

WELCOME (15 minutes)

- **Ice Breaker:** How do you like your steak cooked? – Well-done, rare, medium, etc.

WORSHIP (10 minutes)

- Sing #1, “At the Cross (Love Ran Red)” from the **2016 Small Group Worship CD**.
- Take some time to let a few people thank Jesus for His sacrifice on the cross.

WIN (15 minutes)

- **PRAY** for your list of people who need to know Jesus as their Savior!
- **PLAN** something to do to reach out together to these people.

WORD (25 minutes)

Read: Leviticus is about the Levites and Priests and the offerings and feasts the Israelites were to observe. The **burnt offering** was for the removal of the people’s guilt before God; the **grain offering** restored Israel to serve God and neighbor; and the **fellowship offering** was for the reconciliation between God and His people.

Have everyone open their Bibles to the book of Leviticus.

Point #1 – We need atonement to remove our guilt – Read Leviticus 1:3-9

Discuss: The details for this offering seem bizarre. Most of us have never been around slaughtered animals; we are used to packaged meat in the supermarket aisle. But the Israelites were largely herdsman. They were used to participating in the process of preparing animals for human consumption. Yet the requirements for the burnt offering were something the Israelites must have found quite distinctive. Why do you think the offerer was supposed to identify with the animal by laying his hands on the head? What did this communicate about the nature of the atonement?

Read: The offering would be a “pleasing aroma to the Lord” (1:9). This implies God would find it acceptable. Paul later used this language to refer to Jesus’ crucifixion as “a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God” (Read aloud Ephesians 5:2).

Discuss: Have someone read aloud Hebrews 9:12 and also 10:1-4, 14, & 18. Israelites could offer this offering at any time, but on one day of the year, atonement came into sharper focus – The Day of Atonement (“Yom Kippur” in Hebrew). This was the only time when Israel’s high priest was allowed to enter the most holy place in the tabernacle (later, the temple). There he would carry the blood of a specially slaughtered bull and make atonement (Lev. 16:14, 34). The New Testament writer of Hebrews, fully aware of

this ritual, explained how the Day of Atonement – indeed, all the animal sacrifices by the Israelites – were merely a shadow and a prefiguring of Christ’s atoning death. What response does all this create for you?

Point #2 – We need atonement to restore us to service – Read Leviticus 2:1-3

Discuss: Like the burnt offering, the grain offering was costly for the offerer, both in the ingredients and in the preparation. The description here mentions “fine flour”, but it also included olive oil and frankincense, a costly spice. Why do you think it was important for these offerings to be costly? What did the cost of the offering communicate about the seriousness of sin?

Discuss: Have someone read aloud John 12:24. In other biblical texts, Jesus’ death is compared to the death of a sacrificial lamb; Here Jesus directly compared it to planting a grain seed – a sacrifice that would serve to benefit a people without number, a sacrifice of death to bring life! How does the grain offering inform your understanding that Jesus’ death restored you to serve? How has freedom from guilt through faith in Christ enabled you to serve others? How will you serve others in the coming days?

Point #3 – We need atonement to reconcile us to God– Read Leviticus 3:1-5

Discuss: Unlike the burnt offering, only the fat and certain internal organs were burned. The offerer could eat the cooked meat of this sacrifice, but only on the day of the sacrifice or the next day (7:16-18). In other words, it was a kind of fellowship meal between God, the priests, and the offerer. The animal offered in sacrifice and then eaten symbolized that there was now a right relationship with God. In most cultures, those who share a meal together do so only if a certain level of friendship is present; in this instance God was, as it were, inviting the worshipper to enjoy a friendship meal with Him. Why is it important not only to see atonement as covering our sin but ALSO restoring us to a right relationship with God?

Discuss: Have someone read aloud Romans 3:9-10 and Ephesians 2:13. All humans, by nature, are estranged from God. The only remedy is “the blood of the Messiah”. How does the fellowship offering inform your understanding that Jesus’ death reconciled you to God?

Discuss: All 3 of these offerings show the seriousness of sin and the costliness of salvation. Yet all of them were merely anticipatory. They looked forward to the real atonement sacrifice – the bloody, violent, death of Jesus. What are ways you can express gratitude to God for this?

For next time encourage everyone to read Leviticus 5-27. We’ll look specifically at Leviticus 5 next before moving to Deuteronomy.

WORKS (25 minutes)

- Break into smaller groups of **2 or 3’s of the same gender** to pray for each other.