnt offering.
 - b) Verse 9 says the priest is to keep the offering on the fire all night long.
 - i) In other words, if an offering is going to be burnt, we're going to make sure of that! To let it burn all night is to let all of it burn into ashes.
 - ii) Giving one's all to God may only take a moment. It only takes a few moments to verbally and mentally decide to turn one's life over to God. When an Israelite made that decision, they put an animal that represented them and let it entirely burn into ashes. Watching that slow process is a reminder that it takes a lifetime to completely give over every aspect of our lives to God.
 - iii) Let me give you an illustration of this word picture: We may think, "OK, God, you can be in charge of this aspect and that aspect of my life, but I still want to be in charge of "x" aspect." When it comes to "x" aspect of my life, I'm pretty strong and don't need your help." The point is the entire animal is burnt up. God desires to take over every aspect of our lives.
 - iv) The priest is to make sure the entire animal is burnt up. The priest does not have to "force the burning" to happen. The priest job is just to make sure the whole animal is burnt up. This goes back to the idea of watching and helping others grow in their relationship with God.
 - c) Verses 10-11 have to do with the priests and getting dressed.
 - i) Coming up in the next lesson, we'll discuss the uniform of the priest. The point here is the priest is to put on this uniform to gather all the ashes once the sacrifice is put on the altar. Then they are to change clothes again and take the ashes out of the camp and over to an ash heap. The idea is not to ruin their special high-priest uniform when they go over to the ash heap. This uniform is only to be worn when they are in the tabernacle area.
 - ii) When somebody goes to work and puts on their uniform, it means they are on duty. A doctor is always a doctor whether or not they are at work. The same applies to priests and to us as Christians. Those priests' uniforms were only to be worn in the temple when they are on duty. They are always priests, but they were called to special duties when they were in the tabernacle and wore special uniforms to remind them of those duties. Those uniforms stay at the tabernacle.
 - iii) The same applies to Christians as priests. Our entire life is dedicated to Jesus. When we are helping others, are uniforms are "on" whether we realize or not.
 - iv) The priest's uniforms were removed when going to the ash-dump. The uniform was "dedicated" to God and cannot be associated with the removal of sin.
 - d) The last few verses are about the fact the priests are to keep the fire going.
 - i) The priests were to add wood every day and keep the fire going. There is obviously an exception when they were traveling, but that is besides the point.

- ii) The point is the priests were to have the fire pit ready at all times.
 - a) God is not so much interested in our abilities as people, but in our availability to Him. If someone around us needs help, God wants us to be available. We as priests need to “keep the fire pit warm” so that a person can make a commitment to God at any time.
 - b) The word picture of the all-the-time fire pit is also that of an “all consuming God”. The fire is a picture of God “consuming” the sin of our lives to make us better people.
 - e) The only other reference in this paragraph is to burning the fat and fellowship offerings.
 - i) This is a footnote and is covered in more detail later in this lesson.
 - ii) Just remember for now that “fat” represents the best of animal. God specifically asks the priests to put the fat of the animal on the altar to remind us that we give the “best” of our lives to God. More on this coming up.
6. Verse 14: These are the regulations for the grain offering: Aaron's sons are to bring it before the LORD, in front of the altar. ¹⁵ The priest is to take a handful of fine flour and oil, together with all the incense on the grain offering, and burn the memorial portion on the altar as an aroma pleasing to the LORD. ¹⁶ Aaron and his sons shall eat the rest of it, but it is to be eaten without yeast in a holy place; they are to eat it in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁷ It must not be baked with yeast; I have given it as their share of the offerings made to me by fire. Like the sin offering and the guilt offering, it is most holy. ¹⁸ Any male descendant of Aaron may eat it. It is his regular share of the offerings made to the LORD by fire for the generations to come. Whatever touches them will become holy. ' "
- a) We are now ready for the second offering: The grain offering. To review a little from Chapter 2, when someone wanted to make a grain offering, they had to take some sifted flour, add oil, and make this bread-like substance. The person making the offer had different options on how it could be cooked (i.e., baked or griddled or fried).
 - i) The purpose of the offering was to give some of one's substance to God. Sometimes the word “bread” is a nickname for money. The idea is we give some of our earnings to God as a reminder that we are dependant upon God for every aspect of our lives and we trust He will provide for our future earnings.
 - ii) The grain offering is one of gratitude to God and trust He will provide again.
 - b) Here in Chapter 6, this paragraph does not cover every aspect of the grain offering.
 - i) This paragraph focuses on the priest' role in the offering.
 - c) The first few verses say in effect that when a person brings this grain offering to God, the priest are to take this grain offering and burnt part of it on the altar.
 - i) That is represents “God's portion”. It is burnt up to teach the offering person that God “accepts” part of our provision and God will provide for our future.
 - d) The remainder of the grain offering is to be eaten by the priests.
 - i) This is a reminder to the person making the offer that we are to share part of our substance with those in the “professional” ministry.
 - ii) There is a classic cliché in Christianity that goes, “If you are not on the front line fighting the battle, you should at least be in the back providing the ammunition”. The idea is prayer support for our pastors and missionaries. It also means giving them part of our financial resources for their support.
 - e) Again, the emphasis of this lesson is on the role of the priests.
 - i) They should not hesitate in accept gifts from those who want to help them. The priests are not allowed to ask for more, nor take the whole thing. At the same time, there is no problem in taking what is given to them.

- f) Verse 16 says the priests are to eat this offering “in the courtyard of meeting”.
 - i) That means they eat it in the outdoor area of the tabernacle. They can’t take it home. This food was given as substance for the priests. It was not to be used as take out food to watch in front of the television. ☺
 - ii) The idea is the food given in the grain offering is “given to God”. It is most holy to God and to be eaten in God’s presence.
 - a) That is the emphasis of much of this paragraph. What is dedicated to God by people making this grain offering is “holy”. That word means it is totally dedicated to God. Therefore, even though part of the grain is eaten by priests, it still belongs to God.
 - g) Verse 17 states that “it must not be baked with yeast”.
 - i) The word yeast or its synonym “leaven” is generally forbidden. Yeast is a corrupting substance that causes bread to rise. It also is the ingredient that causes bread to go bad after a few days. The idea is “it corrupts by puffing up”.
 - ii) The word-picture is sin, if left unchecked, gets bigger and bigger like rising bread.
 - h) Let’s wrap up this section with the application to all of us “Christian priests”:
 - i) The main goal of the priest is to help people grow closer to God. Part of that method is encouraging people to trust God with their finances and time. God wants us to give part of our finances and time to the church and trust that He will provide for us “the next day”. It is a way for us to learn to trust God more.
 - ii) All that we have belongs to God, but He doesn’t require a vow of poverty. The idea of giving part is to show our gratitude to God and trust for His provision.
 - a) As “priests”, we are to help others in that trust. It does not mean we reach in their wallets for them. ☺ It means we encourage others to give not as to help us or our particular ministry, but to help them grow and trust Christ.
 - iii) The point of these verses is the priests share in the blessings of when others give to God. We as Christians “share” when others give. That giving helps other ministries to grow and flourish. We get to share in the substance of that offering as it blesses the church and not just the one making the offering.
7. Verse 19: The LORD also said to Moses, ²⁰ "This is the offering Aaron and his sons are to bring to the LORD on the day he is anointed: a tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a regular grain offering, half of it in the morning and half in the evening. ²¹ Prepare it with oil on a griddle; bring it well-mixed and present the grain offering broken in pieces as an aroma pleasing to the LORD. ²² The son who is to succeed him as anointed priest shall prepare it. It is the LORD's regular share and is to be burned completely. ²³ Every grain offering of a priest shall be burned completely; it must not be eaten."
- a) Verses 19 to 23 are still on the same grain offering. The difference is this paragraph is about when a priest himself wants to make such an offering.
 - b) The key difference between the priests’ grain offering and the “common believer’s” grain offering is when the priest makes his offering, the whole offering is put on the altar.”
 - c) So what is the word picture here? For starters, the priest is held to a higher standard the “average” person making the offering.
 - i) The bad news of knowing your bible is that you are more accountable than someone who has never read it. Don’t get me wrong. The advantage of a close relationship with God far outweighs being naïve about God. The point is knowledge comes with accountability.
 - d) The priest’s grain offering must not be shared with anyone, but completely put on the fire. It is symbolic of their complete dedication to God.
 - e) It is also the idea that not only does the “common” person give of their substance to God, but so do the priest. You can’t be exempted because of this occupation.

- f) The priest is to take a grain offering, prepared as instructed back in Chapter 2.
 - i) The priest is to break it in pieces and put it on the altar for burning.
 - ii) The priest is to offer half of the grain offering in the morning and half in the evening (Verse 20).
 - iii) The idea is we are to give our “all” to God. We are to do it day and night to remind ourselves of our duties.
 - g) What’s the application to the Christian today?
 - i) This paragraph is a reminder that we too, are to give our “all” to God if we are called to serve Him. It doesn’t mean giving 100% of our income to a church. It means we are “on call” around the clock if need be, to help others. To “love one another” is to put others needs as priority over our own. It is a reminder that we are to be available to God at all times. We are to pray regularly to God (thus the word picture of “day and night daily offerings”) and seek God regularly.
 - ii) To give one’s life to God and to serve Him on a full time basis is not only our duty, but also a special privilege to be cherished. That privilege comes with accountability and responsibility. That is the word-picture of this paragraph.
8. Verse 24: The LORD said to Moses, ²⁵ "Say to Aaron and his sons: `These are the regulations for the sin offering: The sin offering is to be slaughtered before the LORD in the place the burnt offering is slaughtered; it is most holy. ²⁶ The priest who offers it shall eat it; it is to be eaten in a holy place, in the courtyard of the Tent of Meeting. ²⁷ Whatever touches any of the flesh will become holy, and if any of the blood is spattered on a garment, you must wash it in a holy place. ²⁸ The clay pot the meat is cooked in must be broken; but if it is cooked in a bronze pot, the pot is to be scoured and rinsed with water. ²⁹ Any male in a priest's family may eat it; it is most holy. ³⁰ But any sin offering whose blood is brought into the Tent of Meeting to make atonement in the Holy Place must not be eaten; it must be burned.
- a) This paragraph and the next paragraph get into “sin offerings”. It might be good at this point to discuss sin offerings and trespass offerings.
 - i) Verses 24-29 deal with “unintentional sin offerings”. That ends Chapter 6.
 - ii) Verse 1 of Chapter 7 starts the ritual for “guilt offerings”. This is called “trespass offerings” in other English translations.
 - iii) Going back to chapters 4 and 5, Chapter 4 was about sin offerings. The emphasis was on unintentional sins. It is usually some sort of sin of “omission”, in that it is something one “should” have done but failed (“omitted”) to do it.
 - iv) The “trespass” type of sin is covered in the remainder of Chapter 5. It is a “commission” sin. It is a sin based on a commitment and the failure to keep that commitment. This includes our commitments to God as well.
 - v) Remember that all sins are forgivable for the Christian except the denial of Jesus himself. This was covered in the last lesson. With that said, sin in the believer’s life still has to be dealt with and there are consequences for committing these sins.
 - vi) If you read ten different commentaries on the difference between sin offerings and trespass offerings, you’ll probably get ten different explanations between the two.
 - a) Both types of sins require the same offerings. If you are not sure which one you violated, it is not as important as the fact that you do something about the sin as opposed to which “type” of sin you have committed.
 - b) There is an interesting clause in Verse 26: “The priest who offers it shall eat it”.
 - i) To recap, the “sinner” brought the animal to the tabernacle. They slaughtered the animal and put the fat on the altar. The priest took some of the blood and sprinkled that blood on the incense (prayer) altar. The remainder of the animal was to be burnt up and taken outside the camp.
 - ii) What is “new” here in Chapter 6 is that the priest eats part of the animal after it has been offered.

- iii) My theme of this lesson has to do with our role as priests. When people sin, those around them suffer. I see this eating ritual as Christians helping other people with their problems. We help “consume” the issues and help others to grow. Don’t get me wrong, only Jesus can take away sins, just as these Old Testament priests cannot themselves take away sins. By eating part of the sin offering, they helping the sinner to alleviate the guilt from the sins.
 - c) There is an emphasis in this paragraph that the killed animal is “holy”.
 - i) Whoever touches the animal must be holy. You get the impression that whatever “holy” means, you don’t want to mess with it. For example, if the animal meat was boiled in some sort of clay pot, the pot must be destroyed after the washing. If the animal is boiled in a bronze pot, it must be washed thoroughly (Verse 28). The blood itself must be washed thoroughly from the priest garments (Verse 27).
 - ii) The idea here is the skinned animal belongs to God. The idea of “holy” is something totally dedicated to God. It is no longer “ours”.
 - iii) Phillip Yancey once quipped that “Leviticus reads like a manual on how to properly dispose of nuclear waste”. This paragraph is a prime example of that. The idea is sin is so “serious” it must be handled in a careful, precise manner.
 - iv) Some time from now, if you forget all of these details, simply remember how seriously God takes sin and how precious is something that is “holy” to Him. If we dedicate our lives to God, we are now “holy”. We are precious in His sight. At the same time, sin is to be taken seriously and dealt with “seriously”.
 - v) By the way, by the time the food goes into the mouth of the priest, it is now considered “holy” and clean. The idea is God accepts the sacrifice and it is now “clean enough” where the priest can share in this sacrifice.

9. Chapter 7, Verse 1: “These are the regulations for the guilt offering, which is most holy: ² The guilt offering is to be slaughtered in the place where the burnt offering is slaughtered, and its blood is to be sprinkled against the altar on all sides. ³ All its fat shall be offered: the fat tail and the fat that covers the inner parts, ⁴ both kidneys with the fat on them near the loins, and the covering of the liver, which is to be removed with the kidneys. ⁵ The priest shall burn them on the altar as an offering made to the LORD by fire. It is a guilt offering. ⁶ Any male in a priest's family may eat it, but it must be eaten in a holy place; it is most holy.

- a) This paragraph gets into the trespass offering. To remind us, the trespass offering has to do with our “commitments” that we have failed to obey. For example, if we have made a commitment to give say, 10% of our take-home income to God, and failed to give it when our paycheck came (or say, the next Sunday), we have committed this sin. The “delay” is the sin. Another example is when we give an oath, and fail to live up to that oath.
- b) This paragraph describes again the specific offering for a trespass. Most of the ritual as described in Chapter 5 is repeated here again in Chapter 7.
- c) The blood of the animal is sprinkled upon all the sides of the altar where the animal was killed (i.e., the fire pit). This is a public witness that the “sinner”, who identifies himself with the animal. The “sinner” realizes that the life must be given as price for the sin.
- d) Notice the emphasis on “the fat”. Verses 3 and 4 give details on the fat-parts of the animal that are to be burned on the altar.
 - i) Remember that the “fat” represents the best parts of the animal. This sin is about not giving our “best” to God when we should have. The sinner cuts up the animal and the priest puts the “best” parts of the animal on the altar. It is a reminder that “God wants our best”.
 - ii) Notice the priest is the one putting the fat on the altar. This is not about Christian “priests” punishing those who don’t give when due. It is about encouraging others to give when they should and helping to alleviate guilt.

- iii) I'm a big believer in giving the "best" of my life to God. For example, I'm an early morning person. On weekdays, I'm a walking zombie by 9 pm. ☺ I do my best work early in the morning. This is the time of day when I pray and write because I want to give God the "best" of my time. For others, it might be late at night or the middle of the day. It is not the time of day that counts, but giving to God of the best of our lives. The same applies to our skills. If God has give you or I a particular skill, God desires that somehow, someway, we use that skill for Him!
- e) Verse 6 says that the priest or his family eats part of the offering.
 - i) Further, the priest must eat it "in a holy place". Again, it's not take-out food. ☺
 - ii) Suppose "your average sinner" realizes they made a mistake against God and committed this type of sin. They feel guilty and want to alleviate that guilt. They bring this animal to the tabernacle and slaughter it. After going through the ritual, they see the priest eating part of the food.
 - iii) For the "sinner", seeing the priest eat the food, or knowing that the priest will eat the food would help alleviate the guilt. The "sinner" would think, "Hey, if the holy priest guy could eat my cooked lamb or goat, God must have accepted my offering. I feel much better." By the priest eating part of the offering, it helps the sinner know that their offering to God was accepted.
 - iv) Getting back to "us" as priests, part of our role is to help other Christians know that their sins are forgiven. Christians need to know that once the sin is confessed, "that is that", even if it is a repeated offense or even if the same sin occurs again soon. There is a still a price to pay to society for crimes and sin has lingering effects to those around us, but that is a different issue. A perfect God can forgive perfectly. We are to reassure others of that fact.
- 10. Verse 7: " `The same law applies to both the sin offering and the guilt offering: They belong to the priest who makes atonement with them. ⁸ The priest who offers a burnt offering for anyone may keep its hide for himself. ⁹ Every grain offering baked in an oven or cooked in a pan or on a griddle belongs to the priest who offers it, ¹⁰ and every grain offering, whether mixed with oil or dry, belongs equally to all the sons of Aaron.
- a) Verse 7 states the "same law" applies for both the sin and guilt offering. It does not mean every aspect of the sin offering and the trespass offering is the same. The idea is that whether a sin is one of omission (i.e., one omits doing what one is supposed to do) or a sin of commission (i.e., commits a sin), that sin still has to be dealt with. One cannot ignore the sin, no matter what type of sin it is.
 - i) The "same law" means that part of the animal being sacrificed now belongs to the priest and his family. The priest eats part of the animal.
 - ii) Further, the hide of the animal now belongs to the priest (Verse 8).
 - iii) Part of the grain offering now belongs to the priest (Verses 9-10).
- b) This paragraph emphasizes the priests "fee" for their service.
 - i) Remember these high priests can't go out and earn a living the same way the other Israelites can. They have to stay busy working the fire pit. Their compensation was part of the food offering along with the hides of these animals.
 - ii) This paragraph supports the idea of the "professional ministry". Paul teaches the same idea in 1st Corinthians Chapter 9, among other places.
 - iii) Remember that these offerings are voluntary. The priests cannot go out and "force" the average Israelite to go deal with their sins so they can have food. The priests our dependant upon the Israelite nation for their livelihood, just as the professional Christian priest and minister is dependent upon their congregation.
- c) Meanwhile, back at the altar. ☺

11. Verse 11: " `These are the regulations for the fellowship offering a person may present to the LORD: ¹² " `If he offers it as an expression of thankfulness, then along with this thank offering he is to offer cakes of bread made without yeast and mixed with oil, wafers made without yeast and spread with oil, and cakes of fine flour well-kneaded and mixed with oil. ¹³ Along with his fellowship offering of thanksgiving he is to present an offering with cakes of bread made with yeast. ¹⁴ He is to bring one of each kind as an offering, a contribution to the LORD; it belongs to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the fellowship offerings. ¹⁵ The meat of his fellowship offering of thanksgiving must be eaten on the day it is offered; he must leave none of it till morning.
- a) In Verse 11 through 15, we change topics again. Remember this section of Leviticus is a review of different offerings with an emphasis on the role of the priest.
 - b) The NIV translation calls this the "fellowship" offering. The word "fellowship" refers to friendship. It would be like two people spending time together in order to get closer. In terms of a fellowship offering, the key word is "gratitude". The idea is "I'm thankful to God for a specific reason, and I want to show my gratitude. That is the idea here.
 - i) With that said, Verses 12-15 are an offering of "general gratitude" for God. An example would be, "I'm so thankful right now for what God has done for my life. I'm just a happy person right now. I just want to show my appreciation to God."
 - c) These verses imply an animal is offered, but there is nothing more specific than that. These verses focus on a grain offering to be made along with the meat. The last verse in the paragraph says the priest is to eat some of the meat. The point here is the focus of the verses is on the grain offering.
 - i) The only thing said about the meat is that some of its blood is to be sprinkled on the altar and some of it is to be eaten by the priest.
 - ii) What is not said is the type of animal. I'm speculating any of the types of domesticated animals discussed in Leviticus so far is acceptable.
 - iii) The idea is "I'm so grateful to God; I just want to show my appreciation. Let's see, what do I have here at home...look a sheep! ☺ I'll bring that."
 - iv) Even when we're bringing an offering for gratitude, and no sin was committed, there still has to be "blood". I believe the idea is to show our gratitude for God forgiving us even when the purpose of the offering is gratitude. It puts this "gratitude offering" in perspective.
 - d) The main point of the paragraph has to do with a grain offering. The grain is used to make bread. The paragraph specifically says that one "loaf" (paraphrase) of bread is to be made without yeast and another "loaf" is to be with yeast.
 - i) In earlier lessons, I've stated that "yeast is bad" in terms of a word-picture. It is strictly forbidden in other offerings. In the annual Passover ritual, one of God's specific rules is to remove all yeast from the house (See Exodus 12). The idea is yeast "corrupts" bread and makes it puff up. The word-picture is sin also "corrupts" our life and grows worse and worse if left unchecked.
 - ii) Here in this offering of, two loaves of bread are given. One is to be with yeast. Both are to be given to the priests. The text does not say why two loaves are given. What is important is that everyone understood that yeast is a negative metaphor.
 - iii) Don't forget that same person making this gratitude offering also brings an animal to be slaughtered. With that said, I believe the bread offering with yeast is a reminder of our sinful-humanity.
 - iv) The offering is to be two loaves of bread: One with yeast, and one without yeast. The one without yeast is the reminder of our "perfected, sinless future nature" in that God forgives all of our sins. The one with yeast is the reminder of our current sinful nature and our dependence upon God in order to deal with our sins.

- e) The last verse specifies that the priest who eats that meat must eat it the same day. The verse ends with "he must leave none of it (the meat) till morning".
 - i) The person in focus is the one making the offering. That person must eat some of the meat offered that same day it is brought. The reason is not stated. Most likely, it has to do with avoiding procrastination. I believe the idea is if you're going to show some gratitude to God, do it and don't delay.
 - ii) Why is the meat specified as to be eaten that same day? I believe eating some of the meat is the idea that one's sacrifice is accepted. We "digest" how God has forgiven us and eat it to memorialize that fact.
12. Verse 16: " `If, however, his offering is the result of a vow or is a freewill offering, the sacrifice shall be eaten on the day he offers it, but anything left over may be eaten on the next day. ¹⁷ Any meat of the sacrifice left over till the third day must be burned up. ¹⁸ If any meat of the fellowship offering is eaten on the third day, it will not be accepted. It will not be credited to the one who offered it, for it is impure; the person who eats any of it will be held responsible.
- a) In this text, there are two types of "gratitude" offerings:
 - i) The previous paragraph was on "general gratitude to God".
 - ii) This paragraph focuses on the second type, which is "vow-completed-gratitude".
 - b) Let me give an example of this "vow-completed-gratitude" offering: Let's say one made a vow to make mortgage payments for many years. The mortgage is finally paid off. One can show gratitude to God for the provision to make those payments over the years.
 - c) Here's another example: "I'm vowing to give 10% of my income to God this year. I don't know how I'll financially survive, but I'm trusting God I will." After a year, one might stop and say, "Wow, God made it possible. Here, Lord, have a sheep to show my gratitude!" ☺ (Ok, we don't offer sheep anymore, but you get the idea!)
 - d) The ritual of two loaves of bread and some meat is repeated (or implied) in these verses. The key difference is the meat offering can be eaten the first day or the second day. Further, the text specifies that the meat cannot be eaten on the third day.
 - i) In the previous paragraph of the general-gratitude offering, the offered meat must only be eaten on the first day.
 - ii) So why the emphasis on eating meat on day 1 or day 2, but not day 3?
 - iii) Part of the answer is hygienic. There were no refrigerators. The meat would go bad by day three. It does show God cares about the health of His people.
 - e) You get the impression this vow-fulfillment-gratitude-offering is a little less important than a general-gratitude offering only in that one has an extra day to eat that offering. Again, the reason is not stated. My speculation is the fact that when a "big mission is accomplished", one is grateful anyway. In that sense, this vow-accomplished and now God gives you two days to eat the meat and "digest" it.
 - f) With a general-gratitude offering, God wants it eaten that same day. I suspect it is because God wants us to have a grateful attitude. It's easier to be grateful when a big vow is completed. Therefore, one has two days to eat that "vow-completed" offering. With a general-gratitude offering, one must eat of it (mentally and physically digest it) the same day. The idea is to teach us to be grateful for our lives in general and not just when some big event is completed.
13. Verse 19: " `Meat that touches anything ceremonially unclean must not be eaten; it must be burned up. As for other meat, anyone ceremonially clean may eat it. ²⁰ But if anyone who is unclean eats any meat of the fellowship offering belonging to the LORD, that person must be cut off from his people. ²¹ If anyone touches something unclean--whether human uncleanness or an unclean animal or any unclean, detestable thing--and then eats any of the meat of the fellowship offering belonging to the LORD, that person must be cut off from his people.' "
- a) This paragraph is a still on the "fellowship" (gratitude) sacrifices. The focus is on the meat itself and how it to be handled. Let me give some of the specific's of this paragraph:

- i) If any animal meat being offered touches anything “unclean” it must not be eaten.
 - ii) If a person is “unclean” for some reason, then eats of this meat, that person is to be “cut off”. Scholars debate what “cut off” means, but most likely it refers to ex-communication. That person is banished from the Jewish society for a time.
 - iii) The term “unclean” is a complicated topic. Mainly it includes not touching anything dead and not touching certain types of animals that are “unclean”. Think of it as avoiding touching something contagious.
- b) Part of the reason for this is hygienic. You can read this paragraph with an understanding of “bad germs” and see how God is trying to prevent contamination.
 - i) During some of the great “black plagues” of the Middle Ages, studies were shown how Jewish communities survived better than others did. The religious Jews of that day observed all of these hygienic rituals. Understand that there was no knowledge of germs during that time of history.
- c) On a more symbolic level, the idea is God saying, “Look, the meat you are offering to me is “holy”. It is set apart so you, I (God) and the priest can spend time together in worship. Don’t mess with that meat. Don’t treat it lightly. Avoid contact with “bad things” when that meat is offered or eaten. Take this seriously”.
- d) The only comparison the Christian has to this is the ritual of communion. Paul said about communion: “A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.” (1st Corinthians 11:28 NIV)
 - i) Paul’s point is one doesn’t take communion lightly. One needs to examine himself (i.e., an inventory of any sin that requires confession) prior to eating communion.
 - ii) That compares well with this gratitude offering. Before we can just spend time with God showing gratitude, we have to clear away the sin. That sin causes guilt and blocks our relationship with God. There are definite parallels between Paul’s discussion of communion and Moses’ discussion of how we are to handle “uncleanness” here in Leviticus.

14. Verse 22: The LORD said to Moses, ²³ "Say to the Israelites: `Do not eat any of the fat of cattle, sheep or goats. ²⁴ The fat of an animal found dead or torn by wild animals may be used for any other purpose, but you must not eat it. ²⁵ Anyone who eats the fat of an animal from which an offering by fire may be made to the LORD must be cut off from his people. ²⁶ And wherever you live, you must not eat the blood of any bird or animal. ²⁷ If anyone eats blood, that person must be cut off from his people.' "
- a) Verses 22 to 24 give additional regulations on these “gratitude” offerings.
 - b) One key point emphasized is that no fat may be eaten (Verse 23 and Verse 25).
 - i) Again, fat represents the “best” of animal. The idea is we give our “best” to God.
 - c) A similar point is no blood may be eaten. (Verses 26-27.) Blood represents life. Putting those two together, “life itself” (blood) and “our best” (the fat) both belong to God. The ransom for our life is paid in blood. In gratitude, we give the best of our lives to God, represented by the fat.
 - d) Of all the offerings discussed in the so far in Leviticus, notice that this last one is on gratitude. The idea is our sins are dealt with in earlier sacrifices, and now we get to what God wants from us: Time with Him. He wants us to live a life of gratitude to Him and be close to Him like a good friend. There is a fine balance between 1) a relationship with God like a close-personal friend and 2) the worship of God with the understanding the He is God and is to be worshipped as God.
 - e) That “balance” is represented here in these offering. The regulations show how we are to take God “seriously” and remind ourselves of such things as blood-atonement for sin and giving our best to God. At the same time, God is emphasizing this ritual “last” as he wants us to approach Him in a close, personal and intimate relationship.

- f) One last bit from this paragraph: Verse 24 says animals found dead cannot be used. In other words, we can't offer God "road-kill" as a sacrifice. This goes along the idea of giving God the best of our lives and not the remains. We give to God first, and not based on "what is left over" at say, the end of the week.
15. Verse 28: The LORD said to Moses, ²⁹ "Say to the Israelites: 'Anyone who brings a fellowship offering to the LORD is to bring part of it as his sacrifice to the LORD. ³⁰ With his own hands he is to bring the offering made to the LORD by fire; he is to bring the fat, together with the breast, and wave the breast before the LORD as a wave offering. ³¹ The priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but the breast belongs to Aaron and his sons. ³² You are to give the right thigh of your fellowship offerings to the priest as a contribution. ³³ The son of Aaron who offers the blood and the fat of the fellowship offering shall have the right thigh as his share. ³⁴ From the fellowship offerings of the Israelites, I have taken the breast that is waved and the thigh that is presented and have given them to Aaron the priest and his sons as their regular share from the Israelites.' "
- a) In these verses, we're back to the priests' payment for their involvement in these offerings of gratitude. To summarize, the person making the offering cuts up the animal. The fat is placed on the altar to be burnt up. The priest, as payment for his involvement gets the breast of the animal and the thigh.
- b) Let's remember the primary role of the priest: It is to make intercession between God and man. Remember the difference between a priest and a prophet:
- i) A priest represents man in coming before God. It would be like having a lawyer who represents you in court and speaks on your behalf.
- a) This is why Christians pray "in Jesus name". The idea is Jesus is our High Priest making intercession for us to God. (See Hebrews 7:25).
- ii) A prophet represents God in coming to man. A prophet preaches "God's message" to mankind.
- c) Part of the priest payment is the breast of the meat. The breast is first "waved" between God and the person making the offer. Jewish tradition is the breast is to be waved back and forth over the fire signifying unification between the offering person and God.
- i) Many commentators logically speculate that because the breast is located next to the heart, the symbolism is about the priest "having a heart for God."
- d) The next issue is the "thigh". The King James Bible says the "shoulder".
- i) This is a (trivial) classical debate among bible scholars. Some of the old Latin versions say "shoulder" and so does the King James Version. The "official" Greek translation of the Hebrew, written prior to Jesus also uses "shoulder". Based on some rules of Hebrew grammar, the word is correctly translated "thigh". Most of the modern translations say "thigh".
- ii) Personally, I think shoulder is correct. Think of one bearing weight on one's shoulders. The idea is the priest "bears the burden" of the one making the offering and bearing a burden on one's shoulder is a classical word-picture.
- iii) When we get to the "uniform" of the high priest in the next chapter, we'll see that the tribes of Israel are engraved on the shoulder piece and breast piece of the uniform. I believe that ties here to shoulder.
- iv) If the word "thigh" is right, we'll so be it. ☺ The thigh muscle is the strongest muscle in the body and maybe it represents one's strength to God.
16. Verse 35: This is the portion of the offerings made to the LORD by fire that were allotted to Aaron and his sons on the day they were presented to serve the LORD as priests. ³⁶ On the day they were anointed, the LORD commanded that the Israelites give this to them as their regular share for the generations to come. ³⁷ These, then, are the regulations for the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sin offering, the guilt offering, the ordination offering and the fellowship offering, ³⁸ which the LORD gave Moses on Mount Sinai on the day he commanded the Israelites to bring their offerings to the LORD, in the Desert of Sinai.

- a) These verses are a summary statement of all the offerings in Chapters 1-7. The idea is God saying, "Look folks, I've picked Aaron and His sons to be your representatives to Me. In exchange with their work, they get some meat and skins as payment. I as God want a relationship based on gratitude. This is to last for generations to come. Don't mess with these regulations in order to have this relationship."
 - b) The "big purpose" of Chapters 1-7 of Leviticus is to teach us how to have a relationship with God. It means we have to be willing to "give up" living for ourselves in order to live for God. That means sacrifice. All of the sacrifice rituals of these seven chapters teach us about changing our lifestyle in order to live a life that is pleasing to God. A big part of that sacrifice is about dealing with sin and helping others dealing with sins.
 - i) That idea is taught here in Leviticus with the emphasis on the role of the priest. The purpose of this section is not just for us to understand ancient Jewish priest rituals; it is for us to understand how to help other Christians who are in need.
 - c) Paul's said, "Imitate me as I imitate Christ" (1st Corinthians 11:1, NKJV). A big part of that "imitation" command is about helping others. Christian "love" is all about putting other's needs in front of our own. That is part of our role as "priests".
 - d) I'm running long and there is a lot to digest in these lessons. If there is one thing to "walk away" with, it is the understanding of Christian involvement, not just in making these sacrifices to have a relationship with God, but also as "priests" we are to help other Christians draw closer to God. Christianity is all about teamwork. Our main function as Christians is to help each other draw closer to God. To minister to one another means to put each other as priority over ourselves. Let me end this with a prayer and that might help to explain this ending concept.
17. Let's pray: Father, Thank You for these word-pictures of sacrifice. Help us to digest them so that we can understand how to draw closer to You. Help us to learn how to deal with sin and then help us to learn how to live a life grateful to You. Help us also to remember that You have called us to be priests and ministers to one another. Show us, "your priests, how we can better serve one another. Show us as priests how we can better be of service to others and fulfill our role as priests. We ask this in Jesus name, Amen.