How Did Jesus Serve as Both Priest and Sacrifice? *The Old and New Covenants

Leviticus 9; Hebrews 7:22–8:7

Background
Old Testament sacrifices were complicated, messy, bloody, and public. Blood from the animals covered the horns of the altar, the altar, the priest, and even the people watching the sacrifice. There was little doubt in the minds of the people of Israel that sin was a serious problem that required serious and gruesome atonement.

The purpose of the sacrifice was to restore the relationship between God and Israel. In order to enjoy a close relationship with God, the sins had to be paid for by the blood of the unblemished animals.

The high priest (Aaron, in today’s reading) had to offer sin and burnt offerings to atone for his own sins before offering sacrifices on behalf of the people. Once that was accomplished, he could stand before God and make atonement for the sins of the people. Afterward, a right relationship with God would again be restored.

Through the sacrificial system, God was preparing Israel for the sacrifice of the Messiah, which would put an end, once and for all, to the old covenant system. Jesus would be the perfect sacrifice that would finally pay for all sins; no further sacrifices would be necessary for salvation. Jesus was also the perfect High Priest. He would have no need to offer a sacrifice for His own sins. He would never have to leave the Most Holy Place, driven away by His own sinfulness. He would remain there, at the right hand of God, permanently interceding on behalf of the people.

Devotions
Andrew’s head was down, his palms were sweaty, and he could barely sit in the chair. He was sitting outside the principal’s office, and he wasn’t looking forward to the meeting. Andrew was guilty, and there wasn’t going to be any way to get out of some major trouble. He sighed as he thought about what his parents would say, “Your brother never gave us trouble like this! Why can’t you be more like him?” Andrew often wondered that himself. His brother was good at everything. He was a great older brother. He made time for Andrew, even let him hang out with his friends. He rescued Andrew from bullies, and he drove Andrew around when his parents were too busy. But Andrew was tired of the constant comparisons. He would never be as good as his brother at anything. His talent was getting into trouble!

Sometimes, people feel that way about their perfect brother, Jesus. They think that next to Him, they will never be good enough. They avoid church and Sunday School because it just makes them feel guilty. They don’t read their Bibles because personal devotions are for good people, not them. They don’t try to help others because they are too much of a mess to think about anyone else.

Our brother Jesus can do something for us in heaven that Andrew’s brother couldn’t do for him in the principal’s office. Jesus steps in front of us when we sin so the Father sees His righteousness instead of our guilt. The Father treats us like we were Jesus, giving us the right to come to Him in prayer, the right to be called a child of God, and an eternal home in heaven with Him! We don’t need to feel guilty or hide from church. The Bible is there for us to read so that we can find forgiveness and encouragement. We don’t have to stand by when someone is in need, because God Himself will help us serve others. We have the best big brother ever!

Pray: Thank You, Jesus, for taking my place and getting rid of my guilt. Help me share You with others by the way I treat them and live my life. In Your name, I pray. Amen.

Sing: “Son of God, Eternal Savior” (LSB 842).
Animals Sacrifice

Read through the class the story of the re- cuss of a young boy by a dog named Zain. Ask, How did the dog willingly sacrifice itself to save the boy? (Bull calf and ram, without blemish, male- gest and calf of a lamb, a year old, without blemish) Why do you think the animals had to be with- out blemish? (They had to offer their best animals to atoms for their sins. The animals were a picture of what the final sacrifice would be—Jesus un- ablished by sin.)

Finish reading the passage. Allow students to com- ment on the “grouse” of the sacrifices. Emphasize that the animals had to give their lives to pay for the sins of the priest and the people. The blood as the sym- bols of their lives. Blood covers the altar, the priest, and the people.

If you choose to do so, review the types of sacrifices described in Leviticus 9. (The priests offered sin and burnt offerings for their own sins first to make them clean before offering sin, burnt, peace, and grain offer- ings.)

Activate prior knowledge. Ask students what they already know about the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. (Articles, Chaldean, Chaldean) Read together Leviticus 9. After verse 4, ask, What kind of animals were used? (Old Testament people commanded to use for the burnt and sin offerings? (Bull calf and ram, without blemish, male- gest and calf of a lamb, a year old, without blemish) Why do you think the animals had to be with- out blemish? (They had to offer their best animals to atoms for their sins. The animals were a picture of what the final sacrifice would be—Jesus un- ablished by sin.)

Finish reading the passage. Allow students to com- ment on the “grouse” of the sacrifices. Emphasize that the animals had to give their lives to pay for the sins of the priest and the people. The blood as the sym- bols of their lives. Blood covers the altar, the priest, and the people.

Remember: When you offer something up on the altar, you are giving it to God as a gift. Successfully completing the offering is a way of saying, “Thank you for the gift you gave me.”

In the Old and New Covenants

As you assign and review this verse with your students, stress Jesus’ priestly actions for us, still in- volving God to bless each student in his or her growing service to God and others sacrificially. Close with a prayer ask- ing God to forgive our failures and strengthen us for future service.

Remember: As you assign and review this verse with your students, stress Jesus’ priestly actions for us, still in- volving God to bless each student in his or her growing service to God and others sacrificially. Close with a prayer ask- ing God to forgive our failures and strengthen us for future service.

In the Old and New Covenants

As you assign and review this verse with your students, stress Jesus’ priestly actions for us, still in- volving God to bless each student in his or her growing service to God and others sacrificially. Close with a prayer ask- ing God to forgive our failures and strengthen us for future service.

In the Old and New Covenants

As you assign and review this verse with your students, stress Jesus’ priestly actions for us, still in- volving God to bless each student in his or her growing service to God and others sacrificially. Close with a prayer ask- ing God to forgive our failures and strengthen us for future service.

In the Old and New Covenants

As you assign and review this verse with your students, stress Jesus’ priestly actions for us, still in- volving God to bless each student in his or her growing service to God and others sacrificially. Close with a prayer ask- ing God to forgive our failures and strengthen us for future service.

In the Old and New Covenants

As you assign and review this verse with your students, stress Jesus’ priestly actions for us, still in- volving God to bless each student in his or her growing service to God and others sacrificially. Close with a prayer ask- ing God to forgive our failures and strengthen us for future service.

In the Old and New Covenants

As you assign and review this verse with your students, stress Jesus’ priestly actions for us, still in- volving God to bless each student in his or her growing service to God and others sacrificially. Close with a prayer ask- ing God to forgive our failures and strengthen us for future service.
The Old Testament tabernacle and sacrifices are pictures of Jesus, who was to come. In many ways, they mirror His character and work for us, though on a lesser level. With your class, explore the mathematical concepts of similarity and congruency. You can do this using section 7.4.8, Properties of Similar and Congruent Triangles, found in the Math volume of the Concordia Curriculum Guide.

When discussing sins of omission and commission, use the confessions found in the Divine Services of the hymnal. We confess that we have sinned “in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.” Help students connect these confessional words with the concepts in this lesson.

Table talk—send a note home with each student that encourages the family to talk about experiencing God’s forgiveness because of Jesus. The letter may look like this: Dear Family, We are studying how Jesus takes our guilt on the cross and gives us His righteousness. During family devotions, during breakfast, or around the supper table, talk as a family about times each of you have experienced forgiveness. Adults, try to think of examples from when you were your children’s ages. Help kids remember times you have forgiven them. Share times you have forgiven others. Talk about how it feels to be forgiven. Why is it hard to forgive sometimes? Why does God forgive us? Pray together, thanking Jesus for the gift of forgiveness. Ask for His help forgiving one another. Pray the Lord’s Prayer together whenever possible.

What would you bring? The Israelites offered the best of what they had as sacrifices to the Lord. They brought animals, bread, grain, drink, and such. Ask students to think about and perhaps even bring in their best blessings. Ask them to be prepared to explain why the object would be a good sacrifice. Remind them that a good sacrifice is the best of the best and important to the giver. Present the offerings to the class and share the reasons behind each selection in a modified show-and-tell type activity.

Challenge them further by asking them to think about a way they could offer God some of their time instead of their stuff. To make it concrete, have students write down and place on the altar one sacrifice of time to the Lord in the coming week. Remind students that we don’t make sacrifices to earn forgiveness but in celebration of the forgiveness Jesus earned for us.

Ask your pastor or congregation’s altar guild to help you educate your class about the sanctuary of your church. Take a tour, looking at the art, windows, candles, altar, Communionware, and architecture of the worship area. Ask the altar guild to do some training in how to care for the worship area; then let students help care for the sanctuary. They can wipe down pews, straighten hymnal racks, dust, clean windows, sweep, water plants, or whatever else is needed. Foster an atmosphere of reverence. Talk about what makes God’s house special.