

Week Five

THE SOLUTION (PART 2):
A HOLY GOD AMONG SINFUL PEOPLE

WEEKLY FAST

Shopping for Non-Essentials

TEXT: LEVITICUS 16:20-34

Supplemental Reading:

- Psalm 103:11-12
- Isaiah 53:4-6
- Hebrews 9:11-14
- Hebrews 10:1-4, 10-14
- Hebrews 13:11-13
- Micah 7:18-19

GETTING STARTED

When we discover mold behind a bathroom wall, we know something must be done. Imagine trying to fix the problem by simply painting over it.

At first, the room looks fine. Weeks later, the smell returns. Months later, the structure is compromised.

This is exactly what happens with sin. When sin is covered but not removed, it always returns with greater damage. The ritual of the "scapegoat" shows us that God does not merely forgive sin through atonement; He also removes it from His people, calling them to respond with repentance, rest, and lifelong worship.

As the scapegoat bears Israel's sins and is sent into the wilderness, the people are given a visible picture of sin being carried away. Forgiveness is portrayed as separation from guilt.

In the ceremony, the first goat points to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as our substitute, making atonement for us by dying in our place (propitiation).

The second goat shows how the act of propitiation results in the removal of guilt. As Aaron lays his hands on it and confesses the sins of the people, their guilt is transferred to the goat. When the goat is sent into the wilderness, the people see that God's wrath has been removed (expiation). Likewise, when we place our faith in Christ and confess our sins, He removes the guilt from us! When He bears our penalty... we no longer bear it

Just as the scapegoat was sent outside the camp with the sins of the people upon its head, so Christ was crucified outside the camp (Heb. 13:12); fully removing our sins from us!

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD: *WHAT DOES IT MEAN?*

1. Why do we read that the goat takes the place of the sinner and bears the iniquities and transgressions of the people to a remote area (vv. 20-22)? What does this mean for the sinner? Since sin has been removed and the sinner is no longer crushed by guilt, what should be our response according to vv. 29-31?
2. The people did nothing to earn atonement. Forgiveness was received, not achieved, and it led to worship. According to vv. 32-34, was this a one-time emotional moment, or something meant to shape their lives? Explain.

APPLYING THE POINT: *HOW NOW SHALL WE LIVE?*

1. Jesus paid for your sin and carried it away so that you would not be crushed by guilt. It is no longer counted against you. How can you respond in humility, rest, and ongoing dependence on God's mercy in your life?
2. When the people repented, the scapegoat was sent into the wilderness; sin and guilt were to be seen no more. Do you separate yourself from your confessed sins, or do you go running after the goat at the first temptation? The scapegoat was removed for the sake of the whole camp. Some sins remain powerful because we insist on managing them alone. Can you bring one struggle into safe, wise community to ensure it is no longer carried alone?

