



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 12: Atonement

Suggested Week of Use: February 16, 2025

Core Passage: Leviticus 16:1-10, 29-30

News Story Summary

On September 30, 2024, Pete Rose, one of the best players in Major League Baseball history, died at the age of 83. Rose holds the records for most hits, most games played, most at-bats, most singles, most times on base, and many others. He also set the modern National League record for most consecutive games with a hit at 44 games and was named the National League's Most Valuable Player in 1973. In 1999, he was selected for baseball's All-Century team. Yet, for all those incredible stats, Pete Rose has been banned from the Baseball Hall of Fame since 1989. Why? Because he bet on baseball, including games in which he was playing or managing. Rule 21 of Major League Baseball says, "Any player, umpire or club or league official or employee who shall bet any sum whatsoever upon any baseball game in connection with which the bettor has a duty to perform shall be declared permanently ineligible."

To the day of his death, Rose never expressed remorse for his actions, took responsibility for them, or admitted they caused harm. Some have wondered if such an apology would have made a difference and allowed him to be admitted into the Hall of Fame based on his merits.

For more information on this story, search "Pete Rose's legacy."

Engage

To supplement the Engage activities, summarize the news story about Pete Rose. Encourage adults to raise their hands if they believe Rose deserves to be in the Hall of Fame. Do the same for those who believe the permanent ban is justified. (Note: Encourage everyone to pick a side.) Offer an opportunity for people on opposing sides to share reasons for their position. Ask: *If Pete Rose had ever publicly apologized for what he did, would your opinion have changed? Why or why not?*

Share that the Major League Baseball rulebook is clear: Anyone who bets on games in which they are involved face a permanent ban from the game, including the Hall of Fame. Encourage adults to think about what it would be like if God used the same standard of justice. Say: *Even though our offense against God is so much greater than Pete Rose's offenses, God in His mercy made a way for sinful people to be forgiven.* Share that this session highlights the provision God made for the ancient Israelites and how it applies to us today.

Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, recount the news story about Pete Rose. Ask: *What consequence did Pete Rose's actions have? Knowing what the rulebook says about "permanent ineligibility," what would be the only way for Pete Rose to be inducted into the Hall of Fame?* Affirm that the leaders of baseball would need to lift the permanent ban.

Note that from a spiritual perspective, Rose's story illustrates the truth that despite all our accomplishments and good works, sin still has its consequences. We still need the Savior whom God provided if we're going to be made right with Him. Since this is the designated evangelism lesson for the quarter, take a few moments to share the Plan of Salvation on the inside front cover of the Personal Study Guide as suggested on page 140 of the Leader Guide.