

# Lesson

## Engaging Introduction

Hello, everyone! Today, we're going to dive into a fascinating story from the Bible found in Leviticus chapter 16. Now, you might be thinking, "What does Leviticus mean?" Well, it's one of the books in the Bible, and it's jam-packed with rules and stories from a long, long time ago. These stories and rules were given to the Israelites to guide them on how to live their best lives in a way that honored God. Imagine having a giant, heavenly guidebook to living a perfect life – that's what Leviticus was for the Israelites!

Today, we will explore a special day called the Day of Atonement. Think of it like a super important cleaning day, not just for things like toys and rooms, but for your hearts as well. Imagine for a moment that your heart is a big chalkboard. Every time you do something wrong or make a mistake, a mark gets written on that board. Over the year, it gets filled with scribbles and marks. The Day of Atonement was like taking a giant eraser and wiping it all clean, giving everyone a fresh start.

On this special day, a man named Aaron, who was a priest, had a very important job to do. It involved two goats and a big tent called the Tabernacle. Stay with me, and we'll find out what incredible things Aaron did and what it means for us today. Are you ready to jump in and discover this amazing story? Let's go!

## Main Teaching Points

### 1. The Role of the High Priest

First, let's discover who Aaron was. Aaron was chosen by God to be the High Priest. Now, what is a priest? Imagine someone whose job was to be like a bridge between the people and God. Aaron had to make sure everything was just right so that the Israelites could ask God for forgiveness and blessings. On the Day of Atonement, Aaron had a big responsibility – he was in charge of making sure all the special ceremonies were done correctly. How cool is that?

Aaron had to wear special clothes that were holy and white, symbolizing purity and cleanliness. It was important because when he went into the special tent called the Tabernacle, he represented all the people of Israel before God. So, whenever Aaron put on these special clothes, it was a way of showing how important and serious the Day of Atonement was. This reminds us that when we have important tasks, we should also prepare carefully to do our best!

### 2. The Importance of the Two Goats

Next up, let's talk about two very special goats. On the Day of Atonement, Aaron took two goats and used them in a ceremony that had great meaning. One goat was called the "sacrifice goat," and the other was the "scapegoat."

The "sacrifice goat" was offered as a sacrifice to God for the people's sins. In simple words, it meant that God forgave the people's mistakes because this goat took the consequences. It reminds us that forgiveness sometimes requires a sacrifice but leads to a clean and fresh start.

The second goat, the "scapegoat," had a unique role. Aaron would lay his hands on this goat's

head and confess all the mistakes and bad things the people had done over the year. This act symbolized putting all those wrongs on the goat. Then, this goat was led away into the wilderness, far away from the people, taking away those mistakes. Isn't that amazing? It's like getting rid of all the bad scribbles on our heart's chalkboard, sending them away forever!

### 3. The Concept of a Fresh Start

Imagine if every time you made a mistake, it never went away. How would your heart's chalkboard look? Full of scribbles and marks! The Day of Atonement was God's way of saying, "I want to give you a fresh start. I want to erase that board!" It was a time when the people could feel new and clean again, ready to begin with a clean slate.

This is a powerful picture of forgiveness. It shows us that everyone makes mistakes, but God is eager to help us start over. It teaches us that forgiveness wipes everything clean, and it's as if those mistakes never happened. What if we could do that with our friends and family, forgiving them and moving on? What a wonderful world that would be!

### 4. The Bigger Picture with Jesus

Now, let's make a connection to something even bigger! The Day of Atonement was an early picture of what Jesus would do for us later. Jesus, like the sacrifice goat, gave His life for our mistakes. And like the scapegoat, He took away all our bad thoughts and actions so that we could be clean again. Jesus gives us the ultimate fresh start! Amazing, right? It's God's bigger plan for us to always have a chance for a new beginning.

#### Personal Application for Elementary Students

So, what can we learn from all this? Well, even though we don't have a Day of Atonement like in Aaron's time, this story teaches us a lot about forgiveness and fresh starts.

First, it's important to remember that making mistakes is a part of being human. We all do it. Whether it's accidentally breaking something at home or saying something unkind to a friend, mistakes happen. What counts is what we do after. Just like the Israelites, we can approach God and ask for forgiveness. God loves it when we come to Him with an honest heart.

Second, we can learn to forgive others. Think about a friend who might have hurt your feelings. Remember the scapegoat? Imagine letting that hurt feeling go with the goat, forgiving your friend, and starting fresh. Holding onto hurt doesn't help us or others, but forgiveness brings peace and joy to our hearts.

Lastly, remember that Jesus made it possible for us to have a brand-new heart every day. When you pray or talk to God, you can thank Him for this fresh start and ask Him to help you do better each day. Isn't that an encouraging thought to keep in mind?

#### Interactive Discussion Questions with Explanation and Teaching Guidance

Now, let's talk about some questions to help us think more about what we learned today.

##### 1. Why do you think Aaron had to wear special clothes as the High Priest?

- Discuss how special clothes, like the ones Aaron wore, show the importance of the task. Use examples from daily life, like how we dress up for a wedding or a party to show it's a special occasion.

2. What was the purpose of the two goats in the ceremony?

- Encourage the kids to recall that one goat symbolizes sacrifice and forgiveness, while the other takes away the mistakes. Relate this to how we try to right our wrongs and learn from them.

3. Have you ever had a day when you felt like you needed a fresh start? What happened, and how did it feel to move on?

- Allow the children to share their experiences. Explain how needing a fresh start after a big mistake is natural. Encourage them to think about how starting fresh can feel just like that eraser clearing the board.

4. How can we apply the idea of forgiveness and fresh starts when dealing with friends and family?

- Guide the students to brainstorm ways to forgive others, such as saying "I'm sorry" or "I forgive you" and letting go of the fight. Use examples like lending a toy to someone who may have broken a promise before.

These discussions are meant to help everyone see the power of forgiveness and how we can practice it every day. As we finish up today's lesson, remember that God provided the Day of Atonement in the Old Testament, and through Jesus, He gives us the chance to start new every day. Isn't that a wonderful gift to hold onto? Thanks for joining in, and I hope you carry this lesson of fresh starts in your hearts wherever you go!