



Unit .06

Session .03

A Picture of Atonement

Scripture



Leviticus 16:2-6,15-22

2 The LORD said to Moses: “Tell your brother Aaron that he may not come whenever he wants into the holy place behind the curtain in front of the mercy seat on the ark or else he will die, because I appear in the cloud above the mercy seat. **3** “Aaron is to enter the most holy place in this way: with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. **4** He is to wear a holy linen tunic, and linen undergarments are to be on his body. He is to tie a linen sash around him and wrap his head with a linen turban. These are holy garments; he must bathe his body with water before he wears them. **5** He is to take from the Israelite community two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering. **6** “Aaron will present the bull for his sin offering and make atonement for himself and his household. ...

15 “When he slaughters the male goat for the people’s sin offering and brings its blood inside the curtain, he will do the same with its blood as he did with the bull’s blood: He is to sprinkle it against the mercy seat and in front of it. **16** He will make atonement for the most holy place in this way for all their sins because of the Israelites’ impurities and rebellious acts. He will do the

same for the tent of meeting that remains among them, because it is surrounded by their impurities. **17** No one may be in the tent of meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the most holy place until he leaves after he has made atonement for himself, his household, and the whole assembly of Israel. **18** Then he will go out to the altar that is before the LORD and make atonement for it. He is to take some of the bull’s blood and some of the goat’s blood and put it on the horns on all sides of the altar. **19** He is to sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times to cleanse and set it apart from the Israelites’ impurities. **20** “When he has finished making atonement for the most holy place, the tent of meeting, and the altar, he is to present the live male goat. **21** Aaron will lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the Israelites’ iniquities and rebellious acts—all their sins. He is to put them on the goat’s head and send it away into the wilderness by the man appointed for the task. **22** The goat will carry all their iniquities into a desolate land, and the man will release it there.”

What stands out to you in the text about the Day of Atonement?

What do you think it was like for Aaron and consecutive high priests to approach God on the Day of Atonement? How can we approach a holy God?



99 Essential Doctrines

God is Holy

God's holiness refers to His uniqueness in being separate from all He has created. The Hebrew word for *holy* means *separate* or *set apart*. God's holiness also refers to His absolute purity. God is unstained by the evil of the world. His goodness is perfect, and the moral code we find in the Scriptures is a reflection of His holy nature. As people made in God's image, we are called to holiness.

Main Point

God provides atonement for the people's sins.

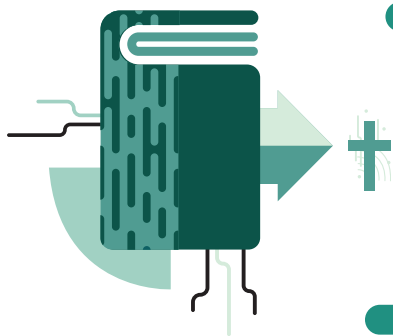
What ways do people sometimes try to approach God on their own terms or in their own way?

How was atonement made?

What ways can you point people to the perfect advocate and sacrifice for sins—Jesus Christ?

Question?

Question?



Christ Connection

Aaron was an imperfect high priest who was required to make atonement for himself and God's people every year. Jesus is the perfect High Priest who made atonement once for all time with His own blood.



Head

In which ways is Israel on the Day of Atonement a picture of ourselves?

How does knowing Jesus Christ as the perfect high priest enable you to come before a perfect and holy God?



Heart

How do you think these sacrifices would have made the person offering them feel in regard to his or her sin?

What should our response be when we recognize our sin for what it really is?

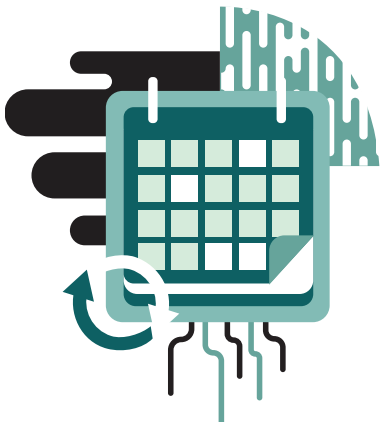


Hands

What are the implications for how we live in light of Jesus' sacrifice for us?

How should we relate to others in light of Jesus' sacrifice for us?

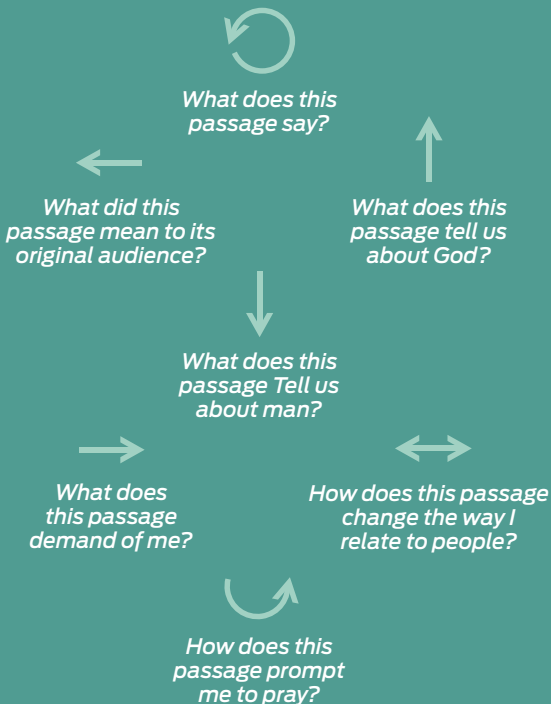
Daily Devotions



Day 1

Leviticus 1:1-17

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



The Book of Leviticus opens by describing several types of recurring offerings the people could offer at the tabernacle. Each of these sacrifices was to be offered in a certain way and had a specific purpose.

The first offering is the burnt offering, a voluntary animal sacrifice where the entire animal was burned and the fire and smoke were a pleasing aroma to God. While the Burnt Offering involved atonement for sin (v. 4), it also signified a person's full dedication to God, pictured by the sacrifice being completely burned.

In this offering, we see images of Christ's full dedication to the Father expressed through His life obedience and His willing sacrifice on the cross. Christ gave Himself fully for us to make atonement for our sin. Our only reasonable response is total surrender to Him. The voluntary nature of this offering captures both Christ's willingness to endure shame on our behalf and our proper motivation in living for Him. Our obedience is not to be offered by compulsion, but instead to be motivated by love and gratitude.

What area (or areas) of your life are you holding back instead of fully surrendering to God? What is preventing you from giving this (these) to God joyfully?

Leviticus 2:1-16

The second offering described in Leviticus is the grain offering. Like the burnt offering, this was a voluntary sacrifice. As the name suggests, this sacrifice did not involve an animal, but grain. The fine flour was mixed with oil and frankincense and burned with the fire and smoke being a pleasing aroma to God. This offering pictured a person's gratitude for God's provision and his or her desire to live with generosity in response.

We can look at this offering, like the burnt offering, and see how it points to Christ. He is the One who demonstrated unmatched humility and generosity in taking on the flesh, coming to earth, and offering Himself so we might have forgiveness and eternal life. Believers should also seek to demonstrate scandalous generosity to those around us, so they might see the beauty and power of the gospel.

How can you be more generous this week with your time and resources?

Leviticus 3:1-17

The third offering is the fellowship offering. Once again, like the burnt offering and grain offering, this was a voluntary sacrifice. Unlike the grain offering, this was an animal sacrifice but unlike the burnt offering, the entire animal was not consumed in flames. The part of the animal that was burned produced an aroma pleasing to God. The fellowship offering was given to express gratitude for a person's relationship with God. Implicit in this offering is the awareness of a person's sins being atoned for.

Once again, it is not difficult for us to connect this offering to Christ. Jesus was the willing sacrifice who provided forgiveness for our sin to remove the barrier between God and those who trust in Him. Because we have been given Christ's righteousness, we are not spiritually neutral before God; He has restored relationship between holy God and forgiven humanity. As believers, each of our days should be marked by deep gratitude and joy for the relationship with God we have been given in Christ.

What can you do today to live out and enjoy the relationship with God that Christ has provided?

Leviticus 4:1–5:19

The fourth and fifth offerings are the sin offering (Lev. 4) and the guilt offering (Lev. 5). These two offerings were not voluntary; both were to be made as a result of sin and reaffirmed the need for forgiveness. The sin offering was made after unintentional sin or uncleanness. The guilt offering was made after intentional acts against others or after desecrating what was holy.

Both of these offerings point to the one-time sacrifice Jesus made for all sin—intentional and unintentional. Jesus’ sacrifice was necessary to provide forgiveness that gives the believer confidence that he or she is accepted by God. Not even a single sin remains to bring condemnation from God. This is the source of the believer’s hope and joy. Even as believers continue to sin, remembering the scope and depth of Christ’s sacrifice for sin should cause us to seek to cast aside sin and to live holy lives pleasing to the Lord.

What sins have you committed but not yet confessed to God? How can you rest in His complete forgiveness and acceptance of you in Christ?

Leviticus 16:1-34

After reading the details of how the Day of Atonement was to be honored each year, we find that another aspect of this day was the people’s rest and self-denial (vv. 29-31). The Day of Atonement was a Sabbath for God’s people.

In a practical sense, God likely commanded this so the people would be able to focus on the significance of this day. Work and the typical distractions of life were set aside. But there may be another reason: Rest and self-denial are central to the gospel.

God’s people were to rest, affirming there was nothing they could do to earn forgiveness for their sins. This truth was accentuated in their being spectators during the ceremonies of the Day of Atonement.

Likewise, the people of Israel were to practice self-denial because humility—that of Christ taking on the flesh and being the Suffering Servant and that of a person who comes to Him in total neediness for salvation—is a defining characteristic of the gospel.

Which do you find more difficult to maintain as a follower of Christ—rest or self-denial? Why?

Notes