

HOW TO APPROACH OUR HOLY GOD

Part 11 of Foundations 260 - OT. Leviticus 8-9.

Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. April 19, 2026.

THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION EVER ASKED

The most important question is:

- How can I gain access to God?
- There is an answer in Leviticus 8-9.

LEVITICUS 8-9

The background of Leviticus 8-9.

- Leviticus 1-7 has instructions about sacrificial offerings.
- Chapter 8 is the consecration of the priests to oversee the sacrifices.
- Chapter 9 describes the first offerings:
 - First, the sin offering atoned for sin.
 - Then, the burnt offering also atoned for sin.
 - Then, the priest blessed the people.
 - Finally, the Lord revealed his glory, and the people fell down in worship.

1. WE SHOULD APPROACH GOD ON HIS TERMS

One phrase is repeated over and over in Leviticus 8-9.

- The phrase is: “as the LORD had commanded...” (or something very close to it). The phrase is found in 8:5, 8:9, 8:13, 8:17, 8:21, 8:29, 8:35-36; 9:6, 9:7, 9:10, and 9:21.
- The significance of the repeated phrase is this: God decides how we gain access to him.

Why does access have to be according to God's command?

- God commanded it.
- God is holy in the sense that he is “other” or transcendent, so we would never gain access unless he told us how.
- We are sinners, and by nature, we would either run away or invent inappropriate ways of approaching God.

Leviticus 10:1-2 (CSB) Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu each took his own firepan, put fire in it, placed incense on it, and presented unauthorized fire before the LORD, which he had not commanded them to do. 2 Then fire came from the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. 3 Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD has spoken: I will demonstrate my holiness to those who are near me ...

2. WE SHOULD APPROACH GOD THROUGH A MEDIATOR

Leviticus 8-9 demonstrates that access to God is through a priest.

- The priest is a mediator because we have no direct access to God.
- The High Priest wore an ephod, a vest with twelve stones representing the twelve tribes of Israel. He offered sacrifices as the people's representative.

6 Moses said, "This is what the LORD commanded you to do, that the glory of the LORD may appear to you." 7 Then Moses said to Aaron, "Approach the altar and sacrifice your sin offering and your burnt offering; make atonement for yourself and the people. Sacrifice the people's offering and make atonement for them, as the LORD commanded."

- The High Priest went into the Tent of Meeting while the people stayed out.

Even today, under the New Covenant, we need a mediator. We cannot access God directly.

3. WE SHOULD APPROACH GOD THROUGH THE BEST MEDIATOR

The Levitical priesthood was temporary until the perfect priest arrived.

- The Levitical priests were sinners who needed to atone for their own sins before offering sacrifices for the people. Plus, their sacrifices had to be repeated day after day, year after year.

Jesus Christ is the better/best mediator/priest.

- God appointed Christ as our High Priest (5:5-6).
- Christ is our eternal High Priest, who saves us permanently (7:23-25).
- Christ is our sinless Priest (7:27).
- Christ offered our atoning sacrifice in heaven (8:1-2; 9:24).
- Christ is our full and final atoning sacrifice (7:27; 9:25-26).
- Christ's sacrificial blood provided our eternal salvation (5:9; 9:12; 10:12-14).
- Through Christ, we confidently draw near to God (Hebrews 4:16; 10:19-22).

THANK GOD!

Thank God for providing us with a perfect, eternal Mediator in Jesus Christ.

- Otherwise, we would be so far from God, and life would feel futile.

"God, apart from Christ, is an angry, offended Sovereign. Unless we behold Him in and through Christ, the Mediator, the terrors of His Majesty would overwhelm us. We dare not approach the Father except in Christ because of our sins. We first fasten our eyes upon Christ, then upon the Father. If Christ does not bear our guilt and reconcile us unto God, we perish! Before any man can think to stand before the face of God's justice or be admitted to the secret chamber of God's mercy or partake of the riches of His grace, he must look to the Mediator, Christ Jesus." - Stephen Charnock, The Existence and Attributes of God

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Review

- Review Peter's April 19th teaching and study guide.
- What were the main insights of Peter's teaching?
- What questions do you have about the passage or Peter's teaching?
- What were the main applications or takeaways for your life?

Discuss

1. How has our culture's "DIY spirituality" (choose your own path to God) influenced the way you and people around you think about approaching God?
2. How does the story of Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10 (offering "unauthorized fire") challenge our casual or experimental attitudes toward worship? What would "unauthorized fire" look like in today's American church context?
3. Hebrews says Jesus "always lives to intercede" for us. When you picture Jesus praying for you and offering the atoning power of his sacrificial death in heaven right now, how does that help you deal with your sin and shame?
4. Peter said, "Jesus is all we need" to approach God. Where are you subtly adding other requirements—performance, emotions, spiritual track record—before you feel you can really come near?

Prayer Focus

- Our 247 prayer: "Lord, please add daily to the Cornerstone those who are being saved."
- Pray that this sermon has a profound and lasting impact on our church.