

Holiness

“The Key to Holiness!”

Leviticus 16-17 – November 2, 2025

Our Sermon Series

HOLINESS		
<i>A Meaningful Study of a Book in the Bible That Most People Skip Over</i>		
Date	Bible Text	Message Title
Oct 5	Leviticus 1:1	Holiness
Oct 12	Leviticus 1-7	Holiness Starts by Saying Please, Sorry, and Thanks
Oct 19	Leviticus 8-10	Holiness is Serious Business!
Oct 26	Leviticus 11-15	Holiness Makes You a Good Kind of Different
Nov 2	Leviticus 16-17	The Key to Holiness
Nov 9	Leviticus 18	Holiness and Sex
Nov 16	Leviticus 19-20	Holiness, Love, and the Poor
Nov 23	Leviticus 21-22	When Leaders Aren't Holy
Nov 30	Leviticus 23-25	Holy Celebrations
Dec 7	Leviticus 26-27	Holiness as a Way of Life

Theme of the Book of Leviticus = Holiness

- Five times God says: “Be holy, for I am holy” (Lev. 11:44,45; 19:2; 20:7,26)
- The Book of Leviticus tells us how to move from outside of God’s Presence (Leviticus 1:1) to in God’s holy Presence (Numbers 1:1). The way is holiness (Hebrews 12:14).

“Houston, We Have a (Sin) Problem”

- **Romans 3:23** – *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*
- **Isaiah 53:6** – *We all like sheep have gone astray; we have turned – every one – to his own way.*
- **Romans 6:23** – *The wages of sin is death.*
- Rob Turner – “Trying to atone for your sin is like scooping out the ocean with a teaspoon.”
- **Isaiah 64:6** – *Our righteous deeds are like filthy rags*
- **Question:** How did the Israelites cleanse their sins and become holy?
- **Answer:** The Day of **Atonement**

Why Atonement is so Important:

- *Atonement refers to the reconciliation of sinners with God, being brought into oneness, having our separation removed through covering or removing our sin.*
- Sacrificial atonement for sin is necessary because God is merciful, but He is also **Just**.
- Allen Mosely – Since God is just, he must punish sin. A judge who lets a guilty person go free with no punishment for his wrongdoing is not a

good judge; he is not upholding justice. However, God must let guilty people go free if He is going to save guilty sinners like us. God is merciful and loving, so He doesn’t want us to perish for our sin. So how can the justice of God and the mercy of God be reconciled?

- Nate Holdridge – “The Day of Atonement was a way for God to say, ‘Despite your sin, I want to make a way for you and me to be in fellowship with each other.’”

Day of Atonement Rundown:

Stage 1: Preparations (Leviticus 16:3-10)

- The high priest first washes and puts on special white linen clothes, then offers a bull sacrifice to cover his own sins and the sins of his family.
 - **Romans 3:23** – *All (including the high priest) have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*

Stage 2: The Payment of Sin

- **High Priest’s Initial Atonement (The Bull):** Aaron offers the bull as a sin offering to make atonement for himself and his household. (Leviticus 16:6)
- **Choosing the People’s Goats:** Two goats are presented, and lots are cast to select one for the LORD (to be sacrificed) and one for the scapegoat (to be driven away). (Leviticus 16:7-8)
- **The People’s Atonement (The First Goat):** The goat chosen for the LORD is sacrificed as a sin offering to pay the death penalty required for the people’s sins. (Leviticus 16:9)
 - **Leviticus 17:11** – *For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have appointed it to you to make atonement on the altar for your lives, since it is the lifeblood that makes atonement.*

Stage 3: The Removal of Sin (Leviticus 16:20-22)

- **Transferring All Sins onto the Scapegoat:** After finishing the blood atonement rituals, Aaron brings forward the live scapegoat, lays both hands on its head, and confesses all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites onto the goat. (Leviticus 16:20-21)
- **Sins Driven Away Forever:** A designated man is commissioned to send the goat away into the wilderness. The goat carries all their sins to a remote place, showing the sin is completely removed and will not return. (Leviticus 16:21-22)
 - **Psalms 103:12** – *As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.*
- **The People’s Fast:** The people must fast and rest completely on this day; it is a holy day of rest. (Leviticus 16:29-31)

“Uh... Houston, We Still Have a (Sin) Problem”

- **Hebrews 10:1-4** – For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. ² Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? ³ But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.
- Bratcher – The very fact that the Old Testament sacrifices were offered on a repeated basis is the argument for their ineffectiveness... If they had been effective and accomplished their purpose, they would have stopped being offered.
- David Curtis – You don't keep on paying monthly installments when the loan on your car has been completely paid off. Repetition conflicts with finality, an action that is repeated thereby shows itself to be inconclusive.
- Charles Spurgeon – “There was ordained a Day of Atonement with especially solemn ceremonies, but what did that day say to the Jews? That atonement was provided? No, but that an atonement was still needed. For, as soon as ever that year was up, the atonement had not been made, and they must have another Day of Atonement.”

The True Form of Realities

Jesus is the **True** and **Better** Atonement

Aspect of Atonement	The Day of Atonement (Old Covenant Shadow)	Jesus Christ (New Covenant Reality)
The Priest	The High Priest was a sinful man (Aaron or his descendants), who had to offer sacrifices for his own sins first (Leviticus 16:6).	Jesus is a sinless High Priest, holy, blameless, and set apart, who never needed to offer a sacrifice for himself (Hebrews 7:26-27).
The Offering	The High Priest offered the blood of animals (bulls and goats), which had no inherent moral worth (Hebrews 10:4).	Jesus offered His own blood —the sinless, perfect, and infinitely valuable Son of God (Hebrews 9:12, 14).
The Frequency	The sacrifice had to be repeated continually, year after year (annual ritual), which proved its ineffectiveness (Hebrews 10:1-3).	Jesus offered Himself once for all time (a single, finished sacrifice), proving its eternal and complete effectiveness (Hebrews 9:26; 10:12).
The Result	The ritual provided a temporary covering (atonement/remission) and an annual reminder of sins (Hebrews 10:3).	Jesus provides eternal redemption, complete forgiveness , and a conscience cleansed once for all (Hebrews 9:12; 10:14).

- **2 Corinthians 5:21** – For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- **1 Peter 3:18** – For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God

The key to holiness isn't found in what we do for God, it's found in what **Jesus has done** for us, once and for all.

- **Application #1** – Receive Jesus' finished work personally.
 - If you have never trusted Jesus for salvation, do it today.

Lord, I confess that I have sinned, and I need your forgiveness. Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross to provide the full and final atonement for my sin and for rising from the dead. I receive you into my life. Please help me to follow you for the rest of my life as my Lord and Savior.
 - Go public with your faith commitment through water baptism on Sunday, Nov. 23. (*Info at whatisgrace.org/baptisms*)
- **Application #2** – Pursue holiness out of gratitude, not guilt.
 - Keep coming every Sunday to learn more about holiness.
 - Join a small group (WhatIsGrace.org/spiritualformation)
 - Completing applications from past sermons.
 - **Galatians 5:13** – For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.
- **Application #3** – Walk in freedom, not shame.
 - Stop striving to earn God's approval and rest in what Christ has already done for you.
 - When the enemy reminds you of your past, remind him of the cross.
 - Memorize **Romans 8:1** – Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
 - Confess your sins and draw near with confidence, stop hanging out in the back.
 - **Hebrews 10:19-22** – Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with truth heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.