

Lesson 3

Day of Atonement

Leviticus 23:26–32

Memory Verse

“But God demonstrates
His own love toward us,
in that while we were still
sinners, Christ died for
us”
(Romans 5:8)

Teacher’s Objective

At the end of the ses-
sion, the students should
be able to:

Define in their own
words what the phrase
“afflict your souls” means

Locate in their Bibles
where the Day of
Atonement is spoken of

Describe what was done
with the goats and what
they represent

Express in their own
words how Jesus Christ
is the atonement for our
sins

Materials Needed

See “Teaching Activities”
for specific activities

Teacher’s Bible Study

On the tenth day of the seventh month an elaborate ritual was performed in Old Testament times and continued until the destruction of the Temple. It was a commanded fast in which no food or water was consumed for a 24-hour period. On the day itself, the ritual of the two goats was enacted as described in detail in Leviticus 16. Two goats were selected. By drawing lots, one was chosen to represent God and the other to represent “Azazel.” In later literature “Azazel” was considered a name for the chief of the demons, in others words, another name for Satan.

The high priest first sacrificed a bull for himself and entered the holy of holies to sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat. Then, he slaughtered the goat “for the Lord” and sprinkled its blood on the mercy seat, as he had done with the blood of the bull. In this way the high priest was the only person to ever go into the holy of holies, and then only on the Day of Atonement. At all other times, and to all other people, it was off limits. The goat for Azazel had the sins of the people confessed over it by the high priest. Afterwards it was led away into the wilderness and turned loose, symbolically removing all the transgressions of the people away from the camp. Thus, the Day of Atonement symbolized the reconciling of the Israelites to God.

The Day of Atonement symbolizes both the reunion of God and man after Christ returns to earth, and the binding of Satan to render him inactive. The evils of human nature are the attitude of their father, Satan the Devil. Since the source of evil remains active, evil will have a part in subverting the world. At this time, the sins of the world shall correctly be placed on their source (as symbolized by the Azazel goat which was sent away into the wilderness). Satan shall be chained and no longer allowed to deceive the world (Revelation 20:1–3).

This is not to diminish our own role in sin, for the Day of Atonement also represents the reuniting of God and man through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the sins of humankind.

The Day of Atonement is kept today by a complete fast (no food or drink) from sunset to sunset. Children and individuals with serious illness or life-threatening conditions are exceptions.

Presenting the Bible Story

Leviticus 23:26–28

The Day of Atonement was on the tenth day of the seventh month. The Israelites were to observe the day by holding an assembly, afflicting their souls and presenting an offering made to the Lord by fire.

Ezra 8:21

What does it mean to “afflict your souls”? It means to fast, to humble yourself before God. When you are humble before God, you show spiritual dependence and acknowledge that God is in total control. In this verse, Ezra prepared God’s people for the journey by proclaiming a fast.

Leviticus 23:29,30

There are special warnings connected with this day. If you did not “afflict your soul,” you were to be cut off from the people. If you worked on this day, God said, “I will destroy that person from among his people.” This is a direct judgment from God.

Leviticus 23:32

The Day of Atonement is a day of rest. “It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest.” You are to “afflict your souls,” which means to fast. This is *not* a feast day.

During Old Testament times an elaborate ceremony took place on the Day of Atonement; it is described in detail in Leviticus 16:1–34.

Leviticus 16:15–22

Throughout this ceremony, Aaron represents Jesus Christ as our High Priest. Aaron was to first make an atonement for himself, with a bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. Then he was to take two goats and present them before the Lord. He was to cast lots upon the goats—one for the Lord and one for the “scapegoat.” Aaron was to lay his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess all the iniquities and transgressions of the people upon him. The Lord’s goat was sacrificed as a sin offering. But the second goat was presented alive before the Lord to make an atonement of him, and then the goat was led away from the camp and released into the wilderness.

The Temple was a rectangular enclosure. About one-third of the area comprised the holy of holies; inside this area the Ark of the Covenant was kept behind the veil. The high priest and only the high priest was allowed to come into this area and only once a year (Hebrews 9:1–7).

Romans 5:6–11

Here is the demonstration of God’s love by the death of His Son, Jesus Christ. God gave proof of His love by having Christ die in the place of humans “while we were still sinners.”

Introduce Memory Verse

When the high priest entered the holy of holies, it was a picture of Christ going before God as our intercessor, our mediator. The Old Covenant ritual served as a ceremony to picture forgiveness of sins. The blood of Jesus Christ has done so much more. He *is* the atonement for our sins. His was the ultimate sacrifice. He paid the ultimate price. His blood covers our sins and purifies us spiritually.

Hebrews 9:11–15

Once forgiveness is achieved, there is no need for a further sacrifice (Hebrews 10:18). The death of Christ the Creator was designed “from

the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8) and could pay the penalty for the sins of humanity because His life was worth more than the total of all the lives of all human beings who have ever lived or ever will live. Our Creator’s love for His creation is beyond our understanding

Each year the Day of Atonement is observed as a memorial. It is a day of worship and giving thanks to God for His redemption and love, as we are reminded that sin demands death (read Romans 6:23), but by the blood of Christ we can have life eternal.

Art and Activities

Explore the following questions with your students:

Always close your class with prayer

Teaching Activities

Young Children

Provide copies of the Activity Page suitable for each of your students.

Older Children

Provide copies of the Activity Page suitable for your students

Explore the Subject

1. After the Feast of Trumpets, what is the next holy day? (Atonement)
2. Is the Day of Atonement considered a “feast” day? (No)
3. What does the phrase “afflict your souls” mean? (To fast)
4. What did the high priest do with the goats?
5. Who is our mediator today? (Jesus, our High Priest)

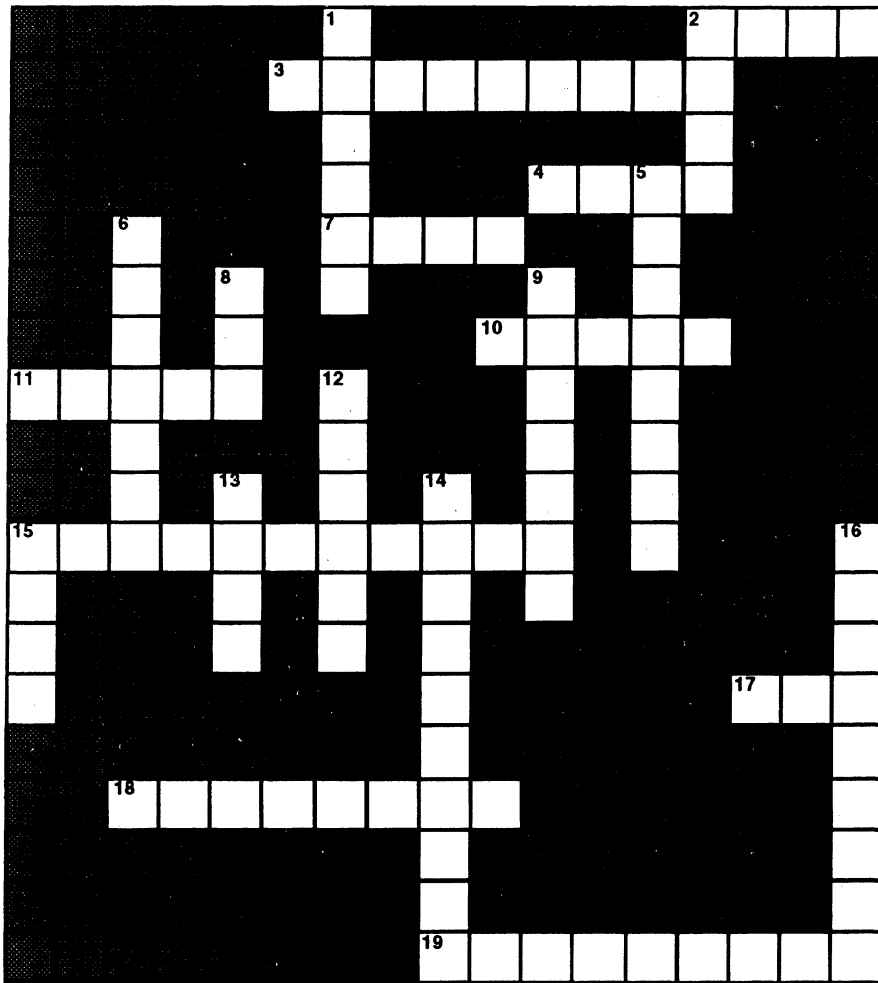
Respond and Reinforce

1. Do you please God when you keep the Day of Atonement?
2. Who is the atonement for our sins? (Jesus)
3. Discuss the memory verse

Activity Page

Day of Atonement

Leviticus 23:26-32



Across

2. Having a spiritually pure quality.
3. To observe with festivities or ceremonies.
4. Supplies nourishment to our bodies for life.
7. A manner of deciding a question or choice by chance (see Leviticus 16:8).
10. A clear colorless odorless tasteless liquid.
11. Chief evil spirit and adversary of God.
15. A group of people gathered in answer to a summons.
17. Transgression of the law.
18. A place of residence.
19. The goat led into the wilderness (Leviticus 16:8).

Down

1. Any persons collectively.
2. Aaron was to lay his hands upon the _____ of the scapegoat (Leviticus 16:21).
5. Something offered in devotion and worship.
6. A man guided by reason, justice and fairness (two words).
8. Transgression of the law.
9. To desist from intaking food or water.
12. Doctrine of _____ (Revelation 2:14).
13. You shall love the Lord thy God with all your heart, and with all your _____, and mind and strength (Mark 12:30).
14. The scapegoat was led into the _____.
15. A place where people are lodged in tents or temporary shelter.
16. Reconciliation, amends; redemption.

Across: 2. Holy; 3. Celebrate; 4. Food; 7. Lots; 10. Water; 11. Satan; 15. Convocation; 17. Sin; 18. Dwelling; 19. Scapegoat. Down: 1. People; 2. Head; 5. Offering; 6. Just Man; 8. Sin; 9. Fasting; 12. Balaam; 13. Wilderness; 14. Soul; 16. Camp; 17. Atonement.

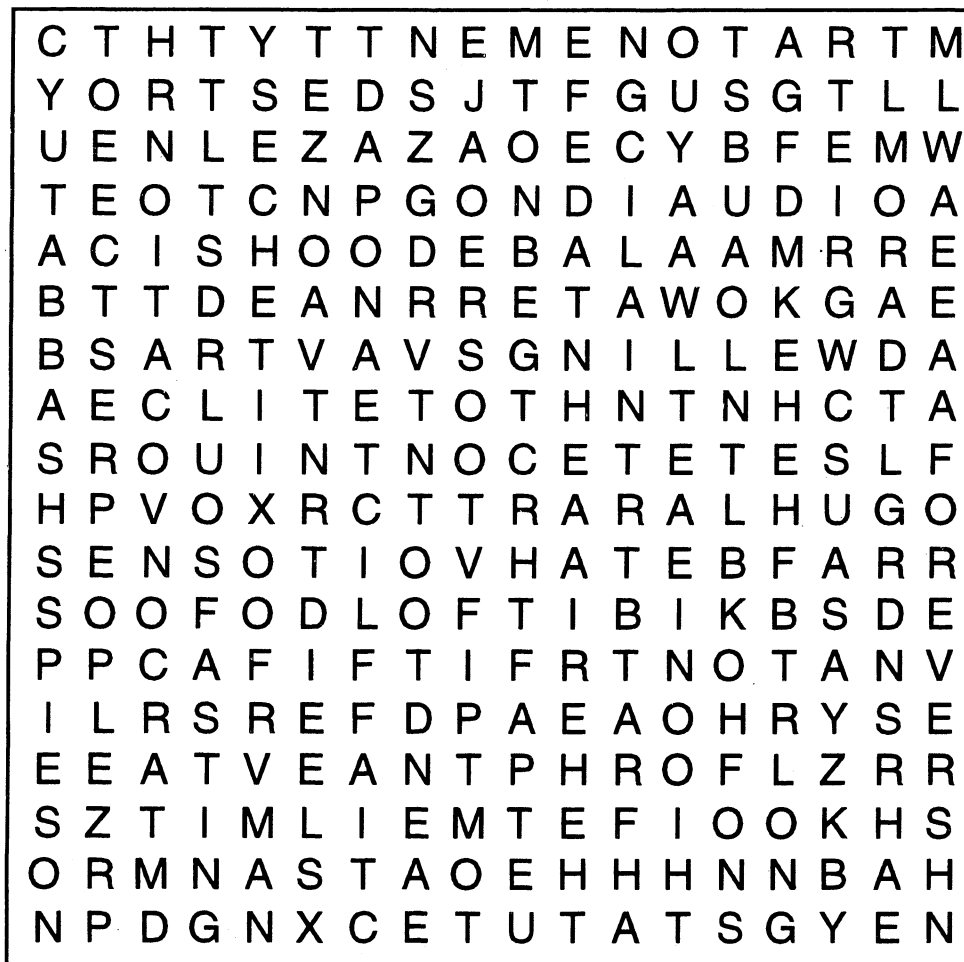
Activity Page

Day of Atonement

Leviticus 23:26–32

Read the scriptures and find the words listed below in the word search puzzle.

The words may run up, down, diagonally, backwards or across.



- | | | | | |
|-------------|----------|------------|-----------|--------|
| ATONEMENT | OFFERING | STATUTE | CELEBRATE | GOAT |
| SEVENTH | WORK | FOREVER | FASTING | MAN |
| HOLY | FIRE | GENERATION | FOOD | AZAZEL |
| CONVOCATION | CUT | DWELLINGS | WATER | CAMP |
| AFFLICT | PEOPLE | SABBATH | THANKFUL | LED |
| SOUL | DESTROY | REST | SIN | BALAAM |

Activity Page

Day of Atonement

Leviticus 16:1-34

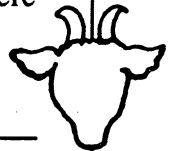
God told Moses,

CODE A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

“This shall be a $\frac{19}{19} \frac{20}{20} \frac{1}{20} \frac{20}{21} \frac{20}{20} \frac{5}{5}$ to you $\frac{6}{6} \frac{15}{15} \frac{18}{18} \frac{5}{5} \frac{22}{22} \frac{5}{5} \frac{18}{18}$: In the
 $\frac{19}{19} \frac{5}{5} \frac{22}{22} \frac{5}{5} \frac{14}{14} \frac{20}{20} \frac{8}{8}$ month, on the $\frac{20}{20} \frac{5}{5} \frac{14}{14} \frac{20}{20} \frac{8}{8}$ day of the month, you shall
 $\frac{4}{4} \frac{5}{5} \frac{14}{14} \frac{25}{25}$ yourselves, and shall do $\frac{14}{14} \frac{15}{15} \frac{23}{23} \frac{15}{15} \frac{18}{18} \frac{11}{11}$.
 For on this day $\frac{1}{1} \frac{20}{20} \frac{15}{15} \frac{14}{14} \frac{5}{5} \frac{13}{13} \frac{5}{5} \frac{14}{14} \frac{20}{20}$ shall be made
 for you, to $\frac{3}{3} \frac{12}{12} \frac{5}{5} \frac{1}{1} \frac{14}{14} \frac{19}{19} \frac{5}{5}$ you; from all your
 $\frac{19}{19} \frac{9}{9} \frac{14}{14} \frac{19}{19}$ you shall be $\frac{3}{3} \frac{12}{12} \frac{5}{5} \frac{1}{1} \frac{14}{14}$
 before the $\frac{12}{12} \frac{15}{15} \frac{18}{18} \frac{4}{4}$.”

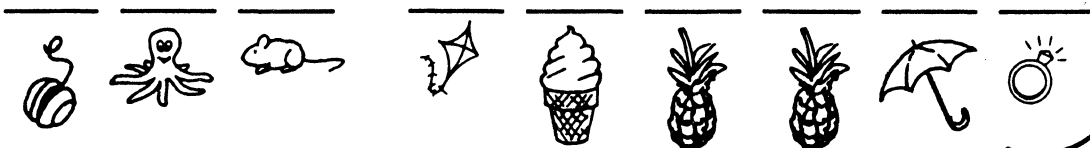
The high priest made a special offering to God to cleanse the people from their sins.

Unscramble these words to find the animals that were sacrificed.



lulb _____
 amr _____
 toga _____

This is still the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. It is observed differently now. The name of the day is



Write the first letter of each picture in the space above it.

Activity Page

Day of Atonement

Leviticus 23:26–32

The Lord spoke to Moses, He gave instructions to tell Aaron, the high priest.
He told them how to observe this special day. Color the picture.

Circle these items in the picture.

