

Seeking God's Face: Honor and Shame in the Sacrificial System

by Jackson Wu

I. Introduction

A. Thesis

How might honor and shame shed light on the saving significance of sacrifices in the Bible? Naturally, one's understanding of the sacrificial system will greatly influence his or her view of atonement.

This paper first explores the ways in which the biblical writers use honor-shame language to discuss various related concepts such as holiness, sacrifice, and sanctification. Specific attention is given to Old Testament passages.

Second, we will consider how these observations inform a biblical understanding of the sacrificial system.

B. Preview of conclusions

Sacrifices function to restore God's honor, which is defamed by human sin. Because God accepts a sacrifice, His people will not be put to shame. This perspective is reinforced throughout the canon, including the New Testament. As a sin offering, Christ bears our shame by giving to God the glory due his name.

1. Sacrifices have what function?

Sacrifices "work" by vindicating God's honor.

That is, sin blackens God's face. Our words and deeds defame God's name. Therefore, sacrifices are regarded as gifts to vindicate God's honor. By offering valuable gifts, the giver "loses his own face" and "gives God face" (to use Chinese language). He acknowledges God's higher position and confesses our lower position and (or) sin. In short, sacrifices honor God as glorious.

2. Overall Argument:

- a. Giving offerings set God apart as holy (i.e. sanctifies God)
- b. Sanctifying God means to give God unique honor, regarding him as uniquely glorious.
- c. Thus, only when this is done is sin atoned for.

3. Clarification

- a. This paper provides a positive argument; it does not explicitly critique or oppose other views. Accordingly, the present proposal and the other views are not necessarily mutually exclusive.
- b. There is no space to both review previous scholarship and also provide a meaningful overview of my proposal. I simply note I find Jay Sklar’s work most helpful among OT scholars who have focused on the sacrificial system.¹

II. Holiness and Purity as Honor Language

A. Holiness expresses unique honor

The biblical writers often use honor-shame language to clarify the meaning and significance of concepts like holiness, sanctification, and purity. Obviously, the latter terms are inextricably tied to the practice of sacrifice.

Stated plainly, holiness expresses unique honor. If someone sets apart as holy (i.e. “sanctify”) people, places, or things, one bestows on them unique honor. People regard as “holy” that which they think has greatest value. We honor what we regard as holy. To be clear, *holiness expresses honor but honor does not necessarily express holiness.*

People worship God because they regard God as holy, i.e. having unique worth. The Bible says the Temple, certain temple utensils, and God’s people all are holy. Why? People and things can have derived holiness. That is, because the Temple and people have a special relationship *with God*, they are reckoned “holy” or sanctified. In some respect, they reflect God’s unique honor, i.e. his holiness. If people live holy lives, their lives reflect God’s honor. As a result, a holy person is worthy of praise precisely because God’s holiness and honor deserves praise.²

A number of passages illustrate the point. For example, God responds to the sin of Nadab and Abihu in Lev 10:3 saying, “Then Moses said to Aaron, “This is what the LORD has said: ‘Among those who are near me I will be *sanctified* [אֶקְדָּשׁ], and before all the people I will be *glorified* [אֶכְבֹּד].” To “be glorified” restates and clarifies the significance of being “sanctified.” Verse 10 elaborates as to what it means for God to be glorified, “You are to distinguish between the holy [הַקֹּדֶשׁ] and the common [חֵל], and between the unclean and the clean [הַטְּמֵא וּבֵין הַטְּהוֹר].”

How does God sanctify the tabernacle? In Exodus 29:43–44, he says, “There I will meet with the people of Israel, and it shall be *sanctified by my glory* [יִקְדָּשׁ בְּכְבוֹדִי]. I will *consecrate* [קִדְּשֵׁתִי] the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will *consecrate* to serve me as priests.” It is God’s glory that is distinctive in sanctifying the tabernacle, its altar, and the priests.³

Glory belongs to the nature of holiness. Holiness inherently has an honor connotation. Hence, Isaiah exclaims, “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” (Isa 6:3). In Ezek 28:22, God’s “glory” and “holiness” are mutually explanatory. God says, “Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, and I will *manifest my glory* [נִכְבְּדֹתַי] in your midst. And they shall know that I am the Lord when I execute judgments in her and *manifest my holiness* [נִקְדְּשֹׁתַי] in her.”⁴

Because God has tied his own honor to a people who have behaved shamefully, it becomes necessary for God to sanctify or cleanse them, lest God suffer dishonor. God explains why he brings Israel out of Egypt,

“But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt . . . Moreover, I gave them my Sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies [שְׁדָק] them” (Ezek 20:9, 11–12).

Sanctification, i.e. setting his people apart as holy, is the means by which God both restores his honor and removes their shame.

In Ezekiel 36:22–32, God emphasizes that He will sanctify Himself. This does not mean that he makes himself holy in an objective sense. Rather, he displays the holiness that makes him worthy of honor.⁵ God’s name has been dishonored. Therefore, God’s solution in verses 22–23 is to sanctify Himself.

Thus says the Lord GOD: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but *for the sake of my holy name*, which you have *profaned* among the nations to which you came. And I will *vindicate the holiness* [שְׁדָק] of *my great name*, which has been *profaned* among the nations, and which you have *profaned* among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when through you I *vindicate my holiness* [שְׁדָק] before their eyes.

Because the people profane God’s name, they are “unclean,” worthy of “disgrace” and “shame” (vv. 24–25, 29–30, 32–33). However, God will sanctify himself by “cleansing” his people, granting them a new heart and his Spirit (vv. 26–27).

A number of passages use honor-shame language to explain the holiness of God’s people. For instance, Deut 26:19, the LORD says to Israel “that he will set you in *praise and in fame and in honor* high above all nations that he has made, and that you shall be a people *holy* to the LORD your God, as he promised.”⁶ God foretells of his salvation in Isa 61 when “you shall be called priests of the LORD” where they will enjoy “honor” instead of “shame” and “dishonor” (vv. 6–7).⁷

The NT likewise uses honor to explain holiness-language. Hebrews overtly depends on and interprets the OT sacrificial system. Therefore, it quite significant that Hebrews 2 states,

But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, *crowned with glory and honor* because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in *bringing many sons to glory*, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. For he who *sanctifies* and those who are *sanctified* all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, . . . (2:9–11)

The phrase in v. 10, “bringing many sons to glory,” is interpreted as being “sanctified” in v. 11.

John’s Gospel, which draws heavily on Temple imagery, intertwines sanctification and honor-language. In John 17:18, Jesus speaks in terms of sanctification, “And for their sake I consecrate [ἀγιάζω] myself, that they also may be sanctified [ἡγιασμένοι] in truth.” Verses 22, 24 suggest how this happens, “The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one . . . [such that they will] see my glory that you have given me.” By granting Christ’s glory to his people, God makes them holy.

Paul also intertwines honor-shame language with holiness-purity imagery in Romans 1. For example, those who did not honor God (as in v. 21) “exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts *to impurity, to the dishonoring* of their bodies among themselves” (v. 23–24). Impurity is explained in terms of dishonor.

Idol worship is the quintessential act of profaning God’s name (cf. Ezek 20:39); so here, the idolaters “exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things” (v. 23). Furthermore, their idolatrous, impure hearts (v. 25) produce “dishonorable passions” and “shameless acts” by those who “did not see fit to acknowledge God” (v. 26–28).⁸

Second Timothy 2:20–21 unambiguously equates honor and holiness. Paul writes,

Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for *honorable* use [τιμῆν], some for *dishonorable*. Therefore, if anyone *cleanses* [ἐκκαθάρη] himself from what is *dishonorable*,⁹ he will be a vessel for *honorable* use [τιμῆν], set apart as *holy* [ἡγιασμένον], useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.”

What is significant is that Paul uses “holy” to express “honorable.” Furthermore, it is because of dishonor that one needs cleansing.

Similarly language is sprinkled throughout the NT. In 1 Thess 4:3–4, Paul writes, “For this is the will of God, your *sanctification* [ἁγιασμός]: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in *holiness* [ἁγιασμοῦ] and *honor* [τιμῆ].”¹⁰ Given 4:7, the contrast to honor is “impurity.”¹¹

Honor is a key concept to understanding holiness, purity and sanctification language. We can apply this observation to OT passages that concern making sacrifices. For example, observe what happens when priests consecrate the altar. In Exod 29:36–37,

. . . and every day you shall offer a bull as a *sin offering* [הַטְּאֵת] for *atonement* [כִּפּוּרִים]. Also you shall purify the altar, when you *make atonement for it* [כִּבְּרָהּ], and shall anoint it to *consecrate it* [לְקַדְּשׁוֹ]. Seven days you shall *make atonement for* the altar and *consecrate it*, and the altar shall be most holy. Whatever touches the altar shall become holy.

By offering a sacrifice, the priest treats the altar with unique honor. As a result, atonement is made.¹² A similar logic is found in other OT passages. Sacrifices effect atonement inasmuch as they sanctify God as uniquely holy.

III. Honorable Sacrifice in the Pentateuch

A. Sacrifices Give Honor to God

In the Pentateuch, one primary function of sacrifices is to sanctify and thus honor God. As a result, atonement is made. In Lev 10, Aaron’s sons Nadab and Abihu mistake the fundamental purpose of the offering. God’s rebuke is illuminating. He says, “I will be sanctified,” which is explained by the phrase, “I will be glorified” (v. 3).¹³

The following context is significant because it immediately clarifies what the sacrifices were intended to achieve. Moses is angered by what seems to be another instance of disregard for the sacrifices. In verse 17, he asks, “Why have you not eaten the *sin offering* [הַטְּאֵת] in the place of the sanctuary, since it is a thing most holy and has been given to you that you may bear the iniquity [לְשִׂאת אֲתֵּי־עֲוֹן] of the congregation, to *make atonement* [לְכַפֵּר] for them before the LORD?”

When does a sin offering bring atonement? When people offer sacrifice in a way that honors God. Note the sequence. First, sacrifice is offered (v. 3, 17). Accordingly, the sacrifice sanctifies or glorifies God. Finally, atonement is made before the LORD.

Similar connections are made in Lev 9:6–7,

And Moses said, “This is the thing that the LORD commanded you to do, *that the glory of the LORD may appear to you.*” Then Moses said to Aaron,

“Draw near to the altar and offer your *sin offering and your burnt offering* and *make atonement for yourself* and for the people, and bring the offering of the people and make atonement for them, as the LORD has commanded.

In order for God’s glory to appear, sacrifice must be offered such that atonement is made for the priests and the people. This is precisely the result in v. 23 (cf. 2 Chron 7).

This understanding of sacrifice is also consistent with passages outside the Pentateuch. In 1 Sam 6:2–5, the Philistines discuss what should be done with the ark of the LORD. The chiasm in vv. 4–5 is significant.

- 4a And they said, “What is *the guilt offering* that we shall return to him?”
- 4b They answered, “Five golden tumors and five golden mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines, for the same plague was on all of you and on your lords.
- 5a So you must make images of your tumors and images of your mice that ravage the land,
- 5b and *give glory to the God of Israel . . .*”

Verse 4a suggests they should return to the LORD a guilt offering (cf. v. 3). The repetitious reply in v. 4b, 5a specifies how they should do this, i.e. by making images of tumors and mice. Finally, v. 5b completes the chiasm and so expresses the effect of the offering mentioned in v. 4a, namely, giving glory to God. Though the method of the offering differs from that of the Levitical priests, the purpose is the same—honoring God such that the people will be healed and God’s hand will not be against them (cf. v. 3).

Further evidence is found in Israel’s songs of worship. In 1 Chron 16:29 (cf. Ps 96:8–9a), praise is given to God,

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come before him!
Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness

The people worship God due to the glory or splendor of his holiness. By bringing God an offering, they honor him. Psalms also make clear that the natural function of offering a sacrifice was to give glory to God.¹⁴

The point is vividly demonstrated via contrast. In Mal 1:6–2:3, Israel gives shameful offerings. The entire passage intertwines honor-shame and purity language. Most significant is 1:6–8a,

A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a father, where is my honor? And if I am a master, where is my fear? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. But you say,

“How have we despised your name?” By offering polluted food upon my altar. But you say, “How have we *polluted you* [גַּאֲלָנוּךָ]?” By saying that the Lord’s table may be despised. When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not evil?

How have the people dishonored God and despised his name? By offering shameful sacrifices and polluting the altar; thus, *they even pollute God*.¹⁵ Notice how sacrifice works. How one gives a sacrifice *represents* how (s)he regards God. In short, offering polluted food is equivalent to polluting God!

1 Samuel 2:29–30 confirms this interpretation. The LORD speak to Eli,

“Why then do you *scorn my sacrifices and my offerings* that I commanded for my dwelling, and *honor your sons above me* by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?” Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: “I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever,” but now the LORD declares: “Far be it from me, for *those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed.*”

In scorning the sacrifices and offerings, Eli honors his sons above LORD. Yet, v. 30 makes clear the intent of such sacrifices. Giving sacrifices ought to represent the honor given to God by the people.

The LORD’s comments in Isa 43:23–24a succinctly restate the point. Isaiah writes,

You have not *brought me your sheep for burnt offerings, or honored me* [דָּתַנְיָכָב] *with your sacrifices*. I have not burdened you with offerings, or wearied you with frankincense. You have not bought me sweet cane with money, or satisfied me with the fat of your sacrifices

The purpose of the sacrifices is not merely assumed; it is explicitly stated.

B. Sacrifices Remove Sinners’ Shame and Restore Honor

There is a second way honor-shame helps us understand the meaning of the sacrifices, including the reason they bring atonement. Not only do sacrifices sanctify God as uniquely worthy of honor; they also sanctify the giver. In other words, the sacrifices remove the sinner’s shame and restore human honor.

When the priests rebuke King Uzziah for burning incense to the LORD, they state the implicit assumption of those who gave offerings in the sanctuary. In 2 Chron 26:18,

they withstood King Uzziah and said to him, “It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are

consecrated to burn incense. Go out of the sanctuary, for you have done wrong, and *it will bring you no honor from the LORD God.*”

Apparently, one should expect sacrifice to bring honor to the sacrificer.

Furthermore, sacrifices remove the shame due to ritual impurity. The basic logic of the Pentateuch is this:

- (1) Uncleanness is shameful.
- (2) Sacrifices solve uncleanness.
- (3) Therefore, sacrifices solve a shame problem.

A number of passages illustrate the first point: uncleanness is considered shameful (cf. Deut 23:13–14; Isa 47:3).¹⁶ Leviticus demonstrates the second premise: sacrifice solves the problem of uncleanness. For example, in Lev 5, the one who becomes unclean for touching an animal carcass (even unknowingly) must make compensation via a sin offering, which will bring about atonement for his sin (cf. Lev 14:19–20).¹⁷

In this way, sacrifices solve the problem of uncleanness.

IV. Implications and Applications

In summary, the passages surveyed above confirm a relationship between honor-shame and the sacrificial system. In particular, the sacrificial system (e.g. the process of giving sin offering) aims to honor God such that He removes our shame by atoning for sin.

Next, I will conclude by briefly answering two questions. First, how does this view of biblical sacrifices relate to other theories of atonement (especially penal substitution)? Second, how might this perspective influence Christian practice?

A. Theology of Atonement

1. How does this view relate to other theories of atonement?

One strength of this interpretation is that it draws from the entire biblical canon. As a result, it is naturally able to integrate multiple metaphors used to describe atonement. For instance, we have already seen the seamless interrelationship between honor, holiness, and purity language.

Precisely because God’s people are to be a kingdom of priests, their sacrifices simultaneously affirm their allegiance to the divine King with whom they are bound by covenant. In as sense, the sacrificial system typifies Christ’s victory of over sin and death in the same way that the sacrificed lamb at Passover was God’s means to judging the gods of Egypt (Exod 12:12; Numb 33:4; cf. Exod 6:6; 7:4). Just as God got glory over

Pharaoh (Exod 14:4, 17, 18), so Christ's sacrifice ensures that God's name will be proclaimed in all the earth (cf. Exod 9:16; 1 Cor 15:28).

The proposal offered in this paper highlights an area of agreement held by those who hold different theories of the atonement: the sacrifices prescribed in the OT should glorify God. Even if people disagree at other points, interpreters can find common ground on the ultimate goal of the sacrificial system.

2. What about penal substitutionary atonement?

Someone who accepts PSA can affirm the main ideas of this paper just as readily as someone who rejects PSA. The difference between those two people would simply be how they think Christ's sacrifice upholds God's honor. For example, John Piper, as advocate of PSA,

Thus, if God is to be righteous, he must repair the dishonor done to his name by the sins of those whom he blesses. He must magnify the glory men thought to deny him. . . . In putting Christ forth as a propitiation, God acts for the sake of his glory, i.e., he actively demonstrates inviolable allegiance to the honor of his name. . . . in order that he might remain and *be* righteous.¹

Of course, other people might suppose that PSA amounts to something negative akin to a divine "honor killing." Therefore, they might separate God's honor from His wrath. Instead, they might prefer other positive formulations. For example, one could simply say that the act of sacrifice is a straightforward demonstration of repentance and allegiance. Or, they might use more explicit language from the OT, saying that sacrifices "sanctify God," i.e. set God apart as one uniquely worthy of glory.

B. Christian Practice

Finally, I will suggest a few practical applications.

1. Missiologically

An honor-shame perspective could help people more easily grasp the meaning and significance of the sacrificial system and ultimately Christ's atonement. In cultures around the world, there are few things more important to daily life than one's public reputation or "face" (to use a Chinese expression).

¹ John Piper, "The Demonstration of the Righteousness of God," *JSNT* 2, no. 7 (Jan 1980): 28, 31.

The interpretation given in this paper lays the groundwork for a robust and healthy contextualization. It affirms what is foundational without supposing that people must immediately understand the various theories and mechanics of the atonement.

2. Doxology & Character

The sacrificial system overturns conventional expectations of honor and shame. Through a sacrificial death, God is glorified and shame is taken away. Accordingly, God's people are challenged to reevaluate what they regard as praiseworthy and pure, sacred and secular. Repentance, service, humility become means of glorifying God and getting honor from the Creator King.

3. Ethics

God brings reconciliation through sacrifice (figuratively, via animals; ultimately, in Christ). Thus, he gives us a model for understanding reconciliation and repentance. Each requires the offender to admit his or her own shameful condition and acknowledge God's honor. Godliness is not defined by rules or ceremony; rather it is oriented on God's glory. In short, Christ's followers are called to seek God's face by sacrificing their own.

ENDNOTES

¹ Jay Sklar, *Sin, Impurity, Sacrifice, Atonement: The Priestly Conceptions* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2015). Jay Sklar helpfully connects the two metaphors. In short, he argues that impurity (whether moral or ritual) creates an obligation (a debt), which the sacrificial system addresses. Accordingly, these metaphors will prove helpful in connecting honor and shame with the sacrificial system. Many evangelical interpretations of Rom 3:24–26 implicitly make this connection, such as when people suggest that sin causes sinners to have obligation or debt, namely death, which is paid by Christ’s sacrifice.

² To use a colloquial Chinese expression, “sanctifying” a person means essentially to give “face” to him or her above all else.

³ This tabernacle is finally made holy in Exod 40:34–34, “Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and *the glory of the LORD* filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and *the glory of the LORD* filled the tabernacle.” The holiness of the sanctuary comes from God’s glory.

⁴ Thus, God will be honored when “they will know that I am the Lord GOD” (28:24). God’s holiness signifies the fact that unique honor is due his name (cf. Ps 29:2).

⁵ Thus, even people can “sanctify” God. Cf. Isa 8:13–14a, “But the LORD of hosts, *him you shall honor as holy* [שְׁדַק; more literally, “him you shall sanctify”]. . . . And he will become a sanctuary.” Likewise, cf. the Greek ἀγιάζω, “in your hearts honor [ἀγιάσατε] Christ the Lord as holy.” (1 Pet 3:15)

⁶ In Ezek 37:28, God receives honor as the one who “sanctifies Israel, when my sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.” Cf. Isa 60:7, 9, 13 where God will “beautify” [פָּאֵר] his sanctuary and “will make the place of [his] feet glorious [כְּבוֹד].” Less direct is Isa 55:3, 5, where God demonstrates that he is “the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you” in keeping with his covenant promises.

⁷ By contrast, in Jer 51:51, observe the sign that leads Israel to say “We are put to shame, for we have heard reproach; dishonor has covered our face.” He adds, Jeremiah writes, “for foreigners have come into the holy places of the LORD’s house.”

⁸ In Rev 15:3–8, John use of words is illuminating. This passage uses a chiasm.

“Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty!

Just [δίκαια] and true are your ways, O *King* of the nations!

4a Who will not fear, O Lord, and *glorify* [δοξάσει] your name?

4b For [ὅτι] you alone are *holy* [ἅγιος].

4c [ὅτι] All nations will come and worship you,

4d for [ὅτι] your *righteous acts* [lemma: δικαίωμα] have been revealed.”

After this I looked, and the *sanctuary* of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, . . . and the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the *glory* [δόξης] of God and from his power, and no one could enter the *sanctuary* until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

In v. 4a, “glory” is a verb but a noun in v. 8. In v. 5–8, the distinctive feature of God’s sanctuary is that it is filled with God’s glory. In other words, God’s glory *sanctifies* the Temple. With this observation, we can better understand vv. 3–5. Because God is holy (v. 4b), therefore people glorify him (v. 4a). In other words, God *inherent, objective* glory (v. 4b, 8) generates God’s *public, subjective* glory (v. 4a, c). God possesses unique honor; thus, he alone is holy (v. 4b), manifest in his righteous acts.

⁹ The Greek uses τούτων, whose antecedent is ἀτιμίαν from v. 20b.

¹⁰ Verse 7 reinforces the contrast between “impurity” and “holiness.”

¹¹ In 1 Thess 2:3–6, observe how Paul explains the fact that “our appeal does no spring from error or impurity.” After all, they “have been approved by God . . . so we speak, not to please man, but to please God.” Further, “we never came with words of flattery . . . Nor did we seek glory from people . . .” In contrast, Paul adds, “You are witnesses, and God also, *how holy* [ὁσίως] and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers” (2:10). Throughout the letter (as elsewhere), purity and holiness are directly explained using honor-shame language. Also, cf. Col 3:12,17, where Paul urges his readers to live as “holy” people, thus “whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him”

It is not possible here to note the full extent to which Peter uses honor and shame to explain his holiness-purity language, particularly in 1 Pet 1:15–2:17. Quoting Lev 11:44, Peter says, “as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy’” (1:15–16). Temple-sacrificial imagery pervades the passage (cf. vv. 19, 22; 2:5, 9). Importantly, he increasingly uses clear honor-shame language to develop his thought (cf. 2:6–7, 9, 12, 17). Thus, those who are holy will “not be put to shame” (2:6) but will receive “honor” (2:7) as living honorably (2:12, 17) for the sake of God’s glory (2:12).

¹² The sin offering consecrates the altar thus purifying or atoning for it. Likewise, in Lev 8:14–15, “Then he brought the bull of the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the bull of the sin offering. And he killed it, and Moses took the blood, and with his finger put it on the horns of the altar around it and *purified* the altar and poured out the blood at the base of the altar and *consecrated* it to make *atonement* for it” (cf. vv. 10–13). Similarly, cf. 2 Chron 30:15; Ezek 43:25–26.

¹³ In contrast, v. 10 indicates how priests should sanctify and glorify God, “You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean.”

¹⁴ Cf. Ps 50:23. The psalmist says, “The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me; to one who orders his way rightly I will show the salvation of God!” The key part of the verse is the fact the writer chooses a sacrifice metaphor to express the way in which a person honors God.

¹⁵ Similar surprising language is found in Isa 63:3, where the LORD says the blood of condemned sinners “stained all my apparel.”

¹⁶ Recall Lev 10. By not distinguishing “between the holy and common, and unclean and clean,” Nadab and Abihu did not sanctify or glorify the LORD (v. 3, 10). In Deut 23, “holy” linguistically contrasts “indecent,” which is translated ערות as “nakedness” in English Bibles. Yet, throughout the OT, uncovering someone’s nakedness [ערות גלה] is regarded as interpreted as exposing one’s *shame*. The LXX makes this quite clear because the translators consistently translate the phrase by combining the verb ἀποκαλύπτω (expose, reveal) with the noun ἀσχημοσύνη or αἰσχύνη (shame). Isaiah 47:3 reinforces the point, “Your nakedness shall be uncovered, and your disgrace [חרפה] shall be seen.

Conceptually, a mass of other passages highlight the shame that comes up someone who is unclean, such as the lepers of Lev 13–14, those with a discharge (Num 5:2), and one with a nocturnal emission (Deut 23:10). Because of their uncleanness, they must suffer the shame of exclusion from the community.

For an introduction to the link between shame and impurity, see Werner Mischke, *The Global Gospel* (Scottsdale, Arizona: Mission One, 2014), 127–144.

¹⁷ Leviticus 14:19–20 indicates that a sin offering and a burnt offering respectively are needed to cleanse the one who is unclean and then the priest who makes atonement for the one who was unclean.