

EXODUS

THE GOD WHO RESCUES

SESSION OBJECTIVE: EXODUS 29:1-21

To understand more about how the priesthood was consecrated.

Read the Text:

Now this is what you shall do to them to consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests. Take one bull of the herd and two rams without blemish, 2 and unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers smeared with oil. You shall make them of fine wheat flour. 3 You shall put them in one basket and bring them in the basket, and bring the bull and the two rams. 4 You shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. 5 Then you shall take the garments, and put on Aaron the coat and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastpiece, and gird him with the skillfully woven band of the ephod. 6 And you shall set the turban on his head and put the holy crown on the turban. 7 You shall take the anointing oil and pour it on his head and anoint him. 8 Then you shall bring his sons and put coats on them, 9 and you shall gird Aaron and his sons with sashes and bind caps on them. And the priesthood shall be theirs by a statute forever. Thus, you shall ordain Aaron and his sons. 10 Then you shall bring the bull before the tent of meeting. Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the bull. 11 Then you shall kill the bull before the LORD at the entrance of the tent of meeting, 12 and shall take part of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and the rest of the blood you shall pour out at the base of the altar. 13 And you shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, and the long lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, and burn them on the altar. 14 But the flesh of the bull and its skin and its dung you shall burn with fire outside the camp; it is a sin offering. 15 Then you shall take one of the rams, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram, 16 and you shall kill the ram and shall take its blood and throw it against the sides of the altar. 17 Then you shall cut the ram into pieces, and wash its entrails and its legs, and put them with its pieces and its head, 18 and burn the whole ram on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the LORD. It is a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the LORD. 19 You shall take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram, 20 and you shall kill the ram and take part of its blood and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tips of the right ears of his sons, and on the thumbs of their right hands and on the great toes of their right feet, and throw the rest of the blood against the sides of the altar. 21 Then you shall take part of the blood that is on the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments, and on his sons and his sons' garments with him. He and his garments shall be holy, and his sons and his sons' garments with him. (Exodus 29:1-21, ESV)

Study the Text:

Consecrated, Pt. 1

Chapter 28 describes the vestments that the priesthood was meant to wear in great detail. Now, chapter 29 describes the process of consecrating Aaron and his sons as priests to God, with more information concerning each type of sacrifice to be offered. Below is a breakdown of the first half of this chapter and the key details contained therein.

SERVANTS

Notice in verse 1 that the language connected to the priests is that of a servant: "...that they may serve me as priests." Because the Tabernacle was the house of the LORD, those who served in the house were, by extension, servants of the Master of the house, the LORD. Those who serve the LORD are often referred to as "servants" or "slaves." For example, in 1 Kings 8:53, Israel is singled out to be a people for the Lord, declared by the servant Moses. The servanthood of Moses is also affirmed in Joshua 1:7. In 2 Samuel 7, David is selected to be the next king, thereby establishing the Davidic dynasty. Yet, 2 Samuel 7:5 calls him "a slave." Jeremiah 7:25 refers to all of the prophets as slaves to God. In the New Testament, it is not uncommon for the

apostles to refer to themselves as servants (Rom. 1:1; Ja. 1:1; Jd. 1). The priests, however, act in a *literal* servant role as keepers of God's house.

ORDINATION AND CLEANSING

The ordination process entails several supplies, and so God gives the list of required items before telling Moses what to do (Ex. 29:1-3). Moses is the one to whom God speaks in this chapter since he will be the one to ordain Aaron and his sons. Aaron and his sons were to be washed with water (Ex. 29:4) and dressed with the vestments described in the previous chapter (Ex. 29:5-6). Further, Aaron was to be anointed with a special oil that would later be described in Exodus 30:22-33. After Aaron was anointed, the rest of his sons were dressed in vestments as well, but the text does not indicate that they would be anointed. Likely, it was to set Aaron apart as the high priest and head of the order.

A SIN OFFERING

Verses 10 through 14 describe the first of many offerings made during this process. The "sin offering" required a "bull" to be brought "before the tent of meeting," where the LORD would meet them. The priests were to lay hands on the bull and sacrifice the animal. Some of the animal's blood was to be placed on the altar's horns. At the same time, the rest of it was poured out at the base of the altar (Ex. 29:12). The "fat that covers the entrails" as well as "the long lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them" were to be burned on the altar (Ex. 29:13). The "flesh of the bull and its skin and dung," however, were to be burned "outside of the camp" as a sin offering (Ex. 29:14). The fatty parts were considered the best parts of the animal. They were thus offered to the LORD, while the useless parts were burned away from the camp. No part of the animal was to be consumed because of the nature of the sacrifice. As a sin offering, it was to be devoured by flame, symbolizing the burning away of transgressions.

An additional note regarding the sin offering is required here. The language is subtle and easy to miss, but typology is at play in verses 10 through 14. The language of "pouring out" the blood on the base of the altar is significant: "...and the rest of the blood you shall pour out at the base of the altar" (Ex. 29:12). This is reiterated in Leviticus 4:7-32 as well. The pouring out of blood is a phrase that the Lord Jesus Christ alludes to during Matthew's account of the Lord's Supper. Matthew's context is decidedly Jewish, and he intentionally includes language that would have evoked a specific understanding in his readers. Jesus, while instituting "the cup," says: "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26:27b-28). Notice that the "sin offering" language corresponds to Exodus 29, particularly concerning the pouring out of blood on an altar. Jesus establishes an essential reality in what He would soon do on the cross. His blood would be a sin offering, poured out at the altar of sacrifice, in this case, *the cross*, for the forgiveness of sins.

THE FIRST RAM

One of the two rams was also to be sacrificed by the priests, the blood also used to consecrate the altar, and the body properly dismembered and offered entirely to the LORD as "a food offering to the LORD" (Ex. 29:15-18). This follows the theme of the Tabernacle as the dwelling place of the LORD. As a house for the LORD, it makes sense that the LORD would not only "live" but also "eat meals" there. This offering was essentially the process of preparing the meal for the LORD to eat in His home.

THE SECOND RAM

The second of the two rams was then to be sacrificed, and this sacrifice included a consecrating element in it. The priests themselves, who were to be consecrated by placing the blood of the ram on the right ears, right thumbs, and right big toes of each of the priests (Ex. 29:20). After this was done, the rest of the blood was thrown against the sides of the altar. Finally, they would mix the blood with the anointed oil and "sprinkle it on

Aaron and his garments, and on his sons and his sons' garments," (Ex. 29:21), which consecrated not only the priests, but their attire.

What About Now?

One takeaway is the reality that sin requires death (Rom. 6:23). Truly, "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Heb. 9:22). The sacrificial system implemented for the priests to uphold provided a way for atonement to be made. This, however, is no longer necessary since Christ, the final high priest, "entered once for all into the holy places, not using the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12). Sin requires death. The death of Christ is the sufficient payment for all who believe in Him (Rom. 5:2). Another takeaway is the importance of holiness for those who serve the Lord. The priests were to be consecrated and ordained unto service, and their consecration also involved sacrifice. Accordingly, we as "priests to God" have been consecrated by blood (1 Cor. 6:11). One of the benefits of a study like this is that it reveals how Christ has fulfilled the law in its entirety. It is not that God no longer requires blood for forgiveness and consecration, but that the blood of Jesus is sufficient to fulfill that requirement.

Study Questions

Day One

1. Read Exodus 29:1-4. What process or act does this passage describe? Why was this necessary? Who did it involve? What materials were required?

2. Read Exodus 29:5-9. In your own words, describe what this passage is saying.

Day Two

1. Read Exodus 29:10-11. What animal was brought to the entrance of the tent? What were they to do with the animal? What were they to do with part of the blood?

2. Read Exodus 29:12. What is significant about the "pouring out" of the blood? (Hint: See above notes)

Day Three

1. Read Exodus 29:13-14. What were they to do with the fatty parts of the animal? What were they to do with the flesh, skin, and dung? What kind of offering was this?

2. Read Exodus 29:15-18. What were they to do with the first ram? How much of it was offered to the LORD? Were they permitted to consume the animal? Why or why not? What kind of offering was this?
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Day Four

1. Read Exodus 29:19-20. What were they to do with the second ram? Where were they to apply the blood? What were they commanded to do with the rest of the blood?
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2. Read Exodus 29:21. What were they to do with the blood and anointing oil?
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Discuss the Text!

Week 75 Discussion: A Bloody Religion

Blood is a significant component of the Christian faith. Sin requires death and the shedding of blood. Animals were used as substitutes in the sacrificial system to bring atonement for sin in that they became the offering of life and blood in the place of the people of God. However, this sacrifice was insufficient for all time and had to be practiced yearly. The need for blood and death as a payment for sin is still in effect. Talk as a group about what the New Testament says concerning Christ's fulfillment of the sin offering for you as a believer.

1. Icebreaker: Have you ever taken the blame for something you didn't do to get someone else out of trouble? If you're comfortable, share details with the group.
2. Read Hebrews 9:22. What is almost everything purified with under the law? Why is blood necessary? (Hint: Read Leviticus 17:11)
3. Read Romans 6:23. What does sin require? What does that mean?
4. Read Matthew 26:26-29. How does Jesus reorient the sin offering towards His own actions?
5. Read 9:12-14. How does this passage correspond to the Book of Exodus?
6. Kid Talk (For Home): Tell your child to imagine they did something that would get them in trouble. Have them imagine that one of their friends takes the blame so they don't receive the punishment. Explain to them that this is what Jesus did for us—He took the punishment for something He didn't do so that we who were guilty would not be punished.

Takeaways:

1. The priesthood was consecrated through the shedding of blood.
2. The sin offering is typological in that it foreshadows the final sin offering of Christ.
3. The priests and their garments were made holy by the sacrifice.