

Alter Call: Group Discussion

Part 1: “A Place Called Sanctuary”

The Israelite sanctuary demonstrates the story of salvation. The sanctuary and its services are all about Christ.

SYMBOL	FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST
Animal Sacrifices	Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:9; Hebrews 9:12-14)
Priest	Christ our High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-5:10; 7:11-8:7)
Veil	Christ’s flesh broken for us (Hebrews 10:19-20)
God’s Law	the character of God → Christ’s character (1 John 4:8; Colossians 2:9; John 8:58)
Bread of Presence	Jesus the bread of life (John 6:48)
Seven Branch Lamp	Jesus is the light of the world (John 9:5)
Water from the Basin	Jesus is the living water (John 19:34; 1 John 5:6-8)
Incense	merits of Christ’s intercession for us (Luke 1:9-10; Revelation 8:3-4; Leviticus 1:9)
Alter of Burnt Offering	Christ sacrifice on the cross (Hebrews 13:10-12; Leviticus 4:30-31)

Discussion Questions:

- Which one of these symbols do you connect with the most? Why?
- How does the sanctuary and its furnishings pointing to Christ enrich your view of salvation?

Part 2: “A Diamond that is Forever”

All sacrifices pointed to Christ’s sacrifice (John 1:29; Hebrews 9:25-28). Christ heals us from our sinful state and gives us eternal life (John 3:16; Psalms 103:2-3).

Offering	Aspect of Christ’s Sacrifice
Burnt	Christ’s offering of Himself consumed Him (Hebrews 7:27)
Grain	Christ’s life-giving power for His people (John 6:48; Matthew 26:26)
Peace aka Well-being	Christ’s life for those who accept Him (John 6:53-56; Matthew 26:26-28)
Sin aka Purification	Christ’s blood ransoms/redeems human lives from the deadly “debt” of sin (Leviticus 17:11; Matthew 6:12; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Ephesians 1:7)
Guilt aka Reparation	Christ’s sacrifice covers our debt (Matthew 5:23-24)

Love = Justice + Mercy

Discussion Questions:

- What do you find surprising about the various types of offerings?
- When you envision God, do you think of Him in terms of justice or mercy?

Part 3: “The Cost of Mercy”

When the blood from sacrifices touch the holy things of the sanctuary, they would carry the defilement that came from the offerer. That means throughout the year the defilement would build up in the sanctuary. The blood of offerings washed away the sins of the people; and left them at the sanctuary. They were not left there forever. On the Day of Atonement, God directed His people to have the sanctuary purified through a ritual performed by the high priest (Leviticus 16:16). Thus, purging the sanctuary of all evils that had already been removed from the persons by sacrifices throughout the year. Meaning that on the Day of Atonement, the sanctuary was cleansed, and sin was eradicated from the camp.

God’s reputation matters. By forgiving guilty people, God lays Himself open to a charge of injustice. In Christ, God took responsibility for forgiving guilty but repentant people. He can do that because He paid the price (Romans 3:21-26). God’s forgiveness doesn’t just leave us the way we were. It changes us and gives us new life. He empowers us to live a new life.

Discussion Questions:

- What does the Day of Atonement mean in terms of what God is trying to teach us about *how* He saves?
- How can God forgive guilty people and still be loving/just?
- In what ways are you allowing God’s forgiveness to change your life?

Part 4: “Who is Afraid of the Judgement?”

The question answered in the judgement is, “who is saved”? The purpose of the judgement is not to condemn people, but to see who can be saved.

Discussion Questions:

- How does this knowledge affect your view of the judgement?
- What is hindering you from viewing the judgement with joy and relief?