

Journey Into God's Word



Leviticus 1-13

Psalms 101-117

Acts 22-28

Dear Brother and Sister,

Thank God for Jesus! His death and resurrection provided the ultimate sacrifice needed to deal with our sins. As you read the book of Leviticus, you will see that in order to deal with sin we would have had to offer burnt offerings of animal sacrifices or, if you were really poor, a dove or pigeon sacrifice would be needed. This burnt offering was needed to make payment for sins in general to show our devotion to God. But that is not all. Grain, fellowship, sin and guilt offerings, all described in detail in Lev. 1-7, would have to be done regularly. Again, thank God for Jesus whose death takes away the deadly consequences of sin.

But there is more. We have seen in Ex. 19:16-22 that all the children of Israel could do is watch God's glory from a distance. As you read Lev. 9:23, 24 you will see that the glory of God "appeared to all people." This Shekinah Glory provided visible assurance that God was with them personally. That same glory later left the temple and returned to heaven in Ez. 8-11. The good news is that in Jesus Christ, God's presence and glory has returned. "The Word (Jesus) became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14) When the angels announce Jesus' birth, "the glory of the Lord shone" all around. (Luke 2:9) Jesus was born but he was not like any other baby-He was "the Savior...Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11) "Immanuel...God with us." (Matt. 1:23) How does Paul in Acts 22:6-11 described this glory of the Lord and how it affected him personally? Have you ever experienced the glory of God manifested through the receiving of Jesus Christ in your life? To receive Jesus means to obey Him as your Lord and Savior. Hearing the Word of the Lord that "the God of our fathers has chosen you to know His will and to see the Righteous One and to hear the words from His mouth. You will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on His name." (Act 22:14-16) Now you may be saying "But I have not seen the presence of Christ in the same way Paul did!" To this Jesus replies, "blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." (John 20:29)

Do you believe? Then your faith experience will lead to a faith expression that will result in a faith event. As you read Ps. 101, and Ps. 102, what faith events or steps of faith do you see that the believer will take? How does faith help us to deal with loneliness as described in Ps. 102:6,7? We see that even though our days are limited, days vanish like smoke, in verse 3 of Ps. 102, we are trusting the Living God whose “years go on through all generations.”Ps. 102:24

What 20 things do we see about who God is and what He has done for us in Ps. 103? “The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed,” (Ps.103:6), particularly for those bound by sin and the guilt it produces. Ps. 103:8-18 reminds us of God’s great love for us. What does John 3:16 mean to you? Only through Jesus Christ can we be free from sin and experience eternal life. For He is “the way, and the truth and the life.”(John 14:6) The forgiveness Christ provides is as Ps. 103:12 declares, “as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”

Are you being true to your calling and sharing this good news about Jesus and the forgiveness of sins that He provides with others? Now He is telling you, “I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified.”(Acts 26:17,18) Have you received this? How is it making a difference in your life? “I preached that they should repent, and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.”(Acts 26:20) “This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”(1John 5:4-5)

But, you say that you have a hard time believing in anything or anyone you cannot see. What is it you see as you look around you? Who do you think created this magnificent world that you live in? Remember Ps. 53:1,2, “The fool says in his heart, There is no God...God looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God.”

Ps. 104 shows us how to seek God as we behold the wonders of His creation. This wonderful Psalm summarizes God’s creation of the world as it is told in Gen. 1. In Ps. 104:1,2 we see the First Day of creation celebrated as it is found in Gen. 1:3. God made light and is the source of all light. Man has his theories of light, but only God knows what light truly is. How appropriate it is to say God, wraps Himself in light as with a garment;” (verse 2)

Ps. 104:2,3 celebrate Day Two, the creation of the heavens and the waters found in Gen. 1:6. He stretches out the heavens like a tent and lays the beams of His upper chambers on their waters.”

Now it's your turn to join in the celebration. Study each one of the remaining Days of creation and note how God's acts of creation deserve the praise of all people. Day Three explained in Gen. 1:9-13 is celebrated in Ps.104:6-18. What do these verse say about God's wonderful creation of land and vegetation?

“The moon marks off the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.”(Ps. 104:19) Day four is celebrated with the creation of the sun, moon, and stars. Ps. 104:19-23 outlines this celebration found in Gen. 1:14-16. Join the celebration—look around and begin to notice all that God has created. “How many are your works, O' Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.”(Ps 104:24)

The celebration of Day Five of creation is found in verses 25,26 which tell of the creation of fish and birds described in Gen. 1:20-25. Behold the sea and all that lives within. Give glory to God and declare. “I will sing to the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.”(Ps 104:33)

Let the doubt be gone. Join in the celebration which continues in verse 27-30 describing the Sixth Day of creation found in Gen. 1:24-31. God created animals, men and the food to sustain them. “When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.”(Ps. 104:30)

Now are you going to believe and live in the reality of Christ's resurrection or are you like the one that Paul describes in Acts 28:26,27. Read these verses and note which he has to say about those who live in the midst of God's creation “always hearing but never understanding, always seeing but never perceiving.” He goes on to say these “people's heart has become callused; they hardly hear with their ears and they have closed their eyes.” The time has come to wake up and celebrate the wonders of God's creation that we not only see in nature but also in other people who are made in the very image of God. (Gen. 1:27)

“Remember the wonders He has done, His miracles, and the judgments He pronounced,” (Ps. 105:5) “Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever. Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord or fully declare His praise? Blessed are they who maintain justice, who constantly do what is right.”(Ps. 106:1-3)

In Ps. 107 what four different types of people in distress are described and how does God rescue them? “He lifted the needy out of their affliction.”(Ps 107:41) What does this mean to you?

David in Ps. 108 describes the victory found in God's strength. As you read this Psalm, explain how it tells you that with God's help you can do more than you think? "With God we will gain the victory."(Ps. 108:13)

In Ps. 109 we see that instead of keeping all our feelings bottle up inside, we can tell God how we really feel about things. How does David do this in this Psalm?

Many consider Ps. 110 one of the most significant Psalms in the Bible. As you study this Psalm, note how it pulls together the role of king (verses 1-3) and priest (verses 4-7) and then attributes them to a single person. This one is God's promised Messiah. Jesus quoted this Psalm in Mark 12:35-37 to show the difference between David himself and the king he was envisioning. Peter in Act 2:34,35 quotes verse 1 of Ps. 110 to affirm that Jesus has returned to His rightful place with God the Fathers Heb. 1:13 quotes this same verse to declare that Jesus is greater than anyone or anything in creation including the angels. This Psalm, written hundreds of years prior to the birth of Jesus Christ, foretold the fact that He is more than a King but is also our Priest. (Ps. 110:4, Heb.7:11-28)

In Lev. 8-10 you read of the instructions for the priests and what happened in chapter 10 when Aaron's two sons Nadab and Abihu did not follow these instructions. What does it mean to you that Jesus is not only your sacrificial lamb but also your high priest? In order to be saved would you want to live daily under the instructions given to you in Lev. 11? If not, then thank God for Jesus. As our King He brings peace and purpose to our lives. Jesus has defeated Satan and sin. (Col. 2:13-15, 2Cor 2:14, 2Cor5:17-19) As our priest, Jesus intercedes to the Father for us and is our ultimate sacrifice.(Heb. 7:26)

Psalm 111 reminds us that, "great are the works of the Lord; they are pondered by all who delight in them. Glorious and majestic are His deeds, and His righteousness endures forever."(verses 2,3)

In Ps. 112 what advantages do we see that there are for having faith in God?

Ps. 113-118 were sung during the Passover meal each year. Ps. 113,114 were sung before the meal with the last four being sung after the Passover meal. These were very likely the ones Jesus sung during the Passover meal with His disciples. "When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."(Mark 14:26) Some of these verses that Jesus may have sung knowing what lay before Him at Calvary included, Ps 113:4-8 and other verses like, "I will fulfill my vows to the Lord."(Ps.116:14) "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His

saints.”(Ps 116:15) For great is His love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.”(Psalm 117:2)

Knowing God’s faithfulness let us move forward, reaching out in word and deed through the love of our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Look at how Acts 28:31 describes Paul. “Boldly and without hindrance he preached the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.” Can those who are observing your work say the same thing about you?

May each of us continue to strive to do God’s will and work this next week as we study Lev. 12-27, Ps. 118-122 and the book of Heb. 1-7.

Yours in Christ’s service,

Larry Rice