

## **The Laws of Moses (1450 – 1400 BCE)**

### ***Guilt Offerings***

### ***Special Offerings***

### ***Rules Pertaining to Offerings***

### ***Other Rituals***

**Readings: *Exodus 23:18; 34:35; Leviticus 5:14-19; 6:1-7; 7:1-10, 37-38; 22:17-30; 24:1-9; Numbers 6:22-27; 28:9-15; Deuteronomy 21:1-9***

### ***Reflections:***

- We should note that guilt offerings included sins that people did not willfully commit but accidentally. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 4:4, “My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.” We see that through these offerings of sins of omission, God wants his people to own all sin and failure even if it happens unintentionally. This helps us to realize that we should not try to use rationalizations to justify ourselves but should as quickly as possible “own” our sin.
- This section also focuses on special offerings and rules pertaining to offerings. This sacrificial system reinforced the perfection of the offering (“without defect” - not even a crushed testicle!). Perfection meant perfection. This was important to capture the idea of the transfer of guilt (“...laying on of hands...”) and the need for purity and cleanness. All of these are physical expressions of what one day will be a spiritual reality found in Christ. Again, this is the picture book for the spiritual development of this child-like nation.
- Priests are to pronounce blessings and to decide cases of disputes or assaults. This we will see will become the work of the church for those who are apart of the body of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 5:12-6:8).
- Animals must be eight days old before they are sacrificed. This is to ensure they are a healthy sacrifice. A person wouldn’t know if the animal would thrive in the first few days and so it was related to offering a perfect sacrifice. Also, there is no yeast, again a symbol of spiritual corruption.
- The verses about the lamp stand remind us that the Tabernacle was a place for relationship with God. It reinforced the idea of God’s light being brought into our darkness. Showbread is the symbol of relationship or fellowship. The blessing by the Priest is also symbolic

relationship as well. Notice the blessing is entirely focused on relationship: “The Lord bless you and keep you, the make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face (ultimate relationship) toward you and give you peace.”

- Now these symbols of sacrifice, light, fellowship bread and blessing are all perfectly realized in Christ. He is our ultimate sacrifice that once and for all covers all of our sin. He is the Light of the world and makes us the light of the world. His broken body is our bread, that we as his Priests eat when we fellowship with God and each other (“the Lord's Supper” or “Communion” - communing with God and each other). Finally in Christ we are perfectly blessed. As Paul writes in Ephesians 1:3, “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.”