Leviticus 1 is about being 100% devoted to God because He is 100% devoted to you. The burnt offering grants a look at how God values wholehearted devotion from His people. This freewill offering required sinners to bring a male animal from their livestock to the temple and give the whole thing to the Lord (Lev. 1:3, 4). Bulls, sheep, goats, turtle-doves, and young pigeons were accepted (Lev. 1:5, 10, 14).

This was quite a demonstration of devotion since the offeror’s family was dependent on these animals for food, clothing, tools, and weapons. Interestingly, the animal was to be slain on the “north side of the altar,” which was the side of the altar closest to God’s throne (Lev. 1:11; Isa. 14:13). This meant the offeror put their wholehearted devotion on display before the King of kings Himself!

Some want God to have only limited control of their lives; they prefer that He have a more compartmentalized involvement. To describe it using a metaphor, they want Him to have access to a file on their desktop but not complete access to what they eat, watch, and listen to, whom they date and marry, how they spend their money, and on and on. Their devotion to God is limited to attending church and does not impact their day-to-day lifestyle. But God does not value “lukewarm” Christianity. In fact, it grosses him out! (Rev. 3:16). His character isn’t lukewarm, and He will not accept it from His people. He wants us either cold or hot; 100% devoted or not at all. Perhaps nowhere in the entire Old Testament is this more emphatically communicated than in Leviticus 1 and the burnt offering. All is to be placed on the altar as an offering to God (Lev. 1:13).
Write out Leviticus 1 from the translation of your choice. If you’re pressed for time, write out Leviticus 1:10–13. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map it.
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Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

Circle repeated words/phrases/ideas

Underline words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw Arrows to connect words/phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse.
Write it out multiple times to help memorization.

In what ways did the burnt offering point to God’s amazing devotion to humanity?

What are areas in your life that you need to give wholeheartedly to God and allow Him to remove or enhance for His glory?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/stw02-3

AN ALL-OUT HEART

On Mount Sinai, God gave Moses five types of sacrificial offerings: the burnt, grain, sin, guilt, and peace offerings. We will eventually learn about all of these, but the burnt offering sacrifice was the oldest and most prominent of the offerings. Some wonder why there needed to be so many different types of sacrifices, and the answer is found in wondering why there are four Gospels in the New Testament. Each Gospel, like each sacrifice, reveals a different aspect of Jesus and what He values, and each compels us to give our lives fully to Him in a different way.

Great Bible heroes like Adam, Abel, Noah, Job, and Abraham offered burnt offerings to the Lord. By doing this, they pointed in faith to the coming substitutional death of Jesus and His desire for wholehearted commitment from His people. The burnt offering represented a wholehearted commitment to God motivated by His wholehearted commitment to us. The Hebrew word for the burnt offering was olah, which means “that which goes up or ascends.” Unlike the other sacrifices, the burnt offerings were completely consumed on the altar of burnt sacrifice. The only thing that remained was the animal’s skin, but this was given to the officiating priest, not to the offeror, again demonstrating one’s complete and wholehearted commitment to God (Lev. 7:8).

By offering this particular sacrifice, offerors were in essence laying themselves upon the altar and dedicating themselves to God completely, without holding anything back. No doubt Paul was referring to the burnt sacrifice when he said, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service” (Rom. 12:1). God highly esteemed the burnt offering, a fact that can be seen in how it is described as being “a sweet aroma to the Lord” three times in Leviticus 1 (vv. 9, 13, 17). There are at least three reasons for this joyful acceptance of the offering.

First and most important, God was pleased with this offering because it was an act of faith in His Son, who would come and die for the sins of the offeror. The book of Hebrews tells us that God got no sadistic pleasure from the animal sacrifices in Leviticus (Heb. 10:5–8). The only reason He was pleased with the burnt sacrifice is that it showed that His people believed in His Son (Heb. 11:6).

Second, the burnt offering was special because it was a volunteer offering. It was not mandatory, but came entirely from the heart of the offeror (Lev. 1:2). In response to Jesus, who willingly laid down His life, God is calling us to willingly lay down our lives as well. Interestingly, the first three offerings in Leviticus are freewill offerings. God delights in those who give from the heart (2 Cor. 9:7).

Third, this sacrifice was highly valued because it showed the kind of response He wants from His people when they understand all He has done for them. God wants His people to be 100 percent devoted to Him in response to His 100 percent devotion to them! God wants us to love Him because “He first loved us” (1 John 4:19).
Tabloids are notorious for reporting false stories. They have been known to manipulate pictures, even going so far as to insert one person's face onto another person's body. They create controversy, stimulate gossip, and ultimately get the gullible to purchase their magazine. The devil does the same thing when it comes to God. Satan accuses God of the evil he is doing, then photoshops God into the situation, trying to make Him take the blame. Thankfully, when we know and trust God's Word, we can discover God's incredible mercy, compassion, goodness, and innocence.

The Canaanites practiced animal sacrifice, believing the act of slaughtering an animal brought their gods great pleasure and provided a meal for them. It was also hoped that this would win them favor or grace with the gods. There was no sense of atonement for sins in the Canaanites' understanding of animal sacrifice. Sadly, this was a satanic perversion of the original sacrificial system that portrayed God as volatile, cruel, greedy, lustful, and even blood-thirsty, for that was not the intent of the sacrificial services that God started in the Garden of Eden and made law in Leviticus. God had warned Adam and Even that if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would die (Gen. 2:17). But when they fell, God had a plan in place to save them from instant death and to infuse them with hope for life beyond the grave.

From the very beginning God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit foresaw the horror of sin and put together a plan to save humanity. Jesus Himself, because of our sins, would make a wholehearted commitment to humanity by laying down His life and dying on a Roman cross. Jesus was to be the whole burnt offering, "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). He was the one to whom all the sacrifices pointed. Leviticus is a prophetic book that we now know is precise in its identification of Jesus as the Messiah (1 John 2:2).

Immediately after Adam and Eve sinned, God Himself conducted the first sacrificial service (Gen. 3:21). He offered a burnt sacrifice, which taught our first parents three important truths: First, that sin is evil and ultimately leads to pain, shame, and death. Second, that the Son of God would one day come, take upon Himself the guilt of our sins, and die a horrific death in our place. So rather than the burnt offering pointing to a cruel God, it symbolized the very opposite: God Himself in the person of His precious Son dying for humanity. Third, the burnt offering was a call to every believer to dedicate themselves fully to the One who had given them all He had to give (Rom. 12:1, 2).
What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

Genesis 22:1–19  
1 Peter 1:19; 2:24  
Hebrews 13:15, 16  
Ephesians 5:2  
Luke 7:37–50  
Romans 12:1, 2

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Leviticus 1?
OUR BURNT SACRIFICE

When John the Baptist shouted, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29), he was clearly identifying Jesus as the burnt sacrifice. Notice that John did not say behold the bull of God, the goat of God, or God’s turtledove. This points to the burnt offerings that the priest offered every morning and evening, to begin and end the daily sacrifices (Exod. 29:39). For these foundational, bookend burnt offerings, a lamb was slain.

For anyone who understood the temple services, this was an exceptional title to bestow upon Jesus. In calling Jesus the Lamb, John was not only identifying Him as the fulfillment of 4,000 years of burnt sacrifices—he was also highlighting the fact that Jesus was the foundation of the entire temple service. He was the Alpha and Omega of the sacrifices! Every burnt sacrifice pointed to Jesus, who “takes away the sins of the world” (John 1:29).

Everywhere in Leviticus 1 we see Jesus represented by the burnt sacrifice. He laid down His life willingly, He was sinless and without spiritual or physical blemish (Lev. 1:3), He was washed and clean both inside and out (v. 9), and He was completely dedicated to God, wholehearted in His commitment to His heavenly Father. He took our sins upon Himself, identified with us, and died the death we should have died (vv. 4, 5). He atoned for our sin, paying with His blood to give us forgiveness and right standing with God (v. 4).

While the burnt offering was indeed a demonstration of one’s wholehearted commitment to God, it was first and foremost a demonstration of God’s commitment to us through His Son. He gave everything so we could be made right with Him (at-one-ment). It is this commitment to us that motivates our commitment to Him! We first recognize that Jesus is our burnt sacrifice, and we respond by laying ourselves upon the altar of complete and wholehearted commitment to the Lover of our souls.

Here are all the aspects of this one sacrifice that reflect Jesus. Like Christ:

• The burnt offering was physically unblemished (1 Pet. 1:18, 19)
• The whole sacrifice was given to God (John 19:30; Heb. 7:27)
• The burnt offering provided atonement for and cleansing from sin (Rom. 3:24, 25; 1 John 1:7)
• The sacrificial animal was put to death (Matt. 26:42)
• The offering was a “pleasing aroma to God” (Eph. 5:2, NLT)
• The blood of the burnt offering was poured out (Heb. 9:11, 12)
ENTIRE CONSECRATION

“Christ shows that there can be no such thing as neutrality in His service. The soul must not be satisfied with anything short of entire consecration—consecration of thought, voice, spirit, and every organ of mind and body” (Ellen G. White, manuscript 78, 1899, in *EGW SDA Bible Commentary* [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1956], vol. 5, p. 1093).

“For the building of the sanctuary great and expensive preparations were necessary; a large amount of precious and costly materials was required; yet the Lord accepted only freewill offerings. . . . Devotion to God and a spirit of sacrifice were the first requisites in preparing a dwelling place for the Most High. All the people responded with one accord” (Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1890, 1908], pp. 343, 344).

“While the building of the sanctuary was in progress the people, old and young—men and women, and children—continued to bring their offerings, until those in charge of the work found that they had enough, and even more than could be used” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 344).

“The sacrificial system, committed to Adam, was also perverted by his descendants. Superstition, idolatry, cruelty, and licentiousness corrupted the simple and significant service that God had appointed. Through long intercourse with idolaters the people of Israel had mingled many heathen customs with their worship; therefore the Lord gave them at Sinai definite instruction concerning the sacrificial service” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 364).
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Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

Where are areas in society that devotion is seen as inspiring? How about in the church?

How did the burnt offerings point to Jesus?

Although the burnt sacrifices ended with Jesus, what lessons can we learn from them today?

How complete is your commitment to God?

What are the areas in your life that need to be surrendered to Him?

How does Jesus’ sacrifice motivate your dedication to Him?

Does modern Christianity reflect God’s value of wholehearted commitment? How can your life personally answer this with a resounding yes?

In what ways can you make a whole offering to the Lord today?