

Jesus is Sacrifice - Isaiah 53:1-12, Matthew 27:11-23
Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading

Notes from the Sermon

The theme of sacrifice is vital if we are going to understand the grand story of the Bible and God's saving purpose. The first sacrifice happens in the Garden of Eden immediately after Adam and Eve ate the fruit in direct rebellion against the command of God. God told them that if they ate the fruit they would die, which of course they eventually did. But on that day they were allowed to live. When their sin exposed their own shame and nakedness they used fig leaves to cover themselves, but fig leaves of their own making were not sufficient to push back death or cover their shame. The first sacrifice is an animal whose life was taken by God Himself, an animal that died that day when Adam and Eve should have. The skin of the animal became a clothing covering to cover the naked shame for the first couple, and the animal's death was literally in the place for our human parents. A little later in the narrative we are told the story of God's command for Abraham to take his son Isaac to a mountain chosen by God to sacrifice him on an altar there. The story is so difficult, Isaac was the miracle son of promise given by God to Abraham and Sarah after being barren into their 90's. Now God is asking Abraham to take the life of his son in some bizarre worship ritual. Did Isaac deserve death? Well, if we truly understand how the Scriptures frame our humanity, the answer is absolutely. Each person sins, is guilty before God, and deserved the removal of all of God's grace and gifts, including life itself. Did you get that, life itself is a gift of God's grace, so when we thumb our nose at God and tell Him that we will live as we want, justice at that moment would be for God to remove all of His gifts including life itself. So, for God to ask for this sacrifice was not, well, unfair. Yet, at the last minute God provides a ram, another animal who dies on the altar taking the place of Isaac. This theme moves forward in the story of the Passover, when a spotless lamb is sacrificed as part of God's rescue story. Sacrifices and the sacrificial system brings this theme to another climactic moment when God's people arrive at Sinai for their meeting with their God and the covenant that Yahweh forms with Israel. Israel will fail to keep the covenant with God, yet, they have a Tabernacle (which eventually becomes a permanent structure called the Temple) where sacrifices are made daily on behalf of the people. With lots of dead animals, it may seem that God is cruel and doesn't much like PETA. If we paused and thought about the dead animals, it is truly revolting, and makes God seem capricious. But the truth is that God is painting a vivid picture of the costliness of sin and God's absolute dedication to justice in the sacrifices.

Our sin is always an offense against the perfect holiness of God and is a destruction of all that He has made. At any moment if God gave what we deserved our last breath would coincide. The theme of sacrifice pictures the incredible ugliness of our sin, and the cost to provide forgiveness. Yet, the sacrificial system in the Old Testament was like trying to pay off a high interest credit card. While the payment at the time kept the creditor from foreclosing, it was never actually sufficient, and had to be done again the next day and next year. Yet the theme of sacrifice in the Old Testament was also preparing the Hebrews for a future sacrifice, one that would involve a perfect sinless man who was also God Himself. This man would willingly lay down His life on behalf of His people. Some 700+ years before Jesus was born the prophet Isaiah was given a vision of the horrible glorious day of Jesus' death. In Isaiah 53 we see a man who was despised and rejected by people, and who gets pierced and crushed. At first Isaiah believes this happens because God is ticked at the person, but quickly realizes something else is happening. This man is dying as a sacrifice, pierced FOR our transgressions, crushed FOR our iniquities, wounded FOR our healing. We like sheep run astray and deserve the wolf, yet it was God's will to lay on Him the sin of us all. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament picture found in all the sacrifices, and His death is sufficient to pay the whole debt. No installment plan that will never get paid off here, our sin debt was paid in full.

The theological term referring to Jesus as our sacrifice is *Penal Substitutionary Atonement*. Remember this idea, each word helps us understand this great theme and what

took place on the first Easter weekend.

- Penal - The death of Jesus paid the penalty I deserve, taking the justice and wrath of God on my behalf.
- Substitutionary - I deserved the very cross on which Jesus died, yet, He died in my place, FOR my sin.
- Atonement - His death created the path for a reconciled relationship with God almighty through His Son Jesus.

This is what it means for Jesus to be our sacrifice, and without it we would get only what we deserve from God. Praise God for Christ's death and the vindication of His death on Easter Sunday morning,

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Mark 15	Mark 16	Numbers 1	Numbers 2	Numbers 3	Numbers 4	Numbers 5

Reading from this past week: Isaiah 53:1-12, Matthew 27:11-23

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Matthew 21:1-11, Luke 24:44-49

Family Worship

Song - *Glorious Day*

<https://youtu.be/gkJJ2XZwDHc>

Gospel Project

Unit: In the Beginning

Story: Jesus came to be the sacrifice for sin.

Big Picture Question: What did Jesus do to save us?

Answer: Jesus lived a sinless life, died on the cross, and rose from the dead.

Scripture: Hebrews 10

New City Catechism

Question #15: Since no one can keep the Law, what is its purpose?

Answer: That we may know the holy nature of God, and the sinful nature of our hearts; and thus our need of a Savior.

Verse: Romans 3:20

Scripture

Isaiah 53, Matthew 27:11-23

- What is a sacrifice? Why is the idea of sacrifice so important for us to understand the Bible and our salvation?
- How does the language of Isaiah 53 help us understand the implications of Christ's sacrifice?
- Barabbas is a figure in the story of Good Friday that actually represents all of us. What are some ways his story and ours are parallel?
- How does the resurrection of Jesus prove the sufficiency of His sacrifice?

Prayer

*Praise God that Jesus died on the cross as your sacrifice and rose again to defeat death, hell, and the grave.

*Pray those who heard the Gospel in Easter services in Eureka and around the world would come to believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior.