

THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

(Hebrews 13)

(2) Truth and Obedience in the Household of God (13:9-17)

- I. Love and Service Should Be the Norm in the Household of God (13:1-8)
- II. Truth and Obedience Should Be the Norm in the Household of God (13:9-17)
 - A. Believers Adhere to Truth and Grace (13:9)
 - 1. Truth Does Not Change according to Fashion/Trend
 - 2. Salvation Is Based on Grace, Not Food (Visible Sacrifices, Rules)
 - a. Some Are Still Occupied with It
 - b. It Never Benefited Them Spiritually
 - B. Believers Bear Christ's Reproach (13:10-14)
 - 1. Christians Have an Eternal Altar/Sacrifice (13:10a)
 - a. Christians Were Accused of Having No Altar/Temple/God
 - b. Christians Do Have an Eternal Altar/Sacrifice/God
 - 2. Yom Kippur Sacrifices Bore Signs of Rejection (13:10b-11)
 - a. Blood of the Sacrifices on the Day of Atonement Cover the Sins of the Priests and Congregation (Lev 16:11, 15)
 - b. Body of the Sacrifices on the Day of Atonement Were Burned Outside of the Camp of Israel (Lev 16:27-28)
 - 3. Christ Bore the Signs of Rejection (13:12)
 - a. Christ's Blood Covered the Sins of Man
 - b. Christ's Body Was Crucified Outside of Jerusalem
 - 4. Christians Will Bear the Sign of Rejection (13:13-14)
 - a. Christians Pick up the Cross and Follow Jesus (13:13)
 - i. God Was Rejected by Israel (Golden Calf; Exod 32)
 - ii. Moses Pitched Outside of Camp (Exod 33:7-11)
 - b. Christians Seek for the Eternal Reward (13:14)
 - i. Moses Bore the Reproach of Christ (Heb 11:26)
 - ii. Christians Seek the City of God (Heb 12:27)
 - C. Believers Continue Sacrifices of Praise, Thanksgiving & Love (13:15-16)
 - 1. Christians Continue the Sacrifice of Praise: for Who God Is
 - 2. Christians Continue the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving: for What God Does
 - 3. Christians Continue the Sacrifice of Love: for God's Pleasure
 - D. Believers Decide to Obey God-Ordained Current Church Leaders (13:17)
 - 1. Leaders Are Ordained by God to Oversee the Souls of the Believers
 - 2. Leaders Must Give Account to God on the State of the Believers
 - 3. Submission to Church Leaders Gives Them Joy
 - 4. Rebellion to Church Leaders Give Them Grief
 - 5. Giving Leaders Grief Does Not Profit Believers
- III. Honor and Goodness Should Be the Norm in the Household of God (13:18-25)

Central Ideas

Believers should adhere to the eternal truth, not the trend of the day. The eternal truth is centered on the grace and sacrifice of Christ, who bore reproach from man while doing great work for God. Believers must emulate Christ, pick up the cross and follow him, continuing the sacrifices of praise, thanksgiving and love. The application for the Jewish Christian believers then was to stay in the general Christian church.

Study Questions for Heb 13:9-17

1. What is the characteristic of eternal truth? What about the “strange doctrines”?
2. What is the eternal truth of the gospel centered on?
3. What does “food” stand for here? Which biblical author repeatedly contrasted the above concept with “food etc”? References?
4. The first-century Christians were accused as atheists. Why?
5. What animals on the Day of Atonement were sacrificed and burned outside of the camp? What must the persons who burn them do in order to return to the camp? What do these mean?
6. Where was Christ crucified? Does that matter theologically? Why?
7. Was God himself ever rejected by Israel? Where did Moses pitch his tent of testimony after the Golden Calf event? Why?
8. In what sense did Moses “bear the reproach of Christ” (Cf. 11:26) What was the interpretation then? Does the text here add on to it?
9. In what sense should Christians imitate Moses and Christ? What equivalent saying did Christ teach directly to the disciples?
10. What among the five major offerings of Leviticus did Christ fulfill for us? What should we continue? In which three senses?
11. What is the difference between the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving?
12. If Christians must bear the reproach of man, what was the application for the first century Jewish Christian readers of the book?

Answers to Study Questions for Heb 13:9-17

1. The eternal truth is not changing; the “strange doctrines” are ever changing.
2. The eternal truth of the gospel is centered on grace, not law, rules or merit.
3. The “food” stands for all the visible apparatus of the Law. Paul repeatedly mentioned food as an example of the contrast between law and grace, in e.g. Rom 14:15; 1 Col 8:8; 10:30; Col 2:16.
4. The Christians did not have visible temple, altar, or sacrifice (Christ was the last sacrifice). Therefore they were thought of by the pagans as atheists, who might offend the gods and bring calamity to mankind. Therefore Christians were thought of as a social malice, no matter how well they behaved in love to others.
5. On the Day of Atonement, a bull was sacrificed for the sins of the priests, and a goat was sacrificed for the sins of the people of Israel. Their bodies were burned outside of the camp, and the people who burned them must wash their bodies before they were admitted into the camp again. This means that the bodies of these sacrifices were unclean, and rejected by God.
6. Christ was crucified just outside of the city wall of Jerusalem at his time. Theologically this fulfilled the typological prophecy of his being rejected by God and the people of God.
7. God was rejected by Israel during the event of the golden calf. Moses pitched his tent outside of the camp after that event, because he is a faithful servant to God, who was rejected by the people, and Moses is a type for Christ.
8. Moses “bore the reproach of Christ” in Heb 11:26 probably in the sense of not initiating a revolt of slaves by his own power after he was revealed to have killed an Egyptian, but escaped to the wilderness for forty years. In Heb 13:14’ allusion to Moses, he bore the reproach of Christ by pitching his tent outside of the camp, symbolizing the rejection of the Messiah by the people of God.
9. Christians should be willing to “bear the reproach of Christ,” being rejected by the world for the sake of truth. Christ commanded us to “take up the cross and follow him” in Mark 8:34.
10. Christ is our *sin offering* (paying off our debt to God), and the divine part of our *guilt offering* (paying off our debt to God due to our sin against man), *whole burnt offering* (dedication of ourselves to God), and *grain offering* (being sanctified; Christ is the bread from heaven). We need to give the human part of our *guilt offering* (repent and repay our sins against others), *burnt offering* (dedicate our lives to God, including tithing that acknowledges God’s sustenance of our lives), and *grain offering* (practical sanctification). The only thing we have to pay totally is the *fellowship offering* (fellowship between man and God). The three forms are praise offering, thanksgiving offering and love (which makes God pleased).
11. The sacrifice of praise is for who God is, the sacrifice of thanksgiving is for what God does/did.
12. They need to stay in the mostly-gentile Christian church, not return to Judaism.

Septuagint in Hebrews 13

Verse	Hebrew Bible (MT)	Septuagint (LXX)	NT Hebrews
Exod 33:7 Heb 13:13	Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it <u>outside the camp</u> , a good distance from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And it came about, that everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting which was outside the camp. (NAS)	And Moses took his tabernacle and pitched it <u>without the camp</u> , at a distance from the camp; and it was called the Tabernacle of Testimony: and it came to pass that sought the Lord went forth to the tabernacle which was without the camp. (Brenton)	13:13 Therefore let us go forth to Him, <u>outside the camp</u> , <u>bearing His reproach</u> . (NKJ) 11:26 (Moses) <u>esteeming the reproach of Christ</u> greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. (NKJ)
Hos 14:2 LXX Hos 14:3 Heb 13:15	Take words with you, And return to the LORD. Say to Him, “Take away all iniquity; Receive <i>us</i> graciously, For we will offer <u>the sacrifices of our lips</u> .” (NKJ)	Take with your words, and return to the Lord your God: speak to him, that thy will not receive the reward of unrighteousness, but they ye may receive good things: and we will render in return <u>the fruit of our lips</u> (Benton)	Therefore by Him let us continually offer the <u>sacrifice of praise</u> to God, that is, the fruit of <u>our lips</u> , giving thanks to His name. (NKJ)
Ps 50:12-15 LXX Ps 49:12-15 Heb 13:15	12 If I were hungry, I would not tell you; For the world is Mine, and all it contains. 13 Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, Or drink the blood of male goats? 14 Offer to God a <u>sacrifice of thanksgiving</u> , And pay your vows to the Most High; 15 And call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me. (NAS)	12 If I were hungry, I would not tell you: for the world and all that is in it is mine. 13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? 14 <u>Offer to God the sacrifice of thanksgiving</u> ; and pay your vows to the Most High; 15 and call upon me in the days of trouble; and I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me. (Bruce)	Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, <u>the fruit of our lips</u> , <u>giving thanks to His name</u> . (NKJ)

DAY 10/04/2009

Note:

- Hebrews alluded to the concepts of “outside the camp,” “sacrifice of praise,” and “sacrifice of thanksgiving” in LXX.