

In the Beginning...Jesus



Lesson 37

Jesus: Lamb of God

Themes:

- The Old Testament system of priests, sacrifices, and temple was temporary, pointing to something much better—Jesus.
- Jesus offered Himself as the one perfect sacrifice for sin.
- Jesus' death fulfilled the Old Testament promises.

Scripture:

Hebrews 9:11-12, 22, 25-26; 10:4, 11; John 1:29; 1 Peter 2:24

Memory Verse:

John 1:17 (and review verses 1-16)

Visuals for Lesson:

- Bible.
- *In the Beginning...Jesus* poster.
- Resource Packet:
 - JESUS: GREAT HIGH PRIEST and JESUS: LAMB OF GOD.
 - BRONZE ALTAR (from Lesson 20).
 - PUNISHMENT.
 - SACRIFICE.
 - ANIMALS ARE NOT GOD'S IMAGE BEARERS.
 - JESUS.
 - 3 CHECK MARKS.
- Paperclip.
- Self-adhesive nametag with "JESUS" written on it.
- Boxed cake mix, bowl, and necessary ingredients (choose a mix that requires vegetable oil, but do not bring vegetable oil).
- Car oil or fragrant bath oil (**Note:** if you use car oil and plan to actually pour some of it into the cake mix, choose a bowl that is disposable and, after the lesson, dispose of the oil and cake mixture properly).
- Large, heavy sack labeled "SINS"

Lesson

Display JESUS: GREAT HIGH PRIEST and tape it over **JESUS: THE FINAL WORD** on the *In the Beginning...Jesus* poster. Remind the children that in our previous lesson we learned how Jesus fulfilled two more Old Testament clues: **GOD'S TEMPLE** and **ONE HIGH PRIEST**. God had meant the Old Testament temple and priests as something temporary. They were good things, but not the best. When Jesus came, He replaced these older things with something perfect and permanent: Himself.

In our last lesson we talked about an important job the priests had. They acted as "go-betweens" for God and His sinful people. They were allowed to enter into God's presence in the temple on behalf of the people. But before they could enter the tabernacle or temple and do this, they had to do something very important. What was it? [They had to offer sacrifices on the altar.]

Display BRONZE ALTAR. Why were sacrifices needed? [For the forgiveness of sin. (See **Hebrews 9:22**.)] Remind the children that God has decided that the right punishment for sin is death. All people have failed to keep God's commands perfectly and, therefore, we are all sinners and all deserve death. **Display PUNISHMENT.** In the Old Testament, God accepted animal sacrifices as a *substitute*. Use a paperclip to attach the **SACRIFICE** over the figure of the man on **PUNISHMENT**.

In order for God to show He is holy and righteous, He must punish sin. God says the right punishment for sin is death. Because God is also merciful, He allowed a substitute—He accepted the death of animals instead. Every day, over and over again, the people would have to kill animals and shed the animals' blood, and then the priests would have to place the dead animals on the altar for sins to be forgiven. This went on week after week and year after year. Thousands and thousands of animals had to be killed.

Why don't we do this anymore? Did people just get tired of killing all of those animals? Did these sacrifices finally work so that they aren't needed anymore?

Have the children turn to **Hebrews 10:11** and **10:4**:

And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

These verses tell us something very important about the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament. What is it? [They could not take away sin]

completely so they had to be done over and over again.] *Why couldn't animal sacrifices take away sin?*

Illustration: Display the cake mix. Read the instructions about what must be added to the cake mix. Empty the cake mix into the bowl, then add the water and egg.

But there is one thing that I'm missing—vegetable oil. The cake won't cook right without the oil. I have an idea of what I could use as a substitute. (Display the bath oil or car oil.) This is oil, too. I can use it instead of the vegetable oil.

Ask the children if it would be okay to substitute the car oil for the vegetable oil in the cake since both are oil. Why not? Explain that even though both are oil, they are very different kinds of oil. One may be eaten. The other one may not be eaten—the bath or car oil is poisonous. Bath or car oil is not the right kind of substitute for vegetable oil when baking a cake.

Display ANIMALS ARE NOT GOD'S IMAGE BEARERS. Explain that the blood of animals could never take away the sin of people. Animals and humans are both living things, but people are very different than animals. People have been made in the image and likeness of God. Killing animals in place of sinners is not the right kind of substitute to take away sin. God knew this.

Then why did God command the people of the Old Testament to offer animal sacrifices then? [Allow the children to respond.] God did it as a temporary way to show the need to forgive sin and to serve as a clue to what would ultimately take away sin. God had something much better coming—a better sacrifice—a perfect sacrifice! What was it?

Choose children to read **Hebrews 9:11-12** and **25-26**:

But when Christ appeared as a High Priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

Nor was it to offer Himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then He would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

According to these verses when Jesus appeared as our great High Priest, did He offer any kind of sacrifice? What was it? [Himself.] How did He offer Himself as a sacrifice? What does that mean? [Allow the children to

respond.]

Choose a child to come to the front. Place the **ANIMALS ARE NOT GOD'S IMAGE BEARERS** sign on him. Explain that in the Old Testament, when a person brought an animal to be sacrificed, he had to lay his hand on the head of the animal before killing it. Demonstrate this by laying your hand on the child's head. Why do you think that God commanded the people to do this? One reason was to show that it was as if you were "laying" your sin on that animal. It was a way of showing that the animal was going to "bear" or "carry" your sin for you and then take the punishment of death in your place.

Point to the picture of Jesus on the *In the Beginning...Jesus* poster and ask:

What kind of punishment did Jesus receive on the cross? [The punishment of death.] Did He deserve to receive this punishment? [No.] Why not? [Because He never sinned.] So why was He punished with death?

Have a **Sword Drill** with **John 1:29**:

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

These words were spoken by John the Baptist. Who did he say Jesus was? [The Lamb of God.] Why would John call Jesus the Lamb of God? How did Jesus act as a "lamb" who could take away sins?

Choose a man and a boy (or two boys) to come to the front. Give the boy the sack labeled SINS to hold. On the man, place the **JESUS NAMETAG**. Next, hold up **PUNISHMENT**. According to God, which person deserves the punishment of death? Give **PUNISHMENT** to the boy to hold.

But here is what the Bible says Jesus did:

Read **1 Peter 2:24a**:

He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree.

*According to this verse, what did Jesus do in His body? [Bore our sins.] What does the verse mean by "on the tree"? [Jesus dying on the cross.] Who should now be holding the sack the (boy) is holding? [The man should take away the SINS sack from the boy and hold it.] What else now needs to be changed? [The **PUNISHMENT** sign. Give this to the man, too.]*

*We had a clue in the Old Testament about a Man who would carry His people's sin. What was it? (Give a child a **CHECK MARK** and have him*

tape it on the picture clue: **SIN BEARER.**) *We also had a clue about the correct punishment for sin. What was it?* [Give another child a **CHECK MARK** and have him tape it on the picture clue: **PUNISHMENT FOR SIN—DEATH.**]

Explain that God knew all along that the blood of animals could never take away sin. The blood of animals that the priests sacrificed was something temporary—it was a clue pointing to something much better that was coming. Only a perfect, sinless man could be the right kind of substitute to die in place of God's sinful people. This perfect substitute was Jesus. Jesus is the great High Priest who brought to God the one perfect sacrifice: Himself. That is why He is called the Lamb of God. Remove **SACRIFICE** from **PUNISHMENT** and attach **JESUS** in its place.

But it wasn't enough that Jesus fulfilled these two clues. Jesus, the Lamb of God, had to be sacrificed at just the right time. Why did the time matter? Because we had an Old Testament clue about a special lamb that the Israelites were to kill at a certain time. Look carefully at the picture clues. What clue was this? [**THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE.**]

*The Passover was a special night a long time ago when God "passed over" the homes of the Israelites. God was about to send the final plague throughout Egypt, killing the firstborn children. In order for the Israelites to escape this plague, God said they must sacrifice a perfect lamb and sprinkle its blood on their doorposts. Every year the Israelites were supposed to celebrate the Passover in order to remember what God had done in saving His people from death. But this Passover was only a clue to something more special—Jesus. Jesus was the final perfect sacrifice, saving His people from sin and death. And He died at just the right time—during the Passover—to fulfill this clue. (Tape a **CHECK MARK** on the picture clue: **THE PASSOVER SACRIFICE.**)*

Tape **JESUS: LAMB OF GOD** over the **JESUS: GREAT HIGH PRIEST** on the *In the Beginning...Jesus* poster.

There is a very good reason why there is no longer a temple in Jerusalem and priests who offer up sacrifices daily. God never intended them to last forever. They were all temporary and were all clues pointing to something much better: Jesus. Jesus is the one and only great High Priest who acts as the perfect "go between" for God and man. He came to offer one perfect sacrifice to take away sin: Himself.

Application

- **WORKBOOK**—Have the children turn to Lesson 37 in their workbooks. In the notebook section have them write the three Old Testament clues Jesus fulfilled. Ask the children how the sacrifice Jesus offered was different from any other. (You may want to explain **Hebrews 9:12**.) Why was it necessary for Jesus to offer Himself? (Recall the illustration of the cake mix and the oil, and read **Hebrews 10:4**.) Why was He the perfect substitute for sinners? [He was fully Man but is fully God. He was without any sin.] Because of this, what was He able to do for sinners? Read and discuss **1 Peter 2:22-25**. What Old Testament passages does Peter want us to recognize in these verses? [**Isaiah 53**]. Have the children complete their workbook page. Ask: *Do you take the punishment of death seriously? What kind of death is the Bible talking about?* [Hell—experiencing God's fierce anger forever. See **Matthew 25:41**.] *How does it feel to have someone willing to take your sin and be punished in your place? What does it mean to die to sin and live to righteousness? Do you believe that you have died to sin? What might that look like in a person's life? What might living to righteousness look like? If a person gives no evidence of dying to sin and living to righteousness, what might it mean?*
- Recall that God instructed the Israelites to place special furniture in the tabernacle and then the temple. However, there was a type of furniture that was missing—chairs! The priests who worked in the tabernacle and temple had nowhere to sit down. Why not? What were they always busy doing? [Offering sacrifices.] Why did they have to keep doing this? [The blood of animals could not take away sin.] Read and discuss **Hebrews 10:11-12**. Why did Jesus “sit down” after He had made an offering for sin? What was the single offering He made? *Did He make this offering on your behalf? Do you feel like your “sins” have been removed, or do you feel guilty? Do you feel forgiven by God because you are trusting in Jesus? Or, do you still feel alienated from God because of your sin?*
- Because of what Jesus has done, how should you respond to Him? Read and discuss **Acts 3:18-20** and **Hebrews 10:19-23**. (Especially the call to respond in verses **22-23**.) What does it mean “draw near with a true heart”? What does “in full assurance of faith” mean?
- Read **Isaiah 53:3-6** and have a time of prayer, giving thanks for the wonder of Jesus coming to be the perfect sin bearer so we might have our sins taken away.
- Have the children turn to Lesson 1 in their workbooks and look at the picture on the page. Recall that Jesus was killed at a very specific time—during the celebration of the Passover. The “last supper” Jesus shared with His disciples before His arrest was the Passover meal. Ask the

children: *Did Judas "just happen" to betray Jesus on the Passover? Did the Jewish leaders "just decide" to arrest Jesus at this time? Did Pilate "just happen" to sentence Jesus to death during the Passover? Did Jesus die on the Passover just by accident? How did all of these things come about at just the right time?*

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