

Leviticus 16

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[0 : 00] The video is chapter 16. It's the 9th of October in Israel, and that's the days. The 9th of October and Yom Kippur, the day of atonement.

The 10th day of the 7th month in the Hebrew calendar. The day according to Leviticus 26 and verse 29, a special day.

If you've got the passage open before you, it says, and it shall be a statute to you forever that in the 7th month or the 10th day of the month, you shall afflict yourself. You shall do no work, either the native or the strangers, soldiers among you.

For on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you. You shall be clean before the Lord from all your sins. It's a bank holiday. It's a bank holiday.

There is no work to be done. It's a religious day. Services are to place. It's a religious bank holiday in the Jewish calendar. Like us, they had a number of bank holidays in the year, but two stood out.

[1 : 04] In the same way for us, Christmas and Easter stand out, don't they? But for the Jews, it was parcel from the day of atonement. Those are the two things that stood out. They are the highlights of the Jewish calendar.

And it's this day that this chapter is all about. And it's worth saying, as I mentioned before the reading, that this book is placed deliberately in the middle of the book.

Can you look at verse 1? The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron when they drew near before the Lord and died. They are given the day after Aaron's boys, Nadab and Abihu who were killed when they were literally fired by God's holy presence.

In other words, chapter 16 comes immediately after chapter 11. But Moses has put chapter 6 in chapter 15, not chapter 11. Why has he done that? Well, because in Hebrew, there was no way of underlining the text.

No pen to highlight. No underline bold or italic that you could click on. In other words, writers often did emphasize a point by placing it somewhere near the middle.

[2 : 15] And Moses is doing that here. He is giving special prominence to this day. Saying this is the key day, the key date in the book of Leviticus. This is the most important thing I want you to know about Leviticus.

This is the central focus. It is the climax, even though it's not the conclusion of the book. It's the peak of everything that God has been talking about. And when understood properly, this day will become the motivation for everything that's to follow.

And it is the climax of everything that we've seen so far. So just look at, you've got a yellow sheet, you should, that gives you a bit of an outline. I just went through it, it's not very clear, is it? So chapters 1 to 5, you've got the five sacrifices that they were regularly to perform.

Chapters 6 and 7, the priests were those who would then perform the sacrifices. 8, 9 and 10, you get a glimpse of those priests in office. And 11 to 15, do you remember, there's the importance of being clean.

And they were clean because of their disobedience, what they did. And they were clean, they were unclean because of who they were. They were unclean just in and of themselves. And they became clean in each and every situation by offering sacrifices.

[3 : 28] And sacrifices run through the book of Leviticus, like letters run through a stick of rock. They're everywhere, they're right the way through. And here's the climax.

All the daily sacrifices that the priests performed on behalf of the individual people only work on the basis of the Day of Atonement.

Everything flows out of this Day of Atonement. The annual sacrifice for Israel. Let me give you a very weak illustration, okay, I know it's poor. So your family, maybe your mum and your dad, they

decide that they will join for you as a family membership of a health club.

And they take out an annual subscription. Anyone in the family can go along to the gym. Any branch of the gym. You can go to the swimming pool, you can go to the sauna. All you have to do is go along and you just have to pay £2 to get it.

You get in to the health club for £2 on the basis of what your mum and dad have paid the annual subscription. Which will have cost significantly more.

[4 : 38] Now do you get the idea? An annual subscription is made so that the individual can go along. And this annual sacrifice is the sacrifice on which all the other daily sacrifices work, are efficacious.

So let's look at the chapter. Let's look at this annual day of atonement. The structure of the chapter is pretty straightforward. 1 to 5 preparations. 6 to 10 is the summary. 11 to 22 are the details about the day.

23 to 28 are the washings that happen at the end of the day. And 29 to 34 is how the day will be remembered. Preparations for the day. Verse 1 The Lord spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron when they drew near before the Lord died.

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 he will appear over the cloud over the mercy seat.

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. He shall put on the holy linen cloak. He shall have all the linen garments on his body. Put the turban sash around his waist.

[5 : 45] They are the holy garments. He shall bathe his body in water and then put them on. Then from the Israelite community he used to take two male goats for the sin offering and a ram for the burnt offering.

Aaron used to offer this bull for his own sin offering to make atonement for his own sin and his household. So Aaron must be king himself. Second one happened we read it didn't we that lots must be cast for these two goats then he used to take the two goats and to present them before the Lord at the entrance of the meeting.

He used to cast lots one lot for the Lord and the other for the scapegoat. Here's what will happen to the first goat. Verse 9 And Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the Lord and use it as a sin offering.

So what will happen to the second goat? Verse 10 But the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel or Azazel depends how you say it shall be presented alive before the Lord to make atonement over it that it may be sent away into the wilderness.

So do you get it? First of all Aaron has got to be cleansed and then two goats will have lots cast between them one will be for the Lord the sin offering and the second goes to the desert as a scapegoat.

[7 : 00] And as we look through the rest of the chapter there are two great themes in view. The first big theme is the presence of God and the second big theme is the sin of the people. And they are flip sides aren't they?

Leviticus has taught us they are flip sides of the same coin. How can the holy God how can the presence of God be with a sinful people? How can God who is holy holy holy of anything to do with you who are sinful?

Well only sinful people are atoned for. So notice part of this big theme is limited access to the presence of God. Limited access to the presence of God.

Can you see that in verses 1 and 2? Aaron is the most senior of the priests the highly priest and yet Aaron must follow these details meticulously. Do you remember what happens to his two sons? notice the geography of the tent that Aaron is not to go whenever he chooses verse 2 into the most holy place. He's not to go whenever he chooses behind the curtain.

[8 : 06] He's not to go into the place where the mercy seat is which is on the ark. Israel you will know were living in tents at this time but this one tent the tent of meeting stands apart.

and it symbolises that God dwells amongst his people. This is where God lives. Behind the curtain in the most holy place where he dwells where the ark of the covenant is the box that contained the ten commandments the summary of the law.

And later when the temple is built this geography remains. When it comes to the temple there's the most holy place the temple in the Old Testament where the most holy place is separated by a 70 foot high curtain.

It's more like a big massive carpet hanging up. And it was a huge no entry sign. It screamed don't come in unless you're asked.

Not even Aaron and his success could go in wherever they wanted. They were allowed into the most holy place when? On one day of the year. This day the day of atonement.

[9 : 16] And then notice verses 3 and 4 you've got this elaborate washing and then humble dress. Not his usual priestly garb. He enters the most holy place and he acknowledges that he's an ordinary human being.

He's the high priest. And yet he needs a bull to sacrifice for his own sin and to make atonement for himself. You can read it in verses 11 to 14. And Aaron's description of the sacrifice of that bull he is to slaughter that bull and then in verse 15 once it's been slaughtered he's to take it behind the curtain into the most holy place and he sprinkles the blood over the mercy seat.

And he does the same for the rest of the tent. And in verse 16 and then in verse 18 he does the same for the altar. Two goats that Aaron will sacrifice. Well first is for cleaning or atoning for the tent and everything in it.

The first is symbolic isn't it? We've got to make the tent clean. And it needs to be made clean in verse 16. Thus he shall make atonement for the holy place because of the uncleanness 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 uncleanness. The tent and later the temple is considered unclean because of the sinfulness of Israel and it needs to be made clean.

[10 : 39] That's what the first goat is involved in. In the cleaning of the most holy place and the temple and the altar. If you come into my house with muddy boots our house gets muddy too doesn't it?

And when sinful people even Aaron go into the most holy place it is as if the place gets dirty too. And it needs to be symbolic and friends it needs to be made clean. But Aaron can only go into that most holy place on one day a year to sacrifice a goat so that the place can be clean.

So that God our holy God can live amongst clean people. I've got a friend. Let's call him Ollie.

And Ollie lives in Ealing. And Ollie lives with two other guys in a lad's house. And let's say Ollie has got a girlfriend who was visiting from a place let's say Warwick.

And we'll call his girlfriend Rachel. And Rachel is coming to visit for the first time. And Ollie is going to cook dinner.

[11 : 47] What does Ollie do? Ollie cleans doesn't he? I believe for ten hours. And so it's all spick and spam for dinner.

It's spick and spam for Rachel. And the holy place needs to be made clean for a holy God. But even then Aaron the high priest on one day of the year can come into that place.

Limited access. For the rest of the chapter there's another big theme. There's limited access but there's annual sacrifice. Limited access, annual sacrifice. And the first goat that Aaron has cleansed is not just about cleansing the building.

Look at verse 15. As he slaughters the goat it is for the sin offering of the people. And he takes the blood behind the curtain and does with it as he does with the bull's blood for his own sin.

It's a sin offering for the people. And notice verse 17 it makes atonement for the most holy place. In other words it doesn't just make atonement it doesn't just make the building right it makes the people right.

[12 : 53] What about goat number! Verse 20 Aaron's done all this and the second goat is brought forward. Verse 20 when he's made an end to the atonement for the holy place he shall present the live goat and Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of!

And then he shall send the goat out into the wilderness under the care of a guy who's been appointed for the task. And the goat carries on himself all the sins to a solitary place and the man shall release the goat into the desert.

And the goat is symbolically taking all the sins of the people into the desert. But also notice verse 10 it's making atonement by sending it into the desert. In other words atonement is being made.

Here's two pictures in your mind. for atonement to be made for a holy God to live in a place and so that people can have their sins dealt with atonement must be made.

So two things must happen. A goat must die as a sin offering and second a goat must have the sin transferred on it and be taken out therefore taking away the sins of the people.

[14 : 26] Remember verses 23 to 28 all kinds of things need to take place. Verse 29 it's a day that should be remembered it's a day that's declared as a solemn day.

It's a fast day no work is done on this day. Two goats a sin offering and a scapegoat and the first goat dies as a sacrifice for the people's sin. A death occurs blood is shed the blood stands for the life of the animal.

It's a visual aid sign isn't it? For Israel as a nation it has to be forgiven. For Israel as a nation to stand sin must be punished.

A sign that the penalty's been paid for a second goat well it's all part of the atonement isn't it? We use that word today don't we? We use the word scapegoat and here it is.

All the sins that all the people confessed on this poor unsuspecting goat all the sins are symbolically transferred to the goat and he's taken away into the desert.

[15 : 28] It was an annual visual aid but if Israel is going to know the Lord dwelling amongst them their sins must be removed. They must be taken away from the place where a holy God is dwelling.

They must be taken away from a holy people that God dwells amongst. They can't be sent there. In other words it's a visual aid for atonement to be made. That not only should a death take place but sin needs to be banished from the people.

And the annual day of atonement provided limited access to the presence of God. But it did so that this annual sacrifice of atonement could be made. And death occurs for sin and sin is taken away.

Now again you read it and you think what a rigmarole. Even reading the chapters exhausts it. But it's a rigmarole that Israel could have been thoroughly grateful for because the Lord God was providing out of his love and kindness and mercy.

Because without it Israel as a nation would die. Without it Israel as a nation would be cast away. For Israel the nation to remain. For Israel the nation not to die.

[16 : 45] The Lord God provides a day of atonement. But it's no surprise as we journey through Leviticus that the message of the New Testament is this is all but a shadow. This is all pointing forward.

This is a shadow of the eternal day of atonement. And the New Testament writer is quite clear on that. That atonement that how we get right with God how we are made right with God is in the coming of the Lord Jesus.

There are one or two little hints of it in Jesus' own ministry. So if you see on your sheet in Mark chapter 2 verse 18 remember the two goats? Remember what they're doing? So let me read you John's disciples the Pharisees.

They were fasting and people came and said to him why did John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast but your disciples do not fast. Jesus said to them can the word in God fast while the bridegroom is with them?

Jesus there is claiming to be God. Get that. The bridegroom in the Old Testament is a picture of God the Father's relationship with Israel. And Jesus is saying there I am the bridegroom.

[17 : 48] I am God. Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away.

It's the language of the first guess. Taken away from them. And then they will fast in that day. The only day in the Old Testament when you were obliged by law to fast was the day of atonement.

They fasted in other times. Lots. For all different reasons. But the only legal requirement was to fast on the day of atonement. And it is most likely up front Jesus in Mark's gospel is saying I am going to be taken away from these disciples.

That at the cross that will be the true day of atonement. And then they will rightfully fast. But the day of atonement is fulfilled at the cross.

And both aspects of what was going on in Leviticus are being fulfilled. Leviticus 16 tells us that ere and alone one man on one day can enter the only holy place to make it clean.

[18 : 55] So that the other work of atonement could be done. One day, one man on one day a year. So flip forward to Mark 15 it's on your sheets again.

What happens at the cross on the day of atonement? We'll pick it up in verse 36. Let's imagine you're a film director okay? And I want you to think where's the camera lens?

So verse 36 someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink saying wait let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down. And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last.

Where's the camera lens? Where's it focused? It is focused on Jesus hanging on the cross. Verse 38 and the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

Where's the camera lens? It's at the temple. So why is Mark suddenly without explanation changing the camera lens to the temple? He's been on the cross and he suddenly takes you to a building half a mile around the road to a completely different location and he tells you that the curtain in the temple was torn from top to bottom.

[20 : 04] Verse 39 where's the camera lens? When the centurion facing him that is Jesus saw that in this way he breathes his last and truly this man was the son of God. We're back at the cross.

So the question is why is verse 38 between 37 and 39? The camera lens in both those verses is at the cross but in 37 in 38 it's not.

It's at the temple. Why does he do that? Well he does that to show you that it's the day of atonement. And yes there is access to God. He's showing you that the death of Jesus the curtain is torn in two from top to bottom and they're both related.

It's cause and effect. The cause is Jesus' death. The effect is that the temple curtain is torn. The low entry sign to God's presence is torn in two and notice from top to bottom it's a miracle.

If you're going to tear a great big 75 foot high curtain you would not be able to tear it from top to bottom you'd have to do it from bottom to top. But the great no entry sign that says you cannot go into the presence of God is taken away.

[21 : 18] And the very first person that sees that in Mark's account is a Roman centurion. It's a Gentile. And Mark is making a big point to you isn't he?

The no entry sign barred the Jews and it certainly barred the Gentiles but it's been taken away. It's been taken away the no entry sign not just for Jews but for Gentiles too that you can now have access into the presence of God.

Now just come with me to Hebrews chapter 10 again it's on your sheet and notice that it begins with therefore Hebrews chapter 10 which is not on your sheet and it spells out the implications so what is the implication of the fact that Jesus has come and has died on the cross do you see it therefore brothers since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus it's a startling thing one man on one day a year never when he wanted to one man on one day a year only when he was told to could enter into the most holy place and Jesus has cleansed it but more than that he has opened it by the new and living way he's opened it for us through the curtain that is through his flesh and therefore he invites you you to come on in don't you think that's the most staggering thing the most unimaginable thing that you can come into the presence of

God this morning by faith and one day you will do it for all eternity face to face you can do what only one man on one day a year in one nation could ever do we are remarkably privileged do not take it lightly do not take it for granted it is not a little thing that you can come to God there is a danger isn't there that we just forget what an awesome privilege it is that we have early on in Hebrews the writer says that this access means we have confidence to pray and we have confidence to pray because we are by faith in the presence of God at the throne of grace we pray you see understand it properly when we pray our prayers do not get caught up in the ceiling we are in the very presence of God himself now by faith but one day he will be face to face it's a terrific privilege that Jesus death has provided sufficient sacrifice for all sin go to

Romans chapter 3 Romans chapter 3 in the book of Romans Paul has been arguing he's been saying that the wrath of God is on all people everywhere because all people without exception are all rebellious against God that includes you that includes me that every single one of us has broken the law whether it is a Jew broken the law of God or a Gentile who has broken the law of their conscience all have broken the law of God that he has given whether it's written on tablets of stone or written on their hearts and Paul draws for a conclusion in chapter 3 verse 19 and he says now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law so that every mouth might be stopped you cannot speak back to God for by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight you will not be declared right by God by Julia Bass since through the law comes the knowledge of sin on to verse 23 it's a great summary for all have sinned and fall short of the

glory of God every single one of us without exception is under

[25 : 03] God's wrath can I ask you do you believe that that all without exception are under God's wrath that all will face God's wrath on the last day there are no exceptions not a single one but verse 24 it is possible to be justified freely to be declared to be in the right with God and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus how would he be declared righteous justified right with himself and how would he be right to do it when you and I are blatantly not right let me repeat that to you how can God be right to declare you right and right with himself when you are wrong and maintain his character of being right how can God be right to say that I'm right when I'm wrong well the answer is that he's redeemed me from slavery to sin how has he done that verse 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood to be received by faith

God presented Jesus as a sacrifice of atonement and he does that Jesus does what both goats in Leviticus 16 were meant to do he propitiated God's anger Jesus dies as our substitute in our place and secondly he takes away our sin so John 129 behold the Lamb of God who takes away the language of Leviticus the sins of the world God presented Jesus as a sacrifice of atonement through faith in his blood how did he do it with his own sex it was to show God's righteousness because in his divine forbearance in his divine patience he passed over for the sins in other words I know it's not easy to think through but in other words all the sins of the people of the Old Testament had not been properly punished in the goats that died they were just a visual aid for the people to understand their forgiveness to help them the sacrifice that actually brought the forgiveness of Moses and Aaron and David and Jeremiah and Isaiah and Esther and Ruth what was the sacrifice that brought about their forgiveness the sacrifice of Jesus the Jesus sacrifice of atonement is the only one that actually works that is the effective one and so he did this in verse 26 can you see it just show his righteousness at the present time so that he might be just and might be right and the justifier and make a writer of the one who has faith in Jesus the day of atonement the day of atonement was an annual sacrifice and it is the sacrifice of Jesus that is a sufficient final sacrifice for conclusions number one the day of atonement in the Old Testament was for the corporate people of God people I think it's very important and that is what Jesus' sacrifice of atonement is it is for all the people of God it is the corporate sacrifice it works for us it works for all of us together and therefore just as

Israel could never think of themselves as mere individuals in a community you cannot think of yourself as an island because the death of Jesus has worked for all of us corporately we'll think a little bit about this more tonight second conclusion the death of Jesus has worked for all types of sins all sins remember in Leviticus 16 that's spelled out again and again as Aaron laid his hand on the goat he confesses all the wickedness and all the sins and all the sins are taken to the desert and Jesus has satisfied God's wrath and he has taken away our sins from the presence of God so the Lord God looks on you you've trusted in Christ and he looks on you justified he looks on you righteous he looks on you and he sees his son because of what has happened in the death of the Lord Jesus Jesus hasn't just died for you Jesus has given you his record of achievement his certificate of achievement his perfect life achievement and he says have that sacrifice and that is how God dwells on you his sacrifice was sufficient so that all our sins could be dealt with so could I say your darkest secret the thing that you quietly wonder whether you could ever be forgiven for the thing that has been hidden by you from people for a long long time he has dealt with it he is buried it at the bottom of the sea and he has put it as far as the east is from the west and he has put it behind his back so that you can't see it and it will never be brought up against you again it will never be brought up against you again that's what God means that's what atonement means that is what forgiveness means that if you confess your sin it has been dealt with by the

[30 : 42] Lord Jesus and so can I say don't let three sources bring trouble to you number one don't let the devil bring it up again you can tell the devil go to hell go to hell because the Lord Jesus has dealt with my sin there is no charge that will stick according to Paul in Romans 8 so do not let the devil make a charge stick it won't work be relieved be assured and don't let anyone look down on you because of things that you've done in the past if God has forgiven you through the death of Jesus why should anyone else look down on you however bad a thing it is that you've done and thirdly don't let your own conscience accuse you it's been dealt with in a room this size not a room this morning but I'm room 50 some of you will have done some very bad things I've been the minister of this church for 13 years and I was working for another church for 4 years and it never ceases to amaze me when people come to me and say you won't believe I did this in a room this

size there will be some who have had an abortion in a room this size there will be any number of you who have had sex when you shouldn't have had it in a room this size there will be people who have had homosexual experiences that you know that you shouldn't have had in a room this size there will be any number of you who got drunk when you knew that you shouldn't have in a room this size there will be any number of you who clicked on the mouse on an in-depth site and you went to pornography and so let me ask you this morning are you basking in the reality of all sin being dealt with because you should if you're a

Christian if you are a believer be encouraged don't let the devil bring it up don't let your friends look down on you don't wallow in them anymore because they are dealt with they are forgiven they are forgiven they are atoneful of course God is one and only son to do it be joyful and be relieved so the third conclusion is there should be no inferiority no superiority amongst the people of God because how have you got forgiven how have you been forgiven worked that out how have you come into the presence of God it's only because of what Jesus has done isn't it and it's not because you are better or worse than anyone else and it seems to me in Christian gatherings like ours they are always riddled with people who feel inferior to everyone else and those who subtly feel that they are superior to everyone else so the old line holds true isn't it that at the cross there is level ground so let me say if you are sitting there this morning and you feel inferior to other people stop it because it's just inverted pride actually and if you are sitting there smugly thinking you are superior to other people stop it because if the

Lord Jesus Christ had not died on the cross and you weren't forgiven through the day of atonement that he fulfills you would be unforgiven and there would be nothing you can do about it and you would not be able to enter into the very presence of God and I say the last conclusion is that it works for all time it will never need to be repeated it will never need to be reenacted it has been done it is finished there has been the day of atonement it is religion that says do it is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that says done and so therefore all we do is merely trust we trust what God says about the death of his son and therefore we live knowing that our sins are forgiven and atonement has been made and therefore we enjoy today by faith what will one day we will see face to face and he will one day have permanent access to the physical presence of God because it's been made by a sufficient sacrifice for all sin so let us pray