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The Offerings for the People of Isra'el

9: 15-21

The offerings for the People of Isra'el DIG: Why is the order of the sacrifices significant? Why was every kind of sacrifice offered except the guilt offering? What does this say about Aaron's role of restoring the people to a right relationship with ADONAI? Why was the goat offering necessary? Why was it offered before the burnt offering?

REFLECT: The order of the sacrifices shows us that we must deal with our sin first, before we can dedicate ourselves totally to the Lord? When have you wanted spiritual growth, but were not ready to give up a particular sin? What helped you move toward repentance and greater dedication? How do you live out complete dedication and commitment to God?

We must first deal with our sins before we can dedicate ourselves totally to the Lord.



The goat purification offering (9:15): Having offered the sacrifices for **himself** and **his sons**, Aaron was ready to minister on behalf of **the people** (**to see link click [Bd](#) - The**

Offerings for Aaron and the Priests). A goat was brought as a national **purification offering**. Then the people's offering was presented. He took the goat of the **purification offering** which was for the people, slaughtered it and offered it for sin, like the earlier **purification offering**. Why a goat? Since it was a sacrifice on behalf of the entire nation, one might suppose it should have been a **bull** as seen in **Leviticus 4** (see [AI - The Purification Offering](#)). The national **purification offering** mandated a **bull** when the entire nation inadvertently **sinned** in regard to a particular command (a situation which could easily arise through a mistake in reckoning the calendar or a misruling by the Sanhedrin). In that event, **the blood of a bull** was to be brought inside the Sanctuary, and the meat of **the purification offering** was to be burned outside the camp. Yet here, in **Leviticus 9**, the **purification offering** on behalf of the entire nation was a **goat**, not a **bull**. Furthermore, its **blood** was not to be brought into the Sanctuary, it was to be eaten by **the priesthood (10:16-18)**. This seems to be a contradiction.

But a third passage which reconciles **Leviticus 4** and **Leviticus 9** is **Numbers 15:22-25**, "If by mistake you fail to observe all these mitzvot that ADONAI has spoken to Moshe, yes, everything that ADONAI has ordered you to do through Moshe, from the day ADONAI gave the order and onward through all your generations, then, if it was done by mistake by the community and was not known to them, the whole community is to offer one young bull for a burnt offering as a fragrant aroma to ADONAI, with its grain and drink offerings, in keeping with the rule, and one male goat as a purification offering. The priest is to make atonement for the whole community of the people of Isra'el; and they will be forgiven; because it was a mistake; and they have brought their offering, an offering made by fire, to ADONAI, and their purification offering before ADONAI for their mistake." This **Numbers** passage mandates a **goat** instead of a **bull** for a national **purification offering** and makes no mention of bringing **the goat's blood** into the Sanctuary.

What then is the difference between **the national purification offering** of **Leviticus 4** and **the national purification offering** of **Numbers 15**? Aside from being a different animal, the primary difference is that **the blood of the bull** in **Leviticus 4** is brought inside the Sanctuary, whereas **the blood of the goat** in **Numbers 15** is not. Thus, **the bull** was not to be eaten by **the priesthood**, but **the goat** was. This seeming discrepancy is easily explained. **The bull** of **Leviticus 4** is offered on behalf of both the entire nation and **the priesthood**. Therefore, it must be a **bull** and **the priests** are not to have a share in eating it, because it was offered on **their** behalf as well. **The goat** of **Numbers 15**, however, is offered on behalf of the nation but not on behalf of **the priesthood**. Therefore, it need not be a **bull** (because it was not offered for **the** anointed **priest**), and it was to be eaten by **the**

priesthood (because it was not offered on **their** behalf).¹³²

The burnt offering and additional offerings (9:16-17): Following the sacrifice of **the purification offering** of a goat, Aaron offered up **the burnt offering** (see [Ai](#) - **The Burnt Offering**). There is a general pattern to be observed in these ceremonies. **The purification offering** is made first to provide ritual **purification** and **atonement**. It signifies that as we approach **ADONAI**, **purification** must be dealt with first. Then, **the purification offering** is followed by **the burnt offering**, which symbolizes dedication and commitment to **God**. We live out this second step in relationship with **God** by turning our lives over to **Him** completely. Only then, following **the purification offering** and **the burnt offering**, are we ready to enjoy fellowship with **God** as symbolized by the shared meal of **the peace offering**.

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, how wonderful to feel **Your** great love, but we must also remember that **You** are holy. **You** cannot ignore **sin**. Some people see as a blind man sees and they say that **You** allow everyone to come to live eternally with **You** within heaven. But, if everyone from earth went to heaven - then there would be no difference between earth and heaven, for **sin** would still be there. The full truth is this: **The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some consider slowness. Rather, He is being patient toward you - not wanting anyone to perish, but for all to come to repentance (Second Peter 3:9).** How important it is to **repent**. **Repentance** turns **the sinner** away from their **sin** and causes them to humbly run into **Your** loving arms. How wonderful that **You** accept our **repentance**. Thank you! In the holy name of **Messiah Yeshua** and by the power of **His** resurrection. Amen*

The burnt offering was presented, and he offered it in the prescribed manner. The grain offering was presented; he took a handful of the dough and made it go up in smoke on the bronze altar, in addition to the morning's burnt offering (9:16-17). Aaron offered **the bull** on behalf of **the people** along with **the grain offerings** (see [Aj](#) - **The Grain Offerings: Dedicated to God**), which typically accompanied **burnt offerings**, not to mention **the grain offering** of **the anointed priest**. The Torah also mentions that all of these sacrifices were, of course, in addition to **the daily burnt offering**, which began the sacrificial services of the day.¹³³

Two peace offerings (9:18-21): After the sacrifice of **the burnt offerings** was made, only **the ox** and ram for **the peace offering** remained (see [Ak](#) - **The Peace Offerings**). Again, Aaron officiated in **the blood** service and offered **the bronze altar** portions and fats on the altar. He slaughtered the ox and the ram, **the people's sacrifice as peace**

offerings; Aaron's sons brought him the blood, which he splashed against all sides of the bronze altar, and the fat of the ox and of the ram - the fat tail, the fat which covers the inner organs, the kidneys and the covering of the liver. They put the fat on the breasts, and he made the fat go up in smoke on the bronze altar. The priestly portions of the breast and right thigh he waved before the LORD as a wave offering. The breasts and right thigh Aaron waved as a wave offering before ADONAI, as Moshe had ordered (9:18-21). These were to be eaten by Aaron and his sons as their share from the peace offerings. We assume the rest of the portions of the ox and the ram were to be eaten by the tribal leaders.

Four offerings were brought on behalf of the people. A goat as a purification offering to cleanse the bronze altar, a young bull as a burnt offering, a grain offering, and an ox and a ram as peace offerings. These were fairly modest offerings in comparison with those offered at the principle feasts (see the commentary on [Numbers Fa - The Mitzvot of the Offerings](#)), and negligible compared with those brought by Solomon at the dedication of the Temple (see the commentary on [The Life of Solomon Bo - Fire from Heaven](#)). However, it's not the quantity, but the variety that is the point here. On Aaron's first day in office he offered every kind of sacrifice, except the guilt offering, which was reserved for specific offenses. This indicates that the purpose of these sacrifices was not to atone for specific sins, but for the general sinfulness of the nation, to dedicate the entire nation to draw near to ADONAI according to His appointed means, and to pray for God's blessing on them.¹³⁴

The order of the sacrifices is significant: The purification offering was first to show that the priority was cleansing the Holy Place due to defilement and sin. Then the worshipers would find full acceptance in the presence of God through the atoning effect of the burnt offering. And this prompted their dedication to the LORD, as expressed through the meal offering. Finally, the worshipers could enjoy celebrating peace with ADONAI with the communal meal of the peace offering. When Aaron had completed all the sacrifices, he and his sons and the people of Isra'el were forgiven, dedicated wholly to ADONAI and in fellowship with Him.¹³⁵

The same is true for us today. We must first deal with our sins before we can dedicate ourselves totally to the Lord. Then we can enjoy fellowship with Him.