

The Burnt Offering

by Roy Hession

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being a 'burnt offering' to God, which means being willing to surrender our lives and receive God's pleasure.

Duration: 35:56

Scripture: Hebrews 11:17

Topics: "Burnt Offering"

Description

In this sermon, Roy Hession discusses the story of Abraham and Isaac, where God tested Abraham's faith by asking him to sacrifice his own son. Hession emphasizes the importance of truly understanding the gravity of this test and not just viewing it as a scary story. He highlights the connection between Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and our own acceptance with the Father. Hession encourages listeners to lay their hands on the head of their own 'burnt offering' and recognize that Jesus took on their suffering and deserved punishment.

Transcript

This is Tapes to Live By, tape number 113, side 2. Roy Hession, speaking on the subject, The Burnt Offering. Now I'm going to assume your familiarity with certain scriptures, and I'm not going to read this whole chapter. But this morning, for a short while, I want to just pick out three phrases and put them side by side and let them throw light on one another.

Two are from this chapter and another from another chapter. Now turn, look down to verse 7. This is the story of Abraham taking Isaac up to the mount to sacrifice him. You remember that terrible test that was proposed to Abraham.

I wonder if we really do let ourselves be sort of gripped by the incident, by the extraordinary thing. I mean, what an extraordinary thing. Don't take it always, don't look upon it as a fairy story.

It rarely happens that God, who had been dealing and leading his servant along, ultimately asked him if he would sacrifice his own son to God. And here too, we very often fail to see the real point. I think we get an impression of a certain scripture, but we know it.

The real meaning is very different, as in the case I've just mentioned about David, so here. What was God testing? He was testing Abraham's faith. Hebrews 11 says that, by faith, Abraham offered Isaac.

He wasn't testing his love. Everybody thinks the test of love, did he love God? God more than loved Isaac, that wasn't the test. Here was a son, in whom the promises of God had been vested, that in his seed, Isaac and his Isaac seed, there would spring this nation, which was going to accomplish such great things in the world, and from whom Messiah was going to come.

And now God says, offer him. He says, what's going to happen to that promise? God can't break the promise, yet he tells me to offer him. And do you know, did you know, what really went on in his heart? He said, I know what's going to happen.

I'm going to ask God to raise him from the dead. It's the only way in which God could yet fulfill his promises. Did you know that's what the Bible teaches? Oh, the need for a patient study of the word.

Here's Hebrews 11 commentary. By faith, Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac, and he that had received the promises, offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead. From whence also, in a figure, he did actually receive it.

Got it? Well, we weren't, that's not the subject, that's just incidental. Now, turn down to verse 7. And Isaac spake unto Abraham, My father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the land for the burnt offering? There's our first phrase. Where is the land for a burnt offering? Now, the burnt offering was the basic offering that Israel offered.

Actually, in the book of Leviticus, we're given five offerings that they were to offer. But the first and the greatest was always the burnt offering. Abel offered a burnt offering of a land, even before the rules and regulations about offerings were instituted.

It was a burnt offering, not a sin offering, not a peace offering, it was a burnt offering. And Noah, when the flood had subsided, he offered a burnt offering. Maybe you're ready to offer your burnt offering when the flood subsides here.

And the whole point of the burnt offering was, it was called, especially when they were all instituted, a sweet savour offering. Certainly that was what was said when Noah offered it. God smelled the sweet savour.

The picture of the burnt offering was something that gave pleasure to God. And I believe that that burnt offering was a picture of the fact that human life was meant to give pleasure to God. That there should come from you and from me a sweet savour.

That God should be pleased with man. That God should be pleased with me and find pleasure in me for himself. And that can only be as we are willing to be Lamb.

If I'm not willing to have the disposition of the Lamb, but perhaps that of the hog, as we were saying on Sunday night, Sunday morning, and I resist the things that God brings into my life and the people, I know what he's going to get from me, a stench of resentment, of jealousy, of anger, of self-pity. And I know that that's what he sometimes gets from me and from you. No sweet savour offering, no burnt offering, because we aren't willing to be as the Lamb.

As we said on Sunday morning, the Lamb is the meekest of all God's creatures. You can do what you like to a Lamb and he doesn't turn around and snap at you. And the disposition of the Lamb is that which

receives things as coming from God.

And they do come from God. You can regard yourself as being in the centre of a circle. The circle being the will of God.

And no matter how that incident originates, somebody's malice against you. By the time it's reached you, God's allowed it. It's come through that circle called the will of God.

How do I receive that? Not like the Lamb. I don't bow my head, I don't give up my rights, I don't meekly accept it as from God, I don't say what Jesus said, put up your sword, the cup that the Father has given me, shall I not drink it? We rather say, let me draw my sword. I'm not going to stand for this.

And you know what happens. An evil stench. And that's sometimes what he smells from our homes, from even the sacred relationship of marriage, as we blame one another, as we resist and resent one another, as we cross one another.

Not a sleep saver, but a stench. And so, the sensitive heart, sometimes is in despair. And it has to cry out, where is the Lamb for the burnt offering? For we certainly know we're not Lambs.

We're not willing to be burnt offerings on the daily altar of the affairs of life. We don't bow our heads, we stick them in our head. The one thing we know we're not is Lambs.

If the thing was, where is the lion? We would qualify. Where is the tiger? In God's service. Where are those modernists? Let me go in and... Oh my, we have decided the question was, where is the tiger? Or where is the lion? Or where is the snake? We're addicts to being snakes in the grass, with the poison of ants under our lips.

But oh, dear friends, where is the Lamb for the burnt offering? And that's the one thing we know we're not. You know the very heart of holiness is humility. Brokenness is humility.

The willingness to accept and bow to the will of God, as it comes to me by other people's behavior. Now that person's behavior is not God's will for that person. But I've got to see God's will for me at the moment.

Isn't that hard? But what's the alternative? An evil stench. It's really got to be this, or nothing. But oh, we know it's not this.

And maybe we sought to be Christians and sought to live, walk before God in holiness, but we haven't succeeded. And therefore our cry is, where is the Lamb for the burnt offering? Because I can't see it. After all my attempts, where is the Lamb for the burnt offering? This is a cry of those who've had any exercise of heart at all.

Where is the Lamb? And when there's been that bust up, or that little crossing of wills, and you go to prayer, you may well say, Oh God, where is the Lamb for the burnt offering? I can't see one an hour over, and I'm not one. Well there's the first phrase. Where is the Lamb for the burnt offering? The second is in the very next verse.

Abraham said, God will provide himself a Lamb. God will provide himself a Lamb for a burnt offering. Abraham thought he knew who was going to be the Lamb for the burnt offering.

He thought he knew it was going to be Isaac. He hated to think it. And when that proposition was first made to Abraham, and God saw poor Abraham start back at the very thought of it, I like to think that God said, Abraham, I know it's hard, but I'm not asking you to do anything which I'm not willing one day to do myself.

And one day God did the same, himself. The same thing that he was asking Isaac to do. And a man went up a hill, dragging his cross upon his shoulder.

And he was nailed upon that cross and lifted up. You say, what's God doing? He's doing the very thing that he asked Isaac to do. He wasn't asking Abraham to do.

He wasn't asking Abraham to do something that he wasn't willing one day to do himself. And you can imagine yourself joining the crowd and watching. And when we see the whole implication, this is his sweet eternal son, and God's offering him up on the sacrifice.

Perhaps we would feel like saying, oh God, oh God, put up thy sword. Do thy son no harm. A substitute was found for Isaac.

Find thou a substitute for Jesus. That's what I meant to say. And I believe, had we said something like that, God would have said, a substitute was found for Isaac.

But there's none for Jesus. Why, Lord? Because he is the substitute. The substitute who? Yours.

And God has provided himself a lamb for a burnt offering. And that lamb is his own son. God has determined he's going to have a sweet favour offering from man.

If the first man fails to give it him, he's going to get it from the second man. The Lord. God's purpose is that he shall get pleasure from man.

And he's going to find it. God's going to provide himself with a lamb for a burnt offering. And thus find pleasure in man.

The God man. Now, the burnt offering of course speaks of Jesus being offered on the cross. Now there are two aspects of the cross.

The one is the sin offering aspect. And I cannot go into it now, but the book of Leviticus in the early chapters enumerates the five different offerings that Israel were required to offer. One was the burnt offering.

But the other was the sin offering. And the sin offering only dealt with sin. It didn't have in mind at the moment giving pleasure to God.

Indeed the body wasn't burnt on the altar, but burnt outside the camp. On the refuge heap. So Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood suffered without the camp.

And this aspect of the cross speaks of the judgment bearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sin deserves a refuge heap. And if Jesus bears our sins in his body on the tree, then he must die virtually on the refuge heap.

And the sin offering was not a sweet savor offering. It only spoke of judgment. The judgment of our sins in the Lord Jesus.

Put away as far as he eases from the west in the most awesome and dreadful way possible. The sin offering. Oh thank God for that.

The wrath of a sin-hating God. Hear that again? The wrath of a sin-hating God with me can have nothing to do now. My Savior's obedience to blood hides all my transgressions from you.

Now that's that one aspect of the cross. The sin offering. But there is another aspect of the same cross.

All these five offerings speak of Jesus and his cross. And that is, as I've said, the burnt offering. And it is linked, of course, with the sin offering.

And I'm going to quote you a sentence from an old writer which has helped me to see this lovely aspect. Jesus Christ took up the whole matter of sin, that's the sin offering, in such a way that all his personal perfection and sweet odor has come out to the supreme satisfaction of God and formed the basis of our acceptance with God. There was something more to God's eye than the judgment bearing.

The manner in which he bore our sins. The humility. The lamb-likeness that bowed.

That didn't resent or resist. That even prayed for his enemies. That was something unspeakably beautiful to God.

As C.S. Lewis says, Jesus Christ was treading Adam's guard backwards. Adam's early submission was easy before sin came. But the same submission to the Son of God was the hardest thing in the world.

And the manner in which he bore my sins, when he was avowed he didn't avow again. He went on nothing. The self-surrender of the lamb to the Father, even when that Father's will meant all that, was something that gave infinite satisfaction to God.

That's what Jesus said when he said, Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. And from this point of view, Jesus' sacrifice was an offering to God. It was offered for sin.

But, in the offering of it, that came out from Calvary, something that gave the Father infinite satisfaction. It was not only a sin offering for man, but it was a dirt offering for God. Now this isn't just some nice little point that one makes up, but in Ephesians 5, you have reference to this aspect of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here it is, walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, listen, and given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling favour. Have I ever thought of what the Father finds in Calvary, of delight and pleasure? This is the burnt offering. And God says, for man, I only get an evil stench, but I'm going to have that burnt offering, if not from the first man, from the second.

And God has provided himself, a lamb, for a burnt offering, for a sweet savour offering. I guess it was pretty sweet. You don't know much about it in America.

Roast lamb, there's roast beef here, but in Britain it's roast lamb. And that speaks of the infinite perfection that came from Calvary. But to the supreme satisfaction of God, and which after formed the basis of our

acceptance.

Right now, how far has he got? Where is the lamb for the burnt offering? Says the saint, say you and me, conscious that we've been anything but lamb. God will provide himself a lamb, he's found the lamb. But you say, well that's all right.

Jesus was the burnt offering, he doesn't need to make what's connected with me. For that, we turn to the third passage, and this is in the book of Leviticus. Now don't get scared of that complicated name, Leviticus.

You see, it's to do with the sons of Levi. Which was the tribe that had to do with the sacrifices. We have a similar word, we talk about Americana.

Well this is, you couldn't cut it, Leviana, but it's the same thing, Leviticus. It's just the thing to do with the work of this particular tribe. And the book of Leviticus, and that's the third book of Moses, isn't it? Yes.

In the first chapter. And the first chapter gives the instructions to how they were to offer a burnt offering. Verse three, if his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let it offer a male without blemish.

Verse four, and he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him. Just that, he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering, and he shall be accepted for him. You see, what connection has the excellences that came out from Calvary to the Father's heart with me? From whom there only seems to come an evil stench.

First, those excellences came out by way of the judgment bearing of Jesus for us. Well there's one connection. They only came out because of what he had to do for me.

And then secondly, those excellences, that's with me. That the Father found in Jesus are the form of basis of our acceptance with the Father. So that the Father credits to me the sweetness that comes from Calvary when I lay my hand upon the head of my burnt offering.

Now this is one of the things, I don't know whether this is new ground for you, but we've got to break it. You're going to live with this till you get to glory. And there's a lot about these things in the Old Testament.

Don't shy off them. At first they may seem a bit puzzling, but keep on and you'll begin to say, oh well it isn't so puzzling, it's all about the Jesus I already know. And in Old Testament sacrifices, the sinner would bring his offering, he would lay his hand upon his head, and he would slay it, and the priest would offer the blood upon the altar.

In the case of the burnt offering, the whole beast was then offered on the altar, not worth the sweet savor. But he had to lay his hand upon his head. Now what does that mean, laying hands? Now you know in New Testament times when they ordained anybody, they laid their hands on them.

Laying hands means in each case, either on the head of the offering, or on Paul and Barnabas, identification. In the case of Paul and Barnabas, these men said, the church go as us. We're identified with them.

That's what the laying on of hands ought to mean today. It means identification to that Hebrew. He lay his hand upon the head of the burnt offering.

This is to be regarded as me. This death it dies is my death. This is exactly the death that a man like me deserves.

He takes his place as one justly deserves the death of being afflicted upon that burnt offering. That's what it means. I identify myself.

And that death I recognize as mine. The cause of my death. Oh, this is a lovely thing.

There's a lovely hymn, I don't know if you know it. Not all the blood of peace on Jewish altars slain could give the guilty conscience peace or take away its stain. But Christ the heavenly lamb takes all our sins away a sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they.

My face would lay her hand on that dear head of thine while in the penitent I stand. And there my soul looks back to see the burdens thou didst bear when hanging on the accursed tree and knows her guilt. Believing we rejoice to see the curse removed.

We praise the lamb with every lost voice and praise his bleeding love. I remember that hymn coming alive when I visited East Africa in one of the great revival conventions. It was sung every day.

I thought it was an old stodgy Church of England hymn with a rather stodgy tune. I'd occasionally sung it in England and hadn't seen much in it. But in those days I thought this was the heart of revival.

And in that great time many, many a man laid his hand upon that dear head of thine and said, that death is mine. That death he died is what I deserve. That's me, righteous opulist, deserving that.

Which he took for me. It was the loveliest picture of repentance. My face would lay her hand on that dear head of thine while in the penitent I stand.

And there confess my sin. And the sweet favor that went from that offering is to form the basis of my acceptance with the Father. That's what is meant when we are accepted in the beloved, that beloved one who is willing to go so low at the Father's command.

Who re-enacted that self-surrender so wonderfully All those actions of the Father known are the basis of my acceptance with the Father. And I am accepted as if they were mine. Listen.

And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering and it shall be accepted for him. Jesus Christ is accepted for me. That surely should finish with a hangover.

Shouldn't it? Praise the Lord! As another hymn writer. I'm sorry, I think the hymns are supposed to quote the scripture. But after all, they're just expositions of it.

Now we see in Christ's acceptance but the measure of our own. Do you believe that? That's it. Maybe that's new.

I thought I was just let off. No, my dear friend. I thought perhaps I could conceive myself being made as white as snow.

Oh, no. Whiter than snow. Now I see in Christ's acceptance but the measure of my own.

And you're free. Free from the hangover. You are, when you've been to the cross as a penitent and identified yourself by confession of sin with that death and said that's what I deserve.

That's my death. Over this thing. This latest rumpus.

This latest nasty disposition I've manifested. Those last nasty words. That proud spirit.

If I've gone there I am now as acceptable to God as Jesus is. Can you believe it? Thou hast fulfilled the laws of another lovely hymn. Thou hast fulfilled the law.

How did Jesus fulfill the law? There are two ways in which you can fulfill the law. You can fulfill the law by keeping it or if you've broken it by paying its penalty. And when you have a ticket and you go and pay you've fulfilled the law.

Thou hast fulfilled the law. Oh, he kept it. But we hadn't.

So he had to fulfill it for us which meant he had to die. He paid his penalty. Thou hast fulfilled the law.

And we are justified. Ours is the blessing thine the curse. Ours the blessing thine the curse.

We live but thou hast died. And this is the connection between me and those three saver-off. It's all very well.

Jesus pleased the Father but I don't. What's the connection? Here it is. It was for me.

And those excellences are to form the basis of my acceptance when I come honestly as a penitent. It's helped me often. I've sometimes got wrong on something as a law.

That's very clear. I lay my hand on that dear head of thine. My burnt offering.

Your dark deep suffering for what I deserved for this greatest thing. And do you recognize that? That disposition. That attitude we adopted that caused unhappiness and disharmony in the home.

It deserved what Jesus took for it. Do I admit that? That's identified. That's putting my hand upon the head.

I say that again isn't it beautifully put. My face would lay her hand on that dear head of thine while as a penitent I stand. And there I confess my sin.

Then I see in his acceptance but the measure of my own. And it doesn't please God to see us dragging our steps. And it doesn't help.

When the person who's been so wrong is seeming to be set free has got peace and tells the folks that they've hurt and asks their forgiveness but does it as an emancipated person it sort of does come into everybody. It isn't merely a hanged dog confession. It's someone who's seen that in Jesus they're as right with God as his blood can make them.

And this perhaps is often to be reiterated and repeated. It has to be in mind. This lovely transaction of repentance and peace.

A dear friend of mine who has recently been called to glory one of our dearest team members we like to call him in England used to sign his letters yours, repenting and rejoicing. That's it. Lay your hand upon his head believing we rejoice as we look back.

And so there it is. There's our picture. We thought about the Lamb in the midst of the throne of Lamb.

Do I see this blessed connection with me? I who've anything but. But I tell you I could repent of being a tiger. I could repent of being the lion.

I could repent of being the snake in the grass. As it happens if I'm open to be convicted. And I can go to Calvary and get peace.

And what else happens? Progressively the mind that was in Christ the disposition that was in Christ becomes mine. Maybe you will never think it does. But if you go on repenting and rejoicing others will see it.

Well I have a very active repenting and asking someone to forgive you. If that isn't the Lamb what is? Tigers don't do that. Lions don't do that.

Everybody's wrong but them. But here's someone going down. And you know you just feel bad about it except you've just got peace you're praising.

But they're seeing Jesus. Whatever power on earth could have bent that neck. And as you bend it they see the figure of the Lamb.

And he's helping you to go that way too. But even the difference in your life that others may see you might even spot some of it yourself. I hope you don't too much.

Make you proud. Just as well not to see. But even if you do that is never the basis of your acceptance.

It's all. I'm changing I'm not reacting as I used to never have more peace. Never.

The next moment something's going to happen you will react. Where's your peace? I hear the words of love I gaze upon the blood I see the mighty sacrifice. That's where my peace is.

That's where I'm accepted. Someone has said, an old writer said There is one work over which God can never say it is finished. It's the work of the Spirit in your heart conforming you to Christ.

He can never say it is finished. It's never complete. There's always much to be done.

Therefore it can never be the ground of my peace. But there's another work of which Jesus said it is finished. Not the work of the Spirit in me but the work of Christ for me.

It's enough for the biggest failure if he goes and lays his hand upon the head of the burnt offering. Well there's our little picture. Three words.

Where is the land for the burnt offering? God will provide himself and has indeed a land for a burnt offering and you and I are called upon to lay our hand upon the head of our burnt offering and it he shall be accepted for us and you're free in heart and happy in him. Until the next time and you know what to do. And the devil can't get us down either.

I thought I was going to put that man out of action for a week. They've gone to Jesus again and they're free again. So praise the Lord for this wonderful redemption.

God's remedy for sin which is to be of continual application for the same.

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