

WARM-UP

- What is something you were told not to do or touch as a child that you disobeyed? (e.g., touching museum pieces or electric sockets)
- For which concert or event would you want to get backstage passes? Why?
- What is one sacrifice someone made for you because of love?

WORD *“For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you. You shall be clean before the LORD from all your sins.”* **LEVITICUS 16:30**

(Read also **LEVITICUS 16:1-5, 20-22, 29.**)

Our God is holy—meaning He is set apart in His greatness and goodness, high above all beings. Because He is holy, our only appropriate response is a life of worship and devotion to Him. However, because of the first man’s sin, our holiness was lost, our relationship with God was broken, and we can no longer draw near to God on our own. But God has not stopped pursuing us and establishing a relationship with His people. When the Law of Moses was written, it revealed the holiness of God—a holiness that could not be approached because of its greatness. Today we’ll discuss how God has made a way for us to draw near to Him despite our fallenness.

1 | Sinful man cannot live before a holy God.

¹The LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near before the LORD and died, ²and 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." **LEVITICUS 16:1-2**

(Read also **LEVITICUS 10:2-3.**)

When Aaron's sons, who were also serving in the temple, died for offering unauthorized incense and fire, it was a clear message from God that His holiness could not be taken lightly. The consequences of the Fall were that humankind could no longer enter God's presence without taking careful measures. But God's heart and will is to have His people draw near to Him in fellowship and relationship. So He made a way for us to approach Him, to once more have fellowship with Him as His people. Have you experienced this longing of God for His children to simply grow in knowing Him? Tell about a time you had a revelation of God's great love for you.

2 | God made a way for sinful humans to have a relationship with Him.

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. . . . ³⁰For on this day shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you. You shall be clean before the LORD from all your sins." **LEVITICUS 16:3, 30**

(Read also **LEVITICUS 16:4-5, 20-22, 29; HEBREWS 10:1, 19-22.**)

After the death of his sons, Aaron was told that to enter into the Most Holy Place, he had to perform an elaborate ritual. The first part involved sacrificing a goat for the sins of the people. Then they laid hands on another goat symbolically placing their sins on it and releasing it into the wilderness to take away their sins from God's presence (Leviticus 16:22). This was yet another clear foreshadowing of the sacrifice that Jesus Christ would eventually make: taking the sins of the world onto Himself and paying its penalty so that we could freely approach God. What does Hebrews 10:1, 19–22 say about ritual sacrifices and Jesus' act of love on the cross?

All of this was because God wants to establish a relationship with us. Given the reality of His holiness and our sin, He intentionally made a way through Jesus so that we could have access to Him once more.

APPLICATION

- What is your posture when you approach God? Can you approach God freely and ask even the hardest questions? How do the truths we learned today affect your view of God and your relationship with Him?
- Knowing God's heart to have His children draw near to Him, how can you intentionally grow in relationship with Him?
- God has not only made a way for us to draw near to Him, but He can also use us to draw others to Him. Think of three of your family members, friends, and coworkers or classmates and commit to share God's goodness and greatness with them this week.

PRAYER

- Thank God for the free access that you have to Him because of Jesus. Pray to hear His voice more and more clearly, and for His grace to obey what He tells you.
- Ask God for the strength and desire to know more about Him and spend time with Him each day. Pray that you won't take for granted your access to Him.
- Pray for your family and friends to be open to knowing God and drawing closer to Him as you share your testimony and preach the gospel to them.

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