

Leviticus 1:1–2

The God Who Speaks to Bring Us Near

Friday, July 14, 2023 • Read Leviticus 1:1–2

Questions from the Scripture text: Who calls in v1? To whom? And what does He do when He calls? From where does He call? By what manner does He speak? What does He tell Moses to do to whom (v2)? What might one of them bring near? To Whom? From where might the brought-near things be brought?

How can the dwelling place of God be a tent of meeting, if man cannot enter it? Leviticus 1:1–2 looks forward to the evening sermon on the coming Lord’s Day. In these two verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **God specifies who may come near, and how.**

YHWH breaks the silence. Exodus has detailed how YHWH has come to dwell with His people. But it has introduced a new problem. When the glory of YHWH filled the tabernacle, even Moses could not enter. And if Moses could not enter, then who could? So the book of Exodus concludes with us at an impasse. Eden has been reproduced in the desert—and that in mobile form. But, as with the previous Eden, currently they are shut out of the presence of God. This cannot be bridged or remediated from our end.

What a great mercy that God does bridge and remediate the impasse for us. And He does so especially by His Word. Note the triple language of “called,” “spoke,” and “saying” in v1. He calls to Moses from within (cf. Ex 24:16) and gives him the way of drawing near.

The book of Leviticus will detail the regulations by which the people may approach the God Who has come to dwell among them. The first nine chapters detail the sacrifices and the priesthood/ordination, climaxing with Moses and Aaron being able to enter.

If we try to come to God in our own way, not only do we make the same dreadful mistake that will be made in 10:1–3, but we also spurn the amazing goodness of God that He Himself has actually spoken to us the right way of coming. Marvelously, although the rituals and priesthood of the shadow times (cf. Heb 8:5, 10:1) sufficed for this tabernacle, God would ultimately tabernacle in the Word Himself (Jn 1:14), Who would also be our priest for that tabernacling. How great is the mercy and provision of God that He breaks the silence and gives His way by His Word!

YHWH brings us near. The root for “near” appears four times in the Hebrew of v2. Both instances of “bring” are actually a causative form of the verb for drawing near. And the word that is being translated offering is built on the same root. Translating it ultra-literally, Moses is to say, “When a man from among you causes to come near a brought-near-thing to YHWH, you shall cause to come near a brought-near-thing...”

We point this out, because v2 is rich with drawing near to God. Here, the problem is that, now that God’s glorious presence in the midst of His people, drawing near was precisely the problem. But even in the language with which God begins to give the instructions, He makes clear that He is making a way that they can draw near while honoring God’s holiness.

Again, this will be the point in 10:3, “By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy.” The point of the five different types of sacrifice is that this is the way by which God’s people may come near. The point of the priesthood is that these are the people by whose ministry God’s people may come near. And to come near in any other way is to profane God Himself. Indeed, it is only to pretend to come near, because man cannot actually effect his own coming near to God. “Coming near” in our own way, therefore, disregards God’s marvelous provision in favor of a play-acting blasphemy.

Where can we learn the right way of coming near to God? What is the GREAT provision that He has made for our coming near? What are we doing if we try to come in some other way?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You and praise You that You have made the way for us to draw near to You in Your Son, our Lord Jesus. And we thank You and praise You that You have told us about this in Your Word, even speaking to us the actions by which we come near through Jesus. Grant that we would raw near to You through Him in accordance with Your Word, and that we would come in no other way, we ask, in Jesus’s Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP73C “Yet Constantly I Am with You” or TPH73C “In Sweet Communion, Lord, with Thee”

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Leviticus one, one through two. These are God's words. Now, y'all hate colds to Moses and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting saying speak. To the children of israel and say to them. When any one of you brings an offering to yahweh, You shall bring your offering of the livestock of the herd.

End of the flock. So far the reading of gods inspired and Dinner and twerk. The book of leviticus. In hebrew is called via crop. And then he called, Um, the verb, of course, coming first. It's just named after the first word, but it really does set the tone for the entire Uh, book of leviticus.

Because the book of exodus ended in an impasse, Uh, this tent has two names. It has the name that is often translated tabernacle, which is from the verb. Um, to dwell. We actually hear it sometimes if you've heard someone use the phrase shekinah, glory and that shakan root in that word.

Is the word for dwelling. It doesn't mean intense. Brilliant. Uh, infinite glory. Although that is the reality of the glory of god. But usually, when i hear the word shekinah glory, that's what i would. Um, the impression that i was being given when i was growing up, But it means dwelling glory.

Uh, you know, the sort of thing that is a promise of god as a gift of god and is also utterly terrifying. Like, when isaiah hears, the Uh, the truth the reality that he had not so fully perceived before the whole earth is filled with his glory and probably isaiah remembers the end of Exodus 40 and thinks Well, that's not good news.

Moses couldn't enter. The. Um, the tent of meeting the tabernacle. The machine the tabernacle because it was filled with his glory. And that's the big question. How can it be? If it's the place? Where god's glory dwells? How can it also be the tent of meeting? It's not a very good.

Um, Uh, meeting place if someone can't go in there. Uh, like i would love for Uh, for most of the congregation, if if they wanted pastoral visitor something well we'll

just schedule it on the pool deck of Milltown Rec between This time and this time, Uh, but they're not members, they can't enter and i'm too cheap to pay five bucks for a day pass for them to have a visit but Um, It's not a good meeting place.

If one of the parties that is supposed to meet can't go there. And so you have uh you have at the end of Exodus great to promise fulfilled. God is dwelling among his people. But how can they? Dwell with him. That's the That's the question. How can it be attentive meeting?

And there's nothing that man can do. From our end. To make ourselves safe to enable ourselves to enter the presence. Of the glory of god. How can we do that? It's absolutely impossible from our end. And so, it's similar to if you remember back. I think it was chapter 24, may have been in chapter 25 but Um thing is back at chapter 24.

Moses is on top of the mountain and the glory of god is there and Moses is waiting outside the glory cloud and and he waits their six days. And then on the seventh day, and that's Um, Obviously. The lord reinforcing the The sabbath principle and the purpose of the sabbath, but it's on the seventh day.

That yahweh called to Moses from within. And then, moses entered. According to the word of yahweh. And now we have the same thing. Yahweh called to Moses and spoke to him. From the tent of meeting. God, intervenes by his word. To tell us his way of our coming near.

And the reason we know that we can come near the reason, we know that this is the right way to come near. Is because god has spoken it. And so you have three speaking words. In verse 1. The word for called the word for spoke the word for saying, And you see how Merciful.

It is to us that we have the god. Do both makes the way for us. To come near to him. And especially who tells us of that way. In fact, when god ultimately comes near to us, In a way in which we will be able to be united to him and come near to him.

The ultimate way that that is, is in jesus. When god actually becomes a man, this is how near god comes to us. He assumes our nature. The second person of the god had does And in assuming our nature he gives us the ability by faith to be united to the Lord.

Jesus christ, so near. Then can we come to god that we are united by the second person of the godhead and indwelt by the third person of the god-head. So that by the ministry of the spirit, who is for us, the spirit of adoption. Giving us our union with christ.

We call the first person of the godhead, our abba. Our daddy. And so god has come so near in christ. And when when god describes that to us, when the spirit describes that to us and john chapter 1, it's the word became flesh. And in the uses. Um, Uses a greek word.

That is a transliteration for China or chicane or michigan. And he uses a verbal form of it and he says the word became flesh and Tabernacle. Among us. And so we see. The great mercy that just the bible by itself is Is it not the equivalent for us? Of yahweh calling to us.

From his glory. Because he is going to bring us near. And so, And just the the speaking words in verse 1, Show us so much. About the mercy of the gospel. Um, The lord himself. Is the first great. Rejector of Speak the gospel at all times. And if necessary use words, no, You have a called to Moses and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting saying.

God, intervenes by his word. He is the one who's going to resolve the impasse. Now, there's going to be a lot of words. There's going to be Uh, Different types of sacrifices. That bring. The worshiper near to god and then they're going to be two more different types of sacrifices.

That. So the first three it will be for like an ordinary situation just for coming near to god. But if a particular sin has been committed, depending on the type of sin and who it was, there are two different types of of sacrifices, for clearing those sins in order to do.

These three. And so you're going to have the five different types of sacrifices. And then the ordination. Of the priesthood. And this is all going to come in seven speeches. And in the ordination of the priesthood, there are seven steps and so you still have that kind of sabbath principle.

Even in the way that Leviticus one through nine is described. Um but you see god making the way that we can come near by his word. His word gives us that way. What's now, you understand? While Leviticus 10 1 through 3. Is such a big deal. You know, those are the that passage is famous because that's Native and abide here.

And their names are infamous because you know what they did, they offered unauthorized fire. They tried to come near to god in a way that was not from his word. Hear god had resolved, the great impasse the great problem that could only be resolved from his end. And he resolved it in a way that preserves the honor of his holiness and looks forward to the incarnation of the lord jesus, and the sacrifice of the lord jesus and union with christ affected, by the spirits, who gives us adoption to the father God is god, is is Taking all of that and boiling it down in.

In shadows and pictures. Uh, you know, it's Uh, you know, before the word comes, they have the picture book like a child read yet. And he's giving them in the first nine chapters of Leviticus The picture book version of coming near to god. Repairing them for when christ should come.

And so we must only come to god in the way. That his word says, And the reason we must come only to come to god, only in the way that his word says. Is because he actually does bring us near and that's in verse two. And unfortunately we have to do More.

Hebrew here, not that using hebrew is bad, but Um, You wish you didn't have to do it so much. Um, So that those who don't know, it wouldn't Uh, wouldn't feel like There are. Unable. To read and understand. But behind four of the words, in verse 2 is the word for for drawing near.

Both both instances of the word bring, and both instances of the word offering. Now, thankfully, this is a word that we have. Uh, literally translated for us in the new testament. When the That when jesus is condemning the pharisees for their tradition that says, you can Um, you can designate.

Funds. That then if your parents need help, Uh you say oh sorry. That's designated. It's core bond. And, The, the hebrew word for draw, for near is karad or karab. And you can hear carbon and carob. Are the same root and it means the brought near thing. And so the word offering the word that's translated offering here twice.

In verse 2 is the brought near thing. And the words, that's translated ring. Is a verb. Built on the same built on the same root. But in this case, it's a causative causative form. So if we were going to translate it super literally it's say Now, this is yahweh speaking from the tabernacle of meeting To people who cannot come near.

And his words say, When any one of you causes to come near the brought near one unto yahweh, You shall cause to come near your brought near one from. Or the brat near one from, And one of the things that we're going to see, then in the sacrifices that are That are coming.

Is that the animal represents? The. Um, The worshiper. Not so much in that, the animal dies. Although, the shedding of blood is, Is necessary for cleansing from sin. But in that, the animal, Is brought near unto God. The animal is cleansed by the shutting of blood. And we'll hear more especially when we get to next week, lord willing in the rest of chapter 1 and what's often called the whole burnt offering.

Uh, but the word for the whole burnt offering is actually the word for going up. Um, the the word for Um, The word for burning is a special word for burning. It doesn't mean Fire that destroys but it means fire. That transforms to smoke. And the the two words together means transformed into smoke so that it can go up.

As a pleasing aroma to god as a pleasing. Anyway, i'm starting to give. Uh, give away the rest of the chapter, but Uh, The idea is, God is giving his people away to come near. A way to ascend. In. Into the mountain of the lord into this. Portable cyani, this portable eden.

Uh, now in Um, Well, that he has planted or erected in the midst of Of his people. And so god is the speaking god. And god is the bringing near to himself. God. Which is the second reason. That false worship is so offensive. The first reason is God, alone can decide.

What worship is and he shows the greatness of the glory of his mercy. By speaking to us, the way to come near. But the second reason that false worship, Is so offensive is That drawing near to god is an actual thing that you gives Through faith in the lord.

Jesus christ. This is the picture book. But it's real by faith in christ. And now we have come into the reality. In union with christ. And you know how amazing. For those who came near to god, through means of the picture book. For hundreds of years, you know, over a thousand years Um, Would christ himself ascends and they are worshiping in heaven.

And they say the lamb of god. And you have redeemed us unto god and you have reconciled us unto God. That they have. Ascended, into Drawing near to god as a real thing. But how offensive then is it? When we redefine. Drawing near to god, as Feeling near to god.

Or making spiritual displays. Or following. A particular external liturgy. Or having things that are spooky. Or any other, any one of the other things by which someone defines the idea of worshipful. It is to claim to be near god. Without actually being near god. It is a lie. And a blasphemy.

That does not regard him as holy. Which is why. After all of chapters, one through nine. When native and a buy who offer the strange fire and it consumes them. Moses immediately warns Aaron And says, isn't this, what y'all play has said? That by those who draw near. To him.

He must be regarded as holy. Because drawing near to him is a real thing. It's all great. Is the mercy of our god. A that he's the speaking god. Who makes the way by his word and tells us that way by his word. And b. Who has given to us.

To draw near to him. As a real thing in the lord jesus christ. Was difficult for us to perceive and feel. With our thoughts and our affections clouded by so much remaining sin. But what the scripture tells you is that, if you believe in jesus and you are united to him, You are already seated with him in the heavenly places.

In your union with him. And then, when you die, And your soul is perfected and holiness. Your soul will follow. And be with christ. And be with the father in christ. And then, That the resurrection, even your body will follow. Even as he already has bodily and glory. God.

Brings us near.

How silly and pathetic all of our Desires motivations pleasures. Are stacked up. Next to that. How it should drive us. To have him. As the pleasure in all of our pleasures, To have him as our aim. And all of our labors. Then, let's prep.

Our father in heaven. We thank you. That is good as The end of Exodus was it wasn't the The end of the story. And even as good as, The coming near. By way of the picture book through faith in christ prospectively. Was. That that is at the end of the story.

But that the The ultimate story is that you bring us near in your son, our lord jesus. And we pray. Oh god. That your spirit would. Help us to process these things. Understand these things. So that even now Belonging to you in. Jesus would be our great pleasure. Said that, whatever we do.

Would be done before your face and unto your glory. Participating in your work, trusting in your providence. Give us to live. Um, out of, and According. To this truth. And this reality that You've taught us about your word. We ask in jesus name, Amen.