

A T O N E D

**LEVITICUS 1:1-4; 25:1-4**

THE PROMISE OF ATONEMENT

FEBRUARY 22, 2026

OPENING**Ice Breaker (Choose One)- 5 minutes**

- What's the most confusing instruction manual you've ever tried to follow?
- Have you ever felt like you were "on the outside" of something important—looking in but not belonging?

Leviticus may feel like an ancient instruction manual—but beneath the details is a dramatic story: How do sinful people move from outside God's presence to be with Him?

Read the Text Together: Leviticus 1:1-4; 5:5-7, 11-13; 23:22; 25:35-38

Since the passages are long, select key portions: Leviticus 1:1-4; 5:5-7, 11-13; 23:22; 25:35-38

Listen for repeated promises, provisions for forgiveness, how forgiveness connects to community life.

SUMMARY

The setting for Leviticus is a problem: God's glory fills the tabernacle, but Moses cannot enter (Exodus 40). At the beginning of the book, God speaks from inside the tent while Moses stands outside. By the time we reach Numbers, Moses is inside with God. Leviticus explains how that movement happens—not through human effort, but through God's provision of atonement.

The first seven chapters lay out sacrifices in detail. While they may seem repetitive, they repeatedly promise something stunning: "And he shall be forgiven."

Unlike surrounding religions filled with uncertainty and escalating sacrifices, Israel's God promises forgiveness in advance when His prescribed offering is brought in faith. And He provides a way for all people to be forgiven. No one is excluded.

The latter chapters (23-25) show what happens as a result: A forgiven people become a forgiving people. Feasts celebrate grace. Debts are canceled. Slaves are freed. Jubilee resets inequality. The God who "covers" sin forms a community that covers one another.



DISCUSSION

Observation Questions

- In Leviticus 1:4, what is the purpose of laying a hand on the offering?
- What repeated phrase/promise appears throughout chapters 1–7?
- What does Leviticus 5 teach about those who cannot afford costly sacrifices?
- In Leviticus 23:22, what is Israel commanded to leave in the fields—and for whom?
- What rhythms of worship are described in chapter 23?
- What radical commands appear in chapter 25 regarding debts, land, and slavery?
- In Leviticus 25:35–38, how are the poor to be treated?

Interpretation & Theological Reflection

- Why does Leviticus begin with sacrificial instructions rather than inspirational messages?
- What does the repeated promise “he shall be forgiven” reveal about God’s character?
- How is Israel’s sacrificial system different from pagan religious practices?
- Why does God include provisions for the poor in the sacrificial laws?
- What does the placement of the gleaning law (23:22) in the middle of feast instructions communicate?
- How do Sabbath years and Jubilee reflect God’s heart for restoration and community?
- What does the movement from atonement to community life teach us about the relationship between vertical forgiveness (God) and horizontal forgiveness (others)?

Application Questions

- Are there ways you still live as though you must “earn” acceptance?
- What does it mean personally that Christ has “covered” your debt?
- Nick asked us to reflect: What price do you demand before giving forgiveness? Is that price something others can afford?



This document can be used for either personal or group reflection.

Group facilitator: Please feel empowered to use only the questions that are helpful for the context of your group.



- Is there someone in your life who needs to hear from you, “You are forgiven”?
- What might it look like to “leave the edges of your field” for others?
 - Time? Finances? Emotional capacity? Hospitality?
- How do debt, resentment, and unresolved conflict divide community?
- In what ways can your group embody the principles of restoration, generosity, release?
- How does corporate worship reinforce your identity as a forgiven person?

Closing Prayer

- Thank God for providing atonement. Praise Him that forgiveness is declared in advance through Christ.
- Confess areas where you have doubted God’s promise of forgiveness. Confess grudges, withheld forgiveness, or hidden resentment.
- Thank Jesus for being the once-for-all sacrifice. Thank God that forgiveness is not based on what we can afford.
- Ask God to deepen your understanding of His holiness.
- Pray for a heart quick to forgive and for generosity to those in need. Ask for courage to restore relationships.
- Pray that our church would be marked by peace and forgiveness. Pray that those who feel “outside” would experience welcome and covering.

Optional Take-Home Reflection

- What would change in your relationships if you lived with daily awareness that you are fully covered by Christ?

