

Leviticus & Hebrews: The Necessity of the Cross

Lesson 1: Worship at the Cross

Anchor Verse: *For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life.* ~Leviticus 17.11

Key Verses: *“Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of livestock from the herd or from the flock.”* ~Leviticus 1.2

...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high...~Hebrews 1.2-3

Imparting wisdom to the next generation is a heavy task. However, it is crucial that children know that should they fall asleep with their gum still in their mouths, it is likely to fall out of their mouth and become glued into their hair. There are many, many supposed remedies for removing gum from a child's hair, but in the end it requires a decent pair of scissors, followed by a memorable haircut (cue the camera!) The gum creates a crisis, but the source of the crisis isn't the gum. Instead, disobedience, or ignoring wisdom and instruction, creates a crisis which requires a resolution that is both punitive and offensive. Adam and Eve's disobedience severed their ability to continue to enjoy God's presence, or to **worship** God. But God provided an *eternal* resolution through **God the Son**. God's plan of redemption was carried out in the punitive and offensive sacrifice of His Son, Jesus the Christ, so that we may revel in the presence of God (worship). Thanks be to God!

Lord God, we come before You in humility and in wonder of what You have for us as we study Your law and Your Son this year. Open our minds to You as we read Your Word. Holy Spirit, bring it to life in our hearts and our minds. Increase our knowledge and our faith through this lesson. Please accept the time we spend thinking, praying, and pondering You as an offering and act of worship of You.

Leviticus 1.1-2 The LORD called Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying, ²“Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of you brings an offering to the LORD, you shall bring your offering of livestock from the herd or from the flock.

Hebrews 1.1-4 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Diamonds:

1. God's instruments for His instructions/teachings in this week's passages are unique to their time period within God's fulfillment of His plan to restore His people back into a familial relationship with Him. Contrast how God is speaking, along with what God is saying in this week's passages (Leviticus 1.1-2 and Hebrews 1.1-4):

The hard contrast in God's instruments for His commands correctly implies a crisis: humanity is no longer living in the presence of God or living in worship of God. At the beginning of time, God walked with His creation daily, communing with His good works. God created man (Adam) on His sixth day of Creation (Genesis 1.26-31). Adam's daily living included reveling in the glory of God, of immersion with God's physical presence (Genesis 2.8,15; 3.8), as well as living at rest in the splendor of God's *original* Creation alongside his Handcrafted (Genesis 2.20-25), gorgeous wife, Eve. God provided wisdom to Adam by instructing Adam and Eve to not eat

To worship the Lord is to ascribe to Him the honor, glory, adoration, praise, reverence, and devotion that is due Him, both for His greatness and for His goodness (Isaiah 42.8; 48.11; Matthew 4.10; Revelation 14.7). The...worship of angels, saints, or other supposed deities constitutes idolatry, and is strictly prohibited in Scripture (Exodus 20.3-5; Colossians 2.18; Revelation 19.10, 22.9; Westminster Confession, Chapter 21, paragraph 1).

True worship must begin in the heart and the mind of the worshipper...God accepts only that which flows from sincere devotion to Him...For believers, the supreme act of worship is to offer all of themselves as a living sacrifice to the Lord (Matthew 22.37). Genuine worship engages the mind; it does not bypass it (1 Corinthians 14.15). Worship encompasses much more than the singing portion of a church service; it is a way of thinking and living for God's honor and glory (Romans 12.1-2).

God's laws are "an expression of [God's] values."⁸ What a treasure to study a book that allows us to know God's heart better. Knowing that God's laws are difficult to understand in 2024, we commit to providing you a thoroughly researched understanding of God's heart through each of His laws. Likewise, Jesus came to fulfill several of His Father's laws, and offers an even deeper understanding of God's heart through His ministry while on earth. Therefore, as we study Leviticus, we will also study how Jesus personally addressed, reinforced, and/or fulfilled God's law. It is our prayer that the laws are less academic, confusing, and revolting as we join the crowds watching Jesus fulfill them and explain them while touching the untouchable, curing the incurable, and the overwhelming compassion He felt as He looked upon His helpless people (Matthew 9.36).

8. Read Leviticus 1.1-2 aloud, replacing the words "offering" with the word "worship". How does this exercise reframe your understanding of God's command in this verse (you may need to repeat yourself a few times!)? What thoughts about worship does this exercise reveal? What are you learning about God through interchanging these words?

Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer: Every week, we ask you to write out a scripture verse found in any portion of the lesson. As you write it, modify it by filling in your personal name, your situation, or any other modification that engages you to consider God. You will NOT be expected to share the exact details of your prayer.

However, your group will be exponentially blessed and encouraged as you choose to share any portion of your prayer every week. Truly, do NOT miss out on God's blessing for you and for your sisters-in-Christ by skipping this section or remaining silent week after week.

Freely use this example or boldly (and bravely!) write using a different verse from this week's study that God has seared into your heart and mind:

Leviticus 1.1-2 + Hebrews 1.1-4 + Psalm 119:

Prophet, Priest, and King, I worship You. I praise You for speaking to all Your people through many instruments over time. I praise You for Your Law because it reveals Your pursuit of Your people.

⁸ Sklar, p. 57

[Praise God using a variety of verses from Psalm 119. Question 7 may be a guide for this, or you may find a different section of Psalm 119 better expresses your heart. Weave your circumstance, name, and/or specific gratitude using Psalm 119]

Increase my faith in my King, who sits at Your right Hand. Challenge my mind to meditate on Your law in view of Your Son's fulfillment of it. Give me courage to boldly ask Your Spirit to teach me when I don't understand Your law, and when it is offensive to me. Thank You for Your Son, Your Heir, whose inheritance includes me! May my offering this day, my worship of You in all I do, please You, My King and Savior. Amen.

Hughes, R. Kent, *Hebrews: An Anchor for the Soul*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015) pp.15-37
MacArthur, J. & Mayhue, R., *Biblical Doctrine*, A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2017)
Mathews, Kenneth A., *Leviticus: Holy God, Holy People*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009) pp.17-28
Morales, L. Michael, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015) pp.15-143
Phillips, Richard D., *Hebrews*, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2006) pp. 5-25
Sklar, Jay, *Leviticus*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014) pp. 9-11, 27-76, 85-89

Lecture Outline:

Aim: Living with Christ's Cross in view cultivates an awareness of God's presence.

- I. The Shadow (Leviticus 1.1-2) **TR1:** Cultivating an awareness of God's presence is only possible through Christ's sacrifice on the Cross.
 - a. How often are you aware of God's presence in your day-to-day life? Is it an occasional awareness or a perpetual awareness?
 - b. What do you need to do to cultivate a more acute awareness of God's presence WITH you?
- II. The Savior (Hebrews 1.1-4) **TR2:** Cultivating an awareness of God's presence deepens our knowledge of His character and ignites genuine worship.
 - a. How well do you know God's character?
 - b. Which of God's character traits has His Son Jesus revealed to you in the Bible?
 - c. How might those character traits cultivate a more genuine worship of the One True God?