

# 12 THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

KEY TEXT: LEVITICUS 16:1-10,29-30

## CENTRAL truth

This week, we will learn about the Day of Atonement. This was the day on which the Israelites observed their most important annual event. It was truly a special occasion. As we read and discuss this week's passage, we will be reminded that **God has created a way for His people to be forgiven and reconciled with Him.**

## key question

**What was the purpose of the two goats in verses 8-10?**

The goat for the *sin offering* was to have its blood shed to cleanse the Israelites of their sins and purify the tabernacle. Once the sin offering had been made, Aaron would lay his hands on the living goat and confess the sins of the nation over it. Then, the goat would be released into the wilderness, indicating that Israel's sins had been removed. On the Day of Atonement—and through the entire system of sacrifices—God's mercy and judgment were displayed.

## keep in mind

- Students may have questions about why this elaborate system of sacrifices was necessary. A helpful passage to reference is Romans 6:23. There, Paul teaches us that “the wages of sin is death.” In God's kindness, He established the sacrificial system so that the Israelites could offer the blood and meat of sacrifices in their place and thus be forgiven and reconciled with Him.
- If your group is using different Bible translations, you will likely notice that verses 8 and 10 are different depending on which translation is being used. Using the **Context Note** to help you, reassure students that even though we don't fully know the meaning of one Hebrew word, we can understand the living goat's purpose: when it was released into the wilderness, it symbolized that the nation's sins had been removed.

## application

**Do you live as though you have direct access to God because of Jesus's sacrifice? Why or why not?**

## the win

**FOR THE STUDENT:** Students should learn that the Lord is a forgiving God who takes away sin. This is ultimately seen in the person and work of Jesus—the perfect sacrifice.

**FOR THE LEADER:** Help students discover that the Lord “is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Encourage them to practice confession this week.

WINTER  
2025