

Sermon #63 — *Discovering Christ in Leviticus*

Title: **THE DEATH OF A BLASPHEMER**

Text: Leviticus 24:10-23

Subject: *The Blasphemy of Shelomith's Son*

Date: Tuesday Evening — August 20, 2019

Readings: *Lindsay Campbell and Mark Henson*

Introduction:

You are either a worshipper of the Lord Jesus Christ, or you are a blasphemer. There is no in between ground. I am either a worshipper of Christ, or I am a blasphemer. There is no in between ground.

The title of my message is **THE DEATH OF A BLASPHEMER**. Our text will be Leviticus 24:10-23. — **THE DEATH OF A BLASPHEMER** (Leviticus 24:10-23).

Proposition: Blasphemy is the cursing of God; and the cursing of God brings death, eternal death, under the wrath of God.

Before we look at our text, let me remind you of its background.

THREE EVENTS

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Only three historical events are mentioned in the Book of Leviticus. But those three historical events are very instructive. Each of these events is very significant and directly connected with God's instructions concerning his worship

1. The first historical event recorded in this Book is **the consecration of Aaron and his sons as the priests** of Israel (ch. 8-9). There is a twofold type here.

*First, **the Aaronic priesthood represents the priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ.** Specifically, Aaron, as the high priest of Israel, foreshadowed the Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest before God. — Divinely Chosen — Divinely Equipped — Divinely Anointed — Divinely Approved. — Only Aaron could make atonement in the holy of holies, because he represented Christ who alone could and would put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

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(Hebrews 7:23-28) “And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: 24 But this *man*, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. 26 For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; 27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. 28 For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.”

Second, Aaron’s sons represent the church and kingdom of God, as that “holy priesthood” of believers who serve God in the holy place day and

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night. Everything about these priests typifies and represents believing sinners in this world.

(Leviticus 8:2) “Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and a bullock for the sin offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread.”

- These men were specifically chosen by God. — Divine Election.
- They were God’s priests because they were Aaron’s sons.
- They wore the garments of the priesthood. — The Garments of Salvation — Perfect Righteousness.
- They were accepted as priests because of a slain sacrifice.
- They were anointed with holy anointing oil and washed with pure water. — The Holy Spirit — The New Birth.
- They were men who deliberately and voluntarily consecrated themselves to God.

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- They lived continually upon the sacrifice of God's altar. — Christ.
- They served the people of God.
- They served God continually.

(1 Peter 2:5-9) “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7 Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. 9 But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

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2. The second historic event recorded in Leviticus is **the death of Nadab and Abihu** by the hand of God, for offering “*strange fire before the LORD*” (ch. 10). — Let all who would worship God understand the powerful lesson set before us in chapter 10. If we would worship God and find acceptance with him, we must come to him with that which he has provided, Christ alone, and no mixture of anything with Christ.

(Leviticus 10:1-3) “And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. 2 And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. 3 Then Moses said unto Aaron, This *is it* that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.”

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3. The third historic thing recorded in the Book of Leviticus is **the stoning Shelomith's son for blasphemy** (24:10-23). — Those who blaspheme the name of God, curse him, denying him as God alone shall be destroyed by him. Though this unnamed wretch had a Hebrew mother, his father was an Egyptian; and he preferred both the gods and the people of Egypt to the God of Glory and his people.

Moses has been, by divine inspiration, giving us instructions about the worship of God. He spoke of **the golden candlestick**, which spoke of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the world, the only light that truly reveals us as we are and the only light by which we see God and the way to God.

Then he spoke about **the golden table of showbread**, which speaks of Christ, the Bread of life. Only as we eat that Bread which came down from heaven, only as we believe on and live by Christ's blood and righteousness, do we have everlasting life.

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On that table, there were **twelve loaves** of bread. In Christ there is bread for all God's Israel. There is in him an infinite fulness and sufficiency of bread. In our Father's house there is bread enough and to spare. Here is bread for all who are hungry.

The bread was ordered and maintained by God's priests. — It is Christ our great High Priest who provides all we need and constantly feeds our souls.

On those loaves of bread, the Lord required that the priests place **pure frankincense**. The bread speaks of Christ; but it also speaks of us, his people (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). We are truly one with him. The frankincense speaks of our acceptance with God by the merit of Christ's mediation. Our God accepts us as he accepts our Substitute and because he accepts our Substitute.

The oil in the lamps and the bread on the table were to be taken from the children of Israel. Among other things, this symbolized our consecration to God. Bread, being the very staff of

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life, it portrayed the fact that faith in Christ involves us giving up our lives to our Redeemer as our Lord and King (Luke 14:25-33).

All that was done in the tabernacle, all access to God, was by his appointed priests. The whole of the tabernacle service was a constant display of...

- Man's separation from God by reason of our sin and God's holiness.
- God's absolute right of sovereignty, dominion, and authority as God. — God alone has the right to prescribe law (civil and spiritual).
- Salvation by God's free and sovereign grace through the merits of the Substitute God has accepted. — The light, the bread, and the frankincense were in the priest's hands alone.
- Our constant need of that grace and that Substitute.

INSTRUCTIVE INTERRUPTION

Then, in verses 10-23 Moses seems to tell us something that has nothing to do with the context. He

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has been giving us instructions about the worship of God, using pictures of Christ, redemption, grace, and salvation. When we get to chapter 25, he picks up with the same thing, giving us instructions about the worship of God, using pictures of Christ, redemption, grace, and salvation.

Then, right in the middle of these wonderful pictures of redemption, grace, and salvation by Christ, we have this story of one man's blasphemy and his punishment.

(Leviticus 24:10-23) “And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father *was* an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish *woman* and a man of Israel strove together in the camp; (11) And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name *of the LORD*, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name *was* Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:) (12) And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be showed them. (13)

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And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, (14) Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard *him* lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. (15) And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. (16) And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, *and* all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name *of the LORD*, shall be put to death. (17) And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death. (18) And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast. (19) And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him; (20) Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him *again*. (21) And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death. (22) Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your

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own country: for I *am* the LORD your God. (23) And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.”

Here is a nameless mongrel Israelite, part Jew and part Egyptian, who openly blasphemed the Lord God in the camp of Israel and was put to death because of it. Why this interruption? Why is this recorded here by inspiration of God the Holy Spirit? Surely, the death of this blasphemer by order of God must have something to do with Christ, the gospel of God, the worship of God, redemption, grace, and salvation by Christ Jesus.

THE OFFENDER

1st — The man described in this story is not named. We do not know who he was. His father’s name is not revealed either, only his mother’s. “*His mother’s name was Shelomith...of the tribe of Dan.*” He is an

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unnamed blasphemer, an Egyptian who claimed a place among the children of Israel.

Some have suggested (and it was commonly taught among the ancient Jewish teachers) that this man's father was the Egyptian Moses killed (Exodus 2:12). But the Scriptures do not tell us who he was, or who his father was, just his mother. **When the sons of God marry the daughters of men, nothing good can be expected as a result of their union.** Here is an Israelite, one of God's covenant children, who married an Egyptian idolater. What could be expected from such a union, except a blaspheming child?

- Disobedience is always costly.
- The disobedience of parents is often manifested in the ruin of their children.
- Being depraved by nature, children are always more apt to follow the influences of evil than of good, to follow the ways of an Egyptian father in blasphemy than of an Israelite mother in the faith, worship, and praise of God.

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- Yet, this man was a man, not a child. He alone stood responsible for his actions.

THE STRIFE

2nd — The son of Shelomith, whose father was an Egyptian, got into a heated argument with one of God's children. The fight may have been both violent and physical. We are not told specifically. But it was, to say the least, a heated discussion.

Remember the camp of Israel was **a mixed multitude**. The mixed multitude was a mixture of Egyptians with Israelites, Egyptians who came out of Egypt with Israel (Exodus 12:38). This mixed multitude was often the source of Israel's troubles. They often caused strife and division in the camp of Israel.

So it is today. The church of God on this earth is always a mixed multitude of believers and unbelievers who profess to be believers, wheat and

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tares, sheep and goats, Egyptians who claim to be a part of Israel.

- Mongrels always cause trouble.
- Mongrels are always demanding.
- Mongrels never promote peace. They always have a bone to pick.

This mongrel son of an Egyptian man and an Israelite woman got upset because someone forgot to ask his opinion! — **Once a quarrel begins who knows what evil will be done before it ends?** How great a fire a little matter kindles! When passion is hot, people forget both their reason and their religion. They are never satisfied to fight with another alone. They try to get others involved in the quarrel, so that they can justify themselves. We would be wise to avoid it altogether. The beginning of strife is like the letting forth of water. Once the dam breaks, you cannot get the water back.

(Proverbs 6:12-19) “A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth. (13) He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet,

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he teacheth with his fingers; (14) Frowardness *is* in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord. (15) Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy. (16) These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: (17) A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, (18) An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, (19) A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.”

(Ephesians 4:29-32) “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (30) And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. (31) Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: (32) And be ye kind one to another,

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tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

(2 Timothy 2:24-26) “And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, (25) In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; (26) And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

THE BLASPHEMY

3rd — What was this strife about that ended in a man being stoned to death by the whole camp of Israel, stoned by the direct command of God? The Spirit of God does not tell us what the strife was about. But I'm sure it must have been something important...

- The Temperature Inside the Tabernacle?
- Moses was so grumpy he wouldn't let children run in and out during the worship services and

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wouldn't even let them run up and down the pews after the services were over?

- Sally's daughter didn't ask Suzie's daughter to spend the night with her at Sharon's house?
- Jack and Jerry went fishing, but they didn't ask Johnny to go?
- No body asked me to go to Wendy's after church?

Whatever the strife was about, it ended in an eruption of blasphemy. — I must confess that I have always read this passage as you probably have, thinking that this man, in the heat of anger said to the Israelite, "God damn you."

Illustration: Jeremiah Wright's (Barack Obama's Pastor) — "God damn America!"

I have read dozens of commentaries and sermons giving that interpretation. Such language is horribly crude, offensive, and obnoxious. But that is not what happened here.

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Remember this event is related to us (and probably happened) just after or as Moses gave the instructions recorded in this chapter about the worship of God. When the mongrel heard and understood Moses' doctrine, God's requirements, and the things signified by these ordinances of divine worship, this Egyptian free-willer, this idolater (who claimed to have embraced the gospel) and the Israelite who loved free grace got into it. When their debate was over, the Egyptian stomped his feet, shook his fists, threw up his hands and said, "Jehovah be damned!" That was his blasphemy. — And that is the blasphemy of all willful, obstinate unbelief. He did not say...

- Ra be damned.
- Horus be damned,
- Allah be damned.
- But Jehovah be damned!

He was enraged that the God of Glory be worshipped as God alone, enraged that Moses declared salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. That which enraged this Egyptian Israelite was the

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gospel doctrine set forth by Moses in every piece of furniture, every sacrifice, every ceremony, every priest, and every sabbath day connected with the tabernacle.

- Divine Sovereignty
- Total Depravity
- Unconditional Election
- Limited Atonement (Substitution and Satisfaction)
- Free Justification
- Perfect, Full, Complete Salvation in, by, and with Christ Alone!
- Righteousness, Holiness, Sanctification, Acceptance by the Doing and Dying of the Son of God!

The name God gives to Babylon, the name God gives to all Arminian, free-will, works religion is “*Blasphemy*” (Revelation 17:1-3). That is what will-worship is. That is what unbelief is. — Blasphemy!

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(Revelation 17:1-3) “And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: (2) With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. (3) So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.”

THE NAME

4th — This man “*blasphemed the name of the LORD*” (v. 11). — What was this mongrel’s blasphemy? Remember, **God’s name is what he is. It is his character, the revelation of his being. The name of the Lord is Christ.** — The word “*blasphemed*” means “pierced, bored through, punctured, violently perforated, struck through, cursed.”

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(Exodus 3:13-14) “And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What *is* his name? What shall I say unto them? (14) And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the “I AM.” Though the priests in Israel had a favored place in the temple of God (vv. 1-9), they showed utter contempt for the Lord of the temple when he came among them (Luke 22:63-65).

(Luke 22:63-65) “And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote *him*. (64) And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee? (65) And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.”

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Christ is the revelation of God, the embodiment of God, the name of God. To despise him and his work is to blaspheme God.

(Acts 4:12) “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

(Philippians 2:5-11) “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (9) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; (11) And *that* every tongue

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should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

(Hebrews 1:1-4) “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, (2) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; (3) Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (4) Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.”

(Psalms 111:1-3) “Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with *my* whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and *in* the congregation. (2) The works of the LORD *are* great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. (3) His

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work *is* honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth forever.”

(Psalms 111:9) “He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant forever: holy and reverend *is* his name.”

GOD’S PROVIDENCE

5th — I try to never miss an open display of divine providence. And this is a wonderful display of it. The fact that this thing took place just as Moses’ was giving the children of Israel God’s law regarding his worship is not insignificant. It shows God’s providence working with his revelation of himself.

- To Confirm His Authority as God.
- To Confirm His Word.
- To Confirm His Gospel.
- To Confirm His Servant.

THE SENTENCE

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6th — The Lord God himself gave the sentence of the law for this blasphemy, the sentence of divine justice that must be executed upon all who refuse to trust his dear Son.

(Leviticus 24:13-16) “And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, (14) Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard *him* lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. (15) And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. (16) And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, *and* all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name *of the LORD*, shall be put to death.”

Moses put him in prison that he might know the mind of God in the matter.

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- He sought God's will. — If we seek the will of God, he will direct our paths in his way (Proverbs 3:5-6).
- Moses waited on the Lord to direct him. — He did not act hastily and would not be pushed into acting hastily.

Remember, this is not the sentence of Israel, or the sentence of Moses, but the sentence of God, whose name was blasphemed. — *“He that blasphemeth the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death.”* — He who cursed God was cursed of God.

- He must be stoned outside the camp, away from the place of blessing, in the place of cursedness and uncleanness.
- Every Israelite who heard his blasphemy must lay his hands upon him, imputing his guilt to him.
- All the congregation must stone him, all must show their approval of and agreement with God's justice.
- The execution was done before all Israel, a public execution.

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- The law applied equally to all.
- Thus it shall be with all who blaspheme the name of the name of the Lord, who despise the Lord Jesus Christ and the gospel of the grace of God.

CIVIL LAW

7th — Before the sentence was executed, the Lord commanded Moses to set before Israel the code of civil law (vv. 17-22).

(Leviticus 24:17-22) “And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death. (18) And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast. (19) And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him; (20) Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him *again*. (21) And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death. (22) Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the

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stranger, as for one of your own country: for I *am* the LORD your God.”

Let me point out just two things here.

1. The law was made for man, for the good of man, to protect society.
2. Moses, in executing the sentence of the law did not act as a private person seeking revenge, but as a civil magistrate executing justice for the protection of society.

(Romans 13:1-5) “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. (2) Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. (3) For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: (4) For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not

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the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. (5) Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.”

THE SUBSTITUTE

8th — I cannot send you home without telling you again that **he whom we have blasphemed and cursed by our unbelief, esteeming him “stricken of God, smitten, and afflicted,” the Lord Jesus Christ, died at Calvary to save blaspheming sinners like us.** He was made a curse that we might escape the curse of God’s holy law.

(Leviticus 24:23) “And Moses spake to the children of Israel, that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones. And the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.”

Behold the condemned blasphemer, executed that day in Israel!

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- His execution was done before all Israel
- His execution was approved of by all. — His Mother — All Israel — His Own Conscience!
- His final place — Outside the camp!

Behold the condemned sinner on the Day of Judgment.

- His execution shall be done before all Israel
- His execution shall be approved of by all. — His Mother — All Israel — His Own Conscience!
- His final place shall be hell, the bottomless pit, the place of outer darkness. — Outside the camp!

Behold the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the sinners' Substitute when he was made to be sin for us. If we would escape the wrath of God, we must go forth unto him, without the camp, to the place of cursing, bearing his reproach.

(Isaiah 53:4-6) “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. (5) But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was*

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bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. (6) All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

(2 Corinthians 5:21) “For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

(1 Peter 3:18) “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

(Galatians 3:13-14) “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: (14) That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

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APPLICATION

I finish my message as I began it. — You are either a worshipper of the Lord Jesus Christ, or you are a blasphemer. There is no in between ground. I am either a worshipper of Christ, or I am a blasphemer. There is no in between ground. Which are you?

- To trust Christ is to worship him.
- Unbelief is blaspheming him, blaspheming the name of the Lord.
- God will forgive any sin and all sin; but if you die in your unbelief, blaspheming the name of the Lord, there shall be no forgiveness for you!

Amen.