

The Day of Atonement

Lesson 02 of 03 in the series "Unfolding Easter"

I. Under the old covenant, the Day of Atonement allowed the Israelites to be made _____ with God for another year.

"Be careful to celebrate the Day of Atonement... You must observe it as an official day for holy assembly, a day to deny yourselves and present special gifts to the LORD. Do no work during that entire day because it is the Day of Atonement, when offerings of purification are made for you, making you right with the LORD your God." Leviticus 23:27-28 (NLT)

- a. It was the one day each year the high priest could enter into God's presence, on behalf of God's people.

The LORD said to Moses, "Warn your brother, Aaron, not to enter the Most Holy Place behind the inner curtain whenever he chooses; if he does, he will die. For the Ark's cover—the place of atonement—is there, and I myself am present in the cloud above the atonement cover. When Aaron enters the sanctuary area, he must follow these instructions fully. He must bring a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. He must put on his linen tunic and the linen undergarments worn next to his body... These are sacred garments..." Leviticus 16:2-4 (NLT)

Note: Because of sin, _____ to God was extremely limited. "...only the high priest ever entered the Most Holy Place, and only once a year. And he always offered blood for his own sins and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance." Hebrews 9:7 (NLT)

Note: The high priest had to come to God on God's _____. "Aaron will wear this robe whenever he ministers before the LORD, and the bells will tinkle as he goes in and out of the LORD's presence in the Holy Place. If he wears it, he will not die." Exodus 28:35 (NLT)

Note: Sin is _____ serious. "For the wages of sin is death..." Romans 6:23 (NIV)

- b. It was the one day each year when people could be assured that their sins were _____ and _____.

"Aaron is to offer the bull for his own sin offering to make atonement for himself and his household. Then he is to take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. He is to cast lots for the two goats--one lot for the LORD and the other for the scapegoat. Aaron shall bring the goat whose lot falls to the LORD and sacrifice it for a sin offering. But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD... He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites--all their sins--and put them on the goat's head. He shall send the goat away into the desert in the care of a man appointed for the task. The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a solitary place; and the man shall release it in the desert." Leviticus 16:6-10, 21-22 (NIV)

Note: The problem with the old covenant was that animal sacrifices never paid for sins _____. "The old system under the law of Moses was only a shadow, a dim preview of the good things to come... The sacrifices under that system were repeated again and again, year after year, but they were never able to provide perfect cleansing for those who came to worship... For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." Hebrews 10:1-4 (NLT)

II. Jesus established a new covenant that makes it possible for all who come to Him to be made right with God forever.

- a. At the cross Jesus was our high priest, sacrificial goat and scapegoat and he paid for our sins _____.

"Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and ...he said, 'It is finished!' Then he bowed his head and released his spirit." John 19:28-30 (NLT)

"With his own blood—not the blood of goats and calves—(Christ) entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured our redemption forever... Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand." Hebrews 9:12, 10:11-12 (NLT)

"But now Jesus, our High Priest... is the one who mediates for us a far better covenant with God, based on better promises... This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors... They did not remain faithful to my covenant, so I turned my back on them, says the LORD. But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day, says the LORD: I will put my laws in their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people... And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins." Hebrews 8:6-12 (NLT)

- b. Because of the cross, Jesus has given all who come to him _____ access to God.

"With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom." Mark 15:37-38 (NIV)

Life Application: We can all _____ come to God about anything, anywhere, anytime. "...we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him." Hebrews 10:19-21 (NLT)

Life Application: We must come to God on _____ terms. "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me." John 14:6 (NLT)

CONNECT GROUP QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever had to go seek forgiveness from someone for what you said or what you did to him/her? Did they forgive you and what did it cost you to make that relationship right again?
2. Read Romans 3:19-20 & 23. What are some of the ways a person can meet God's glorious standard?
3. Read Colossians 1:19-23. Can you name some things that cause us to 'drift away' from the knowledge of who we are in Christ?
4. Read Colossians 2:9-14. Based on this passage, what would you say to a Believer who says 'they are not good enough'?
5. Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21. In your opinion, what makes the Gospel such Great News?
6. Read Hebrews 10:19-22 & Romans 8:15-17. Comparing these passages, how should we view walking into the presence of God?
7. Who can you pray for that is desperately trying to come to God on 'their own' terms? (John 14:6)