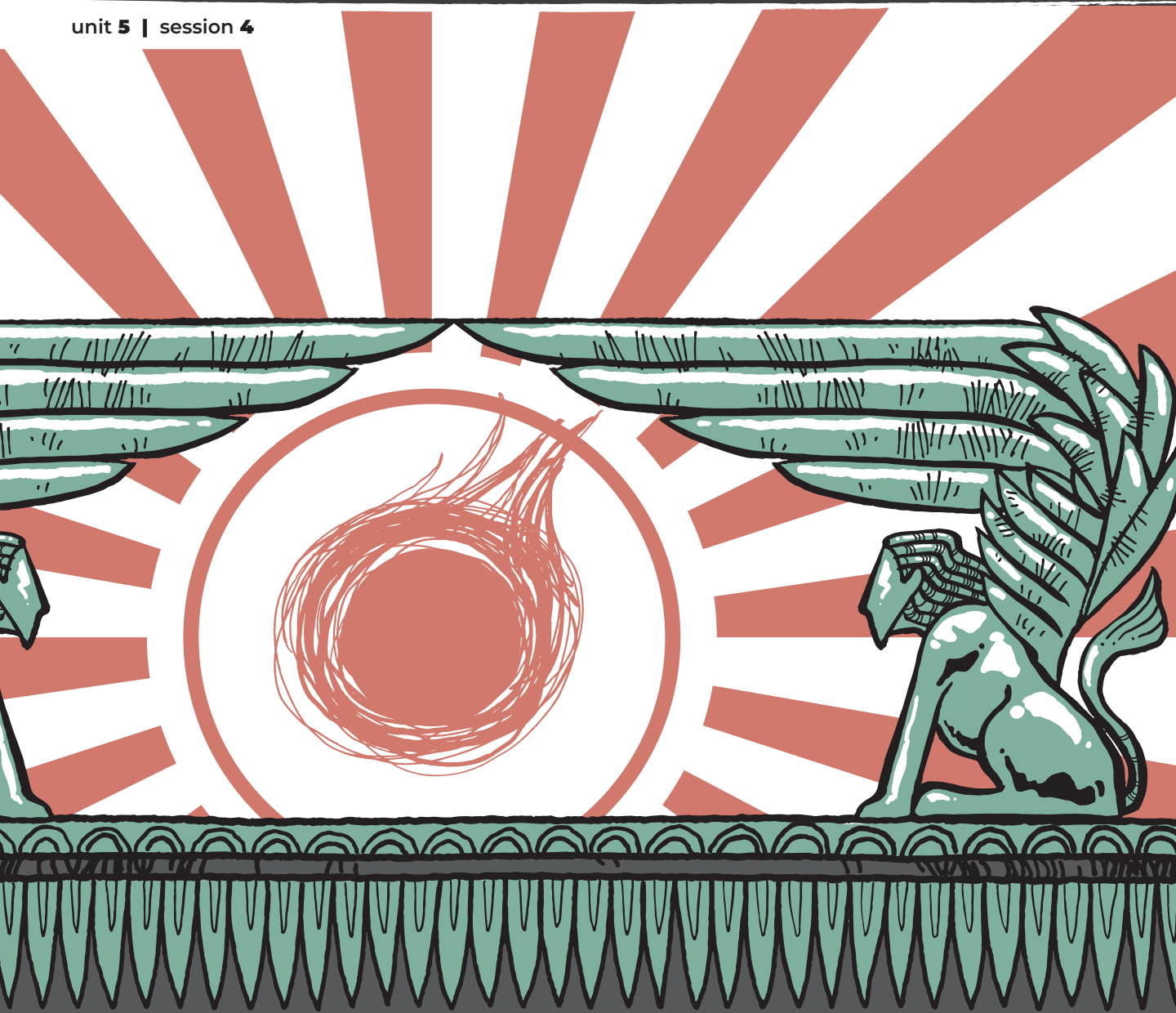


ATONEMENT FOR ALL THEIR *SINS*

unit 5 | session 4



CHRIST CONNECTION

The Lord graciously prescribed animal sacrifices as a part of His law so His people could be forgiven and their sins atoned for, but this was a temporary measure. Because the blood of animals can never take away our sins ([Heb. 10:4](#)), Jesus Christ came to lay down His life in our place. With His perfect blood, He paid the price through His death to atone for our sins once and for all ([Heb. 10:10](#)).

This week, we're covering the passages and main points below. But we encourage you to dig in and read all of the content on this timeline.

Leviticus 16:1

Leviticus 16:34

APPROACHING GOD IS A PRIVILEGE

LEVITICUS 16:1-6

1 The LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near before the LORD and died, 2 and the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat that is on the ark, so that he may not die. For I will appear in the cloud over the mercy seat. 3 But in this way Aaron shall come into the Holy Place: with a bull from the herd for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. 4 He shall put on the holy linen coat and shall have the linen undergarment on his body, and he shall tie the linen sash around his waist, and wear the linen turban; these are the holy garments. He shall bathe his body in water and then put them on. 5 And he shall take from the congregation of the people of Israel two male goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. 6 Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering for himself and shall make atonement for himself and for his house."

THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM POINTED TO JESUS

LEVITICUS 16:15-22

15 "Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the veil and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it over the mercy seat and in front of the mercy seat. 16 Thus he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel and because of their transgressions, all their sins. And so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which dwells with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. 17 No one may be in the tent of meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the Holy Place until he comes out and has made atonement for himself and for his house and for all the assembly of Israel. 18 Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around. 19 And he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it and consecrate it from the uncleannesses of the people of Israel. 20 And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat. 21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins. And he shall put them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. 22 The goat shall bear all their iniquities on itself to a remote area, and he shall let the goat go free in the wilderness."

MAIN POINT.

We depend on Jesus's **sacrifice** to enter God's holy presence.



THEOLOGY CONNECTION

ASPECTS OF THE ATONEMENT

Christ's substitutionary death on our behalf stands at the center of His atoning work. **Without this work, there is no gospel** (1 Cor. 15:3). While this substitutionary aspect is central to the atonement, His death also supremely demonstrates **God's love for sinners** (John 15:13; 1 John 4:10). It shows us how seriously God takes sin; it satisfies every requirement for God to forgive the failures of humanity; and it puts Christ's cosmic victory over sin, Satan, and death on display through His resurrection (Col. 2:15). Every aspect of the atonement should inspire gratitude, praise, and a desire for obedience, because it is only through Christ that we are reconciled.

DISCUSSION

APPROACHING GOD IS A PRIVILEGE

LEVITICUS 16:1-6

- Have you ever had someone act as a go-between for you? How did Aaron do this?
- 📖 • What does the Day of Atonement teach about the severity of sin? How does this differ from the way Satan would want us to view sin?
- How do verses 1-2 challenge the way you approach God's presence? How can we find a balance between enjoying access to God while maintaining reverence for Him?

THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM POINTED TO JESUS

LEVITICUS 16:15-22

- ✝ • Where do you see traces of the gospel in this passage?
- The people's sin had defiled, made impure, the tabernacle throughout the year. How does our sin still defile our spaces today?
- How is the forgiveness believers receive from Christ better than the forgiveness offered in this passage?

READ PSALM 51:16-17. SINCE THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM IS ABOLISHED BECAUSE OF CHRIST, WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN YOUR HEART?

CULTURAL CONNECTION

Certain passages can spark difficult questions due to our limited understanding of ancient eastern cultures. A question most of us may ask about the sacrificial system—the sacrificing of animals for sin—is “Why all the blood?” Here's a simple answer: because of all the sin. Scripture explains that there can't be forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood (Heb. 9:22). Why? Blood is the source of life (Lev. 17:11). It satisfies the payment of death. Imagine the thousands of years in which animal sacrifice took place and all of the blood that was spilled. Yet it could never be enough to permanently pay the price of sin. This should be an alarming realization. But what's more shocking is that it was because of human sin. What's most shocking is that Jesus voluntarily shed His blood for our redemption.



DAY ONE

HEBREWS 4:14-16

What does it mean to have sympathy for someone? Sympathy is the ability to feel sorrow or compassion for someone because of a difficult situation they may be experiencing. But sympathy is very different from empathy. Empathy is putting yourself in their shoes and feeling what they feel; the ability to empathize is usually because you've walked through something similar. When we're going through something difficult, it helps to have others who can show us compassion. It's comforting to know someone cares.

This passage says we have a high priest who is able to sympathize with us—Jesus. He expressed sorrow over sin's effects on humanity when his friend, Lazarus, died (John 11: 28-36). He grieved with Lazarus's family before raising him back to life. He empathized with the family because He felt what they felt. While Jesus can sympathize with us over our sin, He can't empathize with us. Jesus knew no sin; He was perfect and holy. Because Jesus lived a sinless life, He can be our great high priest. He was pure even though He was tempted in every way (v. 15). Like us, Jesus experienced temptation; He understands our struggle, but unlike us and every high priest that came before Him, Jesus never surrendered to temptation. Jesus shows us compassion when we sin and ask for forgiveness. And because He sacrificed Himself on our behalf, we can boldly approach the throne of grace! We have a high priest who understands us, loves us, and shows us compassion.

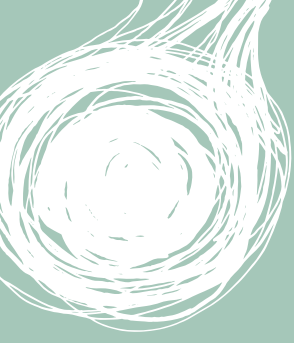
- **HOW DOES IT AFFECT YOU TO REALIZE THAT JESUS EXPERIENCED EVERY KIND OF TEMPTATION YOU FACE?**

- **WHY CAN KNOWING JESUS FEELS SYMPATHY FOR US HELP US BOLDLY APPROACH GOD'S THRONE FOR GRACE AND FORGIVENESS?**

PRAY

JESUS, THANK YOU FOR ENDURING TEMPTATION AND FOR SYMPATHIZING WITH ME WHEN I'M TEMPTED TO SIN. THANK FOR SHOWING ME COMPASSION IN MY SIN.





DAY TWO

PSALM 103:1-14

Have you ever felt the pressure to do something perfectly? When you messed up, did it feel like people forgot you were only human? Did it feel as if they might reject you? We see this sometimes with grades, sports, or other activities. The expectation for us to perform is so high, and when we don't quite perform to the level of someone's expectation of us, we're left feeling like we let them down. They expected us to be greater than we could be.

God holds His children to a high standard: holiness. He commands us to strive for holiness because we're supposed to be like Him. But we're going to fall. We will often fail to meet the standard laid out for us in God's Word. And when we do, these verses help us to remember something: God knows us. He knows what we're made of: dust. He knows we're finite, or limited in our understanding. He knows we're prone to sinning and wandering away from Him. But guess what? None of this changes how God feels about us. None of this actually defines who we are in Christ. In fact, we have assurance that God doesn't deal with us "according to our sins" (v. 10). Instead, He removes our sin "as far as the east is from the west" when we cry out for Him in repentance (v. 12). Here's another way to look at it: instead of casting us away from His presence, God sent Jesus to take on all our failure. He took on all our sin so that we could be forgiven. The Father looks on us with compassion instead of rejecting us when we fail.

○ **WHEN HAVE YOU STRUGGLED WITH FEELING LIKE YOU CAN'T MEASURE UP TO OTHERS' EXPECTATIONS?**

○ **ACCORDING TO VERSE 13, HOW DOES GOD VIEW US? HOW DOES THIS SHAPE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF HIM?**

PRAY

GOD, BECAUSE OF MY SIN, I DESERVE PUNISHMENT. BUT JESUS TOOK ON MY FAILURE SO I COULD BE WITH YOU. THANK YOU FOR REMOVING MY SIN.



DAY THREE

HEBREWS 7:23-28

Israel was made up of twelve different tribes. God ordained all priests to come from only one tribe, the Levites. But because these priests wouldn't live forever, there were many Levites who stepped into this role over time. None of these men were perfect. As we saw this week in our passage in Leviticus, the high priest had to go through strict cleansing rituals—both inwardly and outwardly—before entering the most holy place. If the priest didn't do exactly as God commanded, then he'd die when entering because God's holy presence dwelled there. We saw this happen to Aaron's sons.

We can take two truths from this. First, entering God's presence was and still is a big deal. If a priest took this lightly or ignored God's command, then he died! Second, we needed a better priest. We needed someone to intercede on our behalf who was "holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens" (v. 26). Not a single man in history could meet this need—except Jesus. Jesus is the high priest all of humanity waited for, and when He sacrificed His life, He ended our need for earthly priests. He forever stands as our intercessor between us and God. His sacrifice is sufficient forever because it accomplished what the sacrifice of animals never could—permanent salvation from sin. And now, we're made perfect with Him—able to enjoy God's presence. May we never take it lightly that we're only able to enter because Jesus gave His life.

- **IS IT STILL DANGEROUS TO TAKE ENTERING GOD'S PRESENCE LIGHTLY? EXPLAIN.**
- **WHY DO YOU THINK WE OFTEN TAKE ENTERING GOD'S PRESENCE LIGHTLY? WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?**

PRAY

GOD, I KNOW YOU'RE HOLY. ENTERING YOUR PRESENCE IS A PRIVILEGE THAT I NEVER WANT TO TAKE LIGHTLY. I KNOW I CAN ONLY COME CLOSE TO YOU BECAUSE OF JESUS.



DAY FOUR

PSALM 51:1-17

When you mess up, what do you turn to in order to feel better? Your answer to that question matters because you may be turning to the wrong things. In our brokenness, some of us turn to worldly pleasures, like money, trends, or social media. Some of us turn to physical pleasures, like sex or alcohol, as a way to escape our brokenness. On the flip side, some of us turn to good works; we think that if we just do enough good things, then they'll cancel out our mistakes. But none of these things can fix what's broken inside of us. We can't look to worldly solutions to fix a spiritual problem.

In Psalm 51, David wrote about his sin in committing adultery with Bathsheba and then having her husband murdered. When you read his words, you can sense David's brokenness. He begged God for forgiveness. But notice what David asked for in verse 10: a clean heart and a renewed spirit. He also knew God didn't delight in another sacrifice. God wanted David's brokenness (vv. 16-17). David didn't turn to worldly comforts. He knelt low before God and spilled out His brokenness and sin before Him. David didn't make a sacrifice, as was the custom for sin. He surrendered himself instead. And this is what we are to imitate. When we sin, we can't fix it. We can't run from it. God desires our heart. He wants us to bring Him our brokenness and spill it out in front of Him. And in exchange for our broken, humbled, repentant hearts, He makes us clean.

○ **WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU TURNED TO IN THE PAST WHEN YOU FELT BROKEN?**

○ **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE A "A BROKEN AND CONTRITE HEART" (V. 17)?**

PRAY

**GOD, WHEN I SIN, HELP ME TURN TO YOU
IN REPENTANCE. I KNOW YOU WANT MY
BROKEN, SINFUL HEART. NOTHING ELSE CAN
FIX IT. THANK YOU FOR MAKING ME CLEAN.**



DAY FIVE

1 PETER 1:13-21

Think back to elementary school. Did your teacher ever ask one student to take names? This person was separated from the rest of the class. They were singled out and maybe even disliked because they had the power to get everyone else in trouble. In fact, some of them probably took advantage of this and enjoyed it! But others may have disliked this job because it did set them apart from the rest of the class. It made them feel vulnerable because they just wanted to blend in.

God calls us to be separate from the world, and this often makes many of us feel vulnerable on a whole different level. We'd rather blend in with the crowd; we'd rather be like everyone else. But this isn't how God asked us to live. He told us to be holy because He is holy. And another phrase for holiness is "set apart." Living holy lives requires us to walk away from our sin and the desires we had before we knew Jesus (v. 14). Holiness requires obedience even when it's not the norm. And holiness can sometimes put us on display. Why? Because it often means we're going against the flow of culture. It often means we're separate in the way we talk, act, and love others. It means we won't make the same decisions as a lot of our peers. It means we won't buy into what culture sells as acceptable or normal. And while it can be difficult, holiness makes us like our Savior, who we're supposed to represent to the world. We were bought by Jesus's blood, and we're commanded to live like we've been freed from the power of sin. We've been freed to be like Him!

- **WHEN HAS IT FELT DIFFICULT OR UNCOMFORTABLE TO STRIVE FOR HOLINESS? HOW CAN YOU STRIVE FOR IT ANYWAY?**
- **WHAT IS AT STAKE IF WE DON'T STRIVE FOR HOLINESS? WHAT DOES IT SAY TO UNBELIEVERS IF WE'RE JUST LIKE THE WORLD?**

PRAY

**GOD, THANK YOU THAT I CAN SEEK HOLINESS
BECAUSE OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. HELP
ME TO LIVE A HOLY LIFE THAT PLEASURES YOU
INSTEAD OF LIVING LIKE THE WORLD.**