Unit 6, Session 3

A Picture of Atonement

Summary and Goal
The Book of Exodus describes how sinful people were rescued and reconciled to holy God through a deliverer He Himself sent. Now in this session, we turn our attention to the Book of Leviticus and see that God provided a high priest for His people. Year after year, this representative brought a sacrifice to atone for the sins of the people. We will see that God appointed the Day of Atonement as a way for the people of Israel to be in relationship with Him and as a picture of a better way to come—a way that sin would be dealt with once and for all when the perfect high priest and sinless substitute would take our place and pay the punishment our sin deserved.

Session Outline
1. The priest makes atonement for his sins against a holy God (Lev. 16:2-6).
2. The priest makes atonement for the people’s sins against a holy God (Lev. 16:15-19).
3. The scapegoat carries away the people’s sins against a holy God (Lev. 16:20-22).

Session in a Sentence
Holy God provided a way for a priest to make atonement for the people’s sins.

Christ Connection
Aaron was an imperfect high priest who was required to make atonement for himself and God's people every year. Jesus is the perfect high priest who made atonement once for all time with His own blood.

Missional Application
Because we have been cleansed from our sin through Christ’s atoning work, we offer others the hope of purification that comes only through trusting in Him.
SAY: Representing someone in a court of law for the first time can be overwhelming. You need to know the law and understand previous legal decisions related to your case. You need to follow the proper procedures and know what you can say and when you can say it. Even with all the right information, standing before a judge can be daunting. Then add to all of this the feeling of responsibility for your client. Most of us can only imagine the stress of being a new trial lawyer.

INTERACT: Ask group members the opening question on page 121 in the DDG.

What are some situations you can think of that might be overwhelming, especially when experienced for the first time? (be prepared to give an answer of your own to jump-start the conversation)

EXPLAIN: Use the paragraph in the DDG (p. 121) to help group members grasp the feeling of being overwhelmed in approaching God in worship.

Do you ever find approaching God overwhelming? Do you ever wonder about addressing God, the Creator of everything? Do you consider how to show Him the proper respect? Surely the people of Israel in the Old Testament felt the weight of these questions. They had numerous rules, sacrifices, and rituals from God that comprised a complex system of worship, and they had priests to represent them before God and God before them, but how could anyone approach a holy God, let alone with confidence, in such a complicated system of worship? The answer—with the blood of a sacrifice.

SUMMARIZE: In this session, we turn our attention to the Book of Leviticus and see that God provided a high priest for His people. Year after year, this representative brought a sacrifice to atone for the sins of the people. We will see that God appointed the Day of Atonement as a way for the people of Israel to be in relationship with Him and as a picture of a better way to come—a way that sin would be dealt with once and for all when the perfect high priest and sinless substitute would take our place and pay the punishment our sin deserved.

For additional teaching options and other resources, please visit www.GospelProject.com/additional-resources.
Point 1: The priest makes atonement for his sins against a holy God (Lev. 16:2-6).

SAY: All humanity is ruined by sin and separated from holy God. Showing us this was one of God’s reasons for giving the law. It is a standard of perfection we cannot live up to. We don’t just fall short; we fall miserably short. Even so, God’s desire was to be near His sinful people, and this required the Day of Atonement.

READ Leviticus 16:2-6 (DDG p. 122).

2 The LORD said to Moses: “Tell your brother Aaron that he may not come whenever he wants into the holy place behind the curtain in front of the mercy seat on the ark or else he will die, because I appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.

3 “Aaron is to enter the most holy place in this way: with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. 4 He is to wear a holy linen tunic, and linen undergarments are to be on his body. He is to tie a linen sash around him and wrap his head with a linen turban. These are holy garments; he must bathe his body with water before he wears them. 5 He is to take from the Israelite community two male goats for a sin offering and one ram for a burnt offering.

6 “Aaron will present the bull for his sin offering and make atonement for himself and his household.

EXPLAIN: Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 122) to explain how access to God was limited, and note the reason why: Sin has formed a barrier between people and God, illustrated by the veil closing off the most holy place in the tabernacle.

God appointed only the high priest, Aaron, to enter His presence in the most holy place on one day of the year to make atonement for the sins of the people. If Aaron tried to enter on any other day, he would die. God was not and is not to be approached casually.

FILL IN THE BLANKS: Provide group members with the answers for the call-out in their DDG (p. 122).

God Is Holy: God’s holiness refers to His uniqueness in being separate from all He has created. God’s holiness also refers to His absolute purity. God is unstained by the evil of the world.

Essential Doctrine “God Is Holy”: God’s holiness refers to His uniqueness in being separate from all He has created. The Hebrew word for “holy” means “separate” or “set apart.” God’s holiness also refers to His absolute purity. God is unstained by the evil of the world. His goodness is perfect, and the moral code we find in the Scriptures is a reflection of His holy nature. As people made in God’s image, we are called to holiness.
INSTRUCT: Ask group members to consider how they typically approach holy God and to mark that on the scale in their DDG (p. 122).

How would you describe your typical approach to holy God?

Apathy          Contempt          Rote          Reverence

EXPLAIN: Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 122) to highlight the atonement the high priest needed before he could make the atonement sacrifice for the people. Then connect the role of the high priest to the coming of Christ as the great high priest who is without sin. He opens up access to holy God through Himself.

Before the high priest could represent the people on the Day of Atonement, he needed to be cleansed and forgiven of his own sins. Permitting an atonement sacrifice by a sinful high priest was a grace God afforded the people so He could dwell among them, but one day He would send a high priest better than Aaron—the sinless Son of God.

- When Jesus Christ came to earth, He came as a servant in all humility (Phil. 2:6-7). Like Aaron, He came as a high priest, but unlike Aaron, He came fully qualified for His role as intercessor. In Christ there is no fault or sin to be found (Heb. 4:15). Through Christ, access into God's holy presence has been granted with but a single condition: All may come, but only by trusting in Him.

Commentary: God’s warning to Aaron about approaching Him at the right time in the right way was not abstract. Aaron and all of the people of Israel had seen what happened to those who approach God while disobeying His instructions. Two of Aaron’s sons, Nadab and Abihu, had presented unauthorized fire before the Lord and had been consumed by the Lord’s fire (see Lev. 10:1-2; 16:1).

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

How does Jesus, the great high priest, enable us to approach holy God? (His atoning sacrifice on the cross has covered our sins and taken them away from us; through faith in Christ, our consciences have been cleansed and our guilt has been taken away; the righteousness of Jesus has been granted to us by faith so that God sees us as He would see His own Son)
Point 2: The priest makes atonement for the people’s sins against a holy God (Lev. 16:15-19).

SAY: The high priest was not the only one who needed to be prepared to come before God; the people did as well. Having made purifications for his sin, the high priest next assumed his role as mediator and made atonement for the sins of the people, providing a picture of God’s abounding grace.


15 “When he slaughters the male goat for the people’s sin offering and brings its blood inside the curtain, he will do the same with its blood as he did with the bull’s blood: He is to sprinkle it against the mercy seat and in front of it. 16 He will make atonement for the most holy place in this way for all their sins because of the Israelites’ impurities and rebellious acts. He will do the same for the tent of meeting that remains among them, because it is surrounded by their impurities. 17 No one may be in the tent of meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the most holy place until he leaves after he has made atonement for himself, his household, and the whole assembly of Israel. 18 Then he will go out to the altar that is before the Lord and make atonement for it. He is to take some of the bull’s blood and some of the goat’s blood and put it on the horns on all sides of the altar. 19 He is to sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times to cleanse and set it apart from the Israelites’ impurities.

EXPLAIN: Note that two goats were brought to the high priest for this next stage of the Day of Atonement, and the first was sacrificed for the people’s sins. Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 123) to highlight that atonement was made by the shedding of blood.

The high priest would have started the day in pristine white linen. By now his robes would have been stained with blood, providing a powerful illustration for the people. They had been forgiven of their sin, but that forgiveness had come at a cost. God had promised that sin would lead to death, and on this day it had. But in God’s grace and mercy, it was not their death that was required but another’s death that made atonement—in this case, the death of a goat.

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

Why is it important that we hold God’s justice and His grace and mercy together in balance? (because that is who God is; so we understand the gravity of sin and don’t treat it lightly; so we recognize that no sin is beyond God’s ability to forgive; so we rightly share the gospel, the message of salvation from sin and the judgment of sin)
READ: Ask a volunteer to read the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 123).

While the people had reason to celebrate the grace and mercy God had extended to them, they knew the sacrifices of the Day of Atonement were imperfect and temporary because they would be repeated every year. Ultimately, sinners need Jesus Christ, the perfect mediator, to make true and complete atonement with His own blood.

PACK ITEM 14: OUR SUBSTITUTE: Use this poster to help explain the eternal atonement Jesus has won for us.

- The high priests were not the answer to the sin problem, nor were more animal sacrifices. These only pointed forward.
- Jesus came to offer up His life on the cross to make atonement for sin. As Jesus breathed His last, the veil in the temple was torn in two (Matt. 27:50-51). As both the perfect mediator and the perfect sacrifice, Jesus opened the way into God’s presence.

FILL IN THE BLANKS: Provide group members with the answers for the call-out in their DDG (p. 123).

Christ as Substitute: At the heart of the atonement is Jesus Christ substituting Himself for sinners as He died on the cross. This truth is seen against the backdrop of the Old Testament sacrificial system, which provided a picture of humanity’s need for sin to be covered and guilt to be removed by an innocent sacrifice.

Essential Doctrine “Christ as Substitute”: At the heart of the atonement is Jesus Christ substituting Himself for sinners as He died on the cross. This truth is seen against the backdrop of the Old Testament sacrificial system, which provided a picture of humanity’s need for sin to be covered and guilt to be removed by an innocent sacrifice. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with humankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of humanity from sin.
Point 3: The scapegoat carries away the people's sins against a holy God (Lev. 16:20-22).

**SAY:** Even after shedding the goat's blood to make atonement for the sins of the people, the Day of Atonement was not over. To help the people know that their sins were forgiven, a second goat was brought forward. While the blood of the first goat provided atonement within the tabernacle—outside of the people's view—the second goat served as a word picture, showing everyone what atonement for sin looks like.

**READ:** Ask a volunteer to read Leviticus 16:20-22 (DDG p. 124).

> 20 “When he has finished making atonement for the most holy place, the tent of meeting, and the altar, he is to present the live male goat. 21 Aaron will lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the Israelites' iniquities and rebellious acts—all their sins. He is to put them on the goat's head and send it away into the wilderness by the man appointed for the task. 22 The goat will carry all their iniquities into a desolate land, and the man will release it there.

**EXPLAIN:** Using the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 124), describe the picture of sin being removed from the people by means of the scapegoat.

The atonement for the people's sin that occurred privately between Aaron and God in the tabernacle was displayed publicly in the scapegoat. The high priest placed his hands and head on the goat's head and confessed the sins of the people over it, symbolically placing them on the goat, which was then led into the wilderness, never to be seen again. The blood of one goat was taken into the tabernacle and presented before God. The other scapegoat was led out of the camp in the opposite direction.

- The picture is powerful. God had forgiven all their sin and He no longer held any of it against them. There was no longer any cause for guilt and shame. No need to confess these sins again. This is what God's forgiveness looks like—it is total.
- God wanted His people to see and understand the fullness of their forgiveness before the Day of Atonement concluded. This would help keep their hearts in the correct posture, hearts full of humility, awe, gratitude, and joy, necessary kindling to fuel the fire of God-honoring obedience.

**INTERACT:** Ask group members the following question.

> How does the Day of Atonement picture of the two goats help you understand the completeness of God's forgiveness of your sin? (be prepared to give an answer of your own to jump-start the conversation)
EXPLAIN: Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 124) to show how Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrifices, including the ones on the Day of Atonement. Also emphasize that He is the better high priest, the better sacrifice, and the better mediator.

We all need forgiveness. The blood of bulls and goats was never enough to take away sin, nor was it intended to. The picture of sacrifices and scapegoats was always intended to point to the atoning work of Jesus; His blood alone can remove our sin as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12). Christ is the better high priest. The better sacrifice. The better mediator. Because of the finished work of Christ on the cross for our salvation and His ongoing work of intercession for our sanctification, we are free to live forgiven and clean, confident as we serve the living God.

READ the following passage from Hebrews 9:11-14, emphasizing Jesus’ once-for-all sacrifice and the result that we have been cleansed to serve the living God.

- “But Christ has appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come. In the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands (that is, not of this creation), he entered the most holy place once for all time, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a young cow, sprinkling those who are defiled, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works so that we can serve the living God?”

Commentary: Christ has removed our sin—for good. Like Leviticus 16, Hebrews 9 draws our attention to the ministry of a high priest. This high priest too came as a servant and was provided to make atonement for the people’s sin. But this high priest was not like any high priest who had come before Him. He was sinless and without fault and had no need to make atonement for His own sin. Neither did this high priest sacrifice any bulls, goats, or other animals. Instead, this high priest, Jesus, the Son of God, laid down His own life and was the perfect one-time sacrifice for our sin.

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

How should understanding Jesus’ sacrifice give us confidence to serve the living God? (our service to God can be done without fear because we aren't earning our status with God; we serve God in the name of Jesus, the Son of God who loves us and died for us; we have been cleansed from guilt and shame and are free to live as we were intended—for God’s glory)
My Mission

EXPLAIN: In giving His Son to be our perfect high priest and the once-for-all sacrifice for our sin, we see the love and glory of God. In Christ, we are invited to come boldly before the throne of grace. No longer is access to God limited to one man on one day of the year. Now we come freely to our Creator as children of our Father. This is the picture of the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16.

- God in His love provided a means of salvation for our sin—salvation we did nothing to deserve.
- God’s glory is revealed in such an amazing plan—one that provided forgiveness through His own sacrifice on our behalf.

READ the following missional application statement in the DDG (p. 125), and encourage group members to choose at least one of the options below as a way to respond to the truth of God’s Word.

Because we have been cleansed from our sin through Christ’s atoning work, we offer others the hope of purification that comes only through trusting in Him.

- In what ways will you trust in Jesus because of His atoning work on the cross for our sins?
- Just as the Day of Atonement was done corporately, how can your group live and worship together in light of Christ’s atonement?
- With whom will you share about Christ’s payment for sin and the cleansing He offers, and what steps will you take to share the gospel with this person or persons?

CLOSE IN PRAYER: Father, Your eyes are holy and cannot look upon sin. In order to approach You, we need a mediator who can offer the appropriate atonement. Thank You for providing the great high priest we have in Jesus, who entered the most holy place once for all time offering Himself in obtaining an eternal redemption for us. Help us to tell others about Your holiness and the provision for sins found in Christ. Amen.

PACK ITEM 15: THE SACRIFICES: Pass out a copy of this handout to each group member to aid them as they read the Scriptures on the Old Testament sacrifices in their Daily Study devotions this week.

INSTRUCT: As your group departs, encourage group members to read and respond to the Daily Study devotions in their DDG (pp. 126-128), which build and expand upon the group study. Also advocate for small groups or families to use Encourage One Another (p. 129) for mutual accountability and fellowship grounded upon the foundation of God’s Word.
Daily Discipleship

Throughout the week following the session, use the ideas below to remind and encourage your group members to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Daily Study devotions in the DDG (pp. 126-128) will help group members get into God’s Word and study it for themselves. Encourage One Another (p. 129) will help group members and families fellowship with one another with purpose.

Daily Study

Brief daily devotions in the DDG (pp. 126-128) will help group members take initiative in their own discipleship.

- Make sure all group members have access to a Bible to read. Have some Bibles available to give to guests who may need one, or offer to get one and arrange a time to meet to give it and show how to navigate it for the devotions.
- Share the following idea from the devotion for Day 4 as a part of point 3 in the session: Jesus’ sacrifice was necessary to provide the forgiveness that gives the believer confidence that he or she is accepted by God. Not even a single sin remains to bring condemnation.

Consider leading by example and reading the daily devotions yourself with your own DDG. Based on your study, use brief messages throughout the week (group text, email, social media) to encourage your group to keep up with their daily time in God’s Word and to live it out. Here are a couple of examples you can use:

- Day 1: “Our obedience is not to be offered by compulsion but motivated by love and gratitude.”
- Day 5: “God’s people are to rest in affirmation that there is nothing they can do to earn forgiveness for their sins.”

Visit www.GospelProject.com/Blog for additional content and resources you can use to help group members gain more insight into their daily studies. Send group members a link or a portion of a blog post or other content that you believe will be helpful and encouraging for their time in God’s Word.

Encourage One Another

This brief plan for fellowship and accountability in the group member’s DDG (p. 129) will help groups of 2-4 people to meet sometime during the week to reflect on the session and to share how God is working and they are responding. It could also be used for family discipleship with students and children who are using The Gospel Project in their groups.

- Encourage group members to reflect on ways to teach others about God’s holiness in a culture that tends to downplay human sinfulness.
- See yourself as a member of the group who also needs encouragement in the faith, and participate in such a group this week.
Additional Commentary

**Point 1: The priest makes atonement for his sins against a holy God (Lev. 16:2-6).**

“All these initial instructions leave one with a powerful impression of God majestic in holiness. They thus begin to disclose the problem that the Day of Atonement was designed to address. The holy God has been offended in manifold ways by his people, and their offences have led to a growing mountain of defilement that must be removed. The uncleanness will not just disappear, it must be cleansed; the offenses will not just go away, they must be taken away. And that is what the Day of Atonement is designed to accomplish.”

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“The **holy place** refers to the holy of holies (vv. 16-17,20,23,27,33). The **mercy seat** was the place of atonement and was made of a solid gold slab that covered the ark of the covenant. The Septuagint (LXX) translates this word as ‘instrument of propitiation.’ The **cloud** is not the cloud of smoke from the incense; it is the divine cloud representing God’s presence that descended on the tabernacle as a sign that Israel was to make camp (Ex. 40:34-35) and that rested on the ark when God spoke to Moses (Ex. 25:22; Num. 7:89).”

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“Some commentators have referred to the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus as the central chapter of the book. Chapters 1–15 describe laws for sacrifices and purity, and chapters 17–27 describe the holy living that God required of His people. Chapter 16 stands in the middle of those two divisions of Leviticus, and it describes the holiest day of the year for God’s people of the old covenant. Leviticus 23 refers to that day as **yom hakkipurim** (vv. 27-28). Today we call it ‘Yom Kippur,’ or ‘Day of Atonement.’”

**Point 2: The priest makes atonement for the people’s sins against a holy God (Lev. 16:15-19).**

“The high priest was also to cleanse the **tent of meeting** (16:17). This could imply that he sprinkled blood in the Holy Place seven times (see 4:6,17) or that the cleansing of the Most Holy Place cleansed the entire tent of meeting. No one could be in the tent of meeting while the high priest was making atonement, perhaps so that their sin would not contaminate the sanctuary before the high priest finished cleansing it. The high priest was then to cleanse the altar of burnt offering in the tabernacle courtyard by putting blood from his sin offering and that of the people on the horns of the altar and sprinkling more blood on the altar seven times (16:18-19).”
“Sacrificial atonement for sin is necessary because of God’s justice. Since God is just, He must punish sin. God commanded Israelite judges to be just, clearing the innocent and punishing the guilty (Ex. 23:6-8; Deut. 1:16-17). In one of King Solomon’s prayers, he expressed his confidence that God is just, ‘condemning the wicked man by bringing what he has done on his own head and providing justice for the righteous by rewarding him according to his righteousness’ (1 Kings 8:32). A judge who lets a guilty person go free with no punishment for his wrongdoing is not a good judge; he is not upholding justice. However, God must let guilty people go free if He is going to save guilty sinners like us. God is merciful and loving, so He doesn’t want us to perish for our sin. So how can the justice of God and the mercy of God be reconciled? Atonement for sin through sacrifice is God’s answer to the tension between His justice and mercy. God expressed His justice against sin in the death of the sacrifice, and God expressed His mercy to the sinner by allowing the sacrifice to substitute for the sinner. The sacrifice died, not the sinner. God’s penalty for sin was applied, but it was applied to the sacrifice, not the guilty.”

**Point 3: The scapegoat carries away the people’s sins against a holy God (Lev. 16:20-22).**

“The goat was then extremely unclean, so someone appointed for the task was to lead the goat out into the wilderness and release it in a remote place (16:22). The Hebrew word translated *scapegoat* literally means ‘goat to go away.’ Some argue that the name also means ‘entire removal’; others that it refers to the place where the goat goes. It was taken far enough away to assure that it would not return and was assumed to die in the wilderness. Later, the priests pushed the goat off a cliff to ensure that it did die. Like the bird released in the cleansing of a person healed of a defiling skin disease (14:6-7), the live goat carried the sins and guilt of the people far away, never to be seen again.”

“The second phase of purification occurred through the removal of the scapegoat. The author of Hebrews drew a parallel to this ritual when he affirmed that Christ offered himself as a sin offering once and for all (Heb. 10:10). Jesus is also compared to the scapegoat because he also ‘suffered outside the gate, so that he might sanctify the people by his own blood’ (Heb. 13:12). The fact that Jesus took our sins upon himself is also affirmed in Isaiah 53:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; 1 Peter 2:24. From a symbolic perspective, when Jesus died on the cross, the curtain that divided the holy of holies from the holy place was torn from top to bottom (Matt. 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45), signaling access to God by all people through Christ’s atoning act on our behalf.”

References
2. Derek Tidball, The Message of Leviticus, in The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove: IVP, 2016) [eBook].
6. Allan Moseley, Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in Leviticus [WORDsearch].
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<td>The Church United</td>
<td>Living Like Jesus (Acts; Hebrews)</td>
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<td>The Sent Church (Acts; Epistles)</td>
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<td>Don’t Forget (Acts; Epistles)</td>
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<td>Summer 2021</td>
<td>All Things New</td>
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<td>Facing Adversity (Acts; Epistles)</td>
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<td>Jesus Will Come Again (Revelation)</td>
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The Books of Genesis and Exodus are meant to be read together, providing an important clue for our approach to the rest of Scripture. The story begins in Genesis and unfolds with breathtaking speed, but then the pace slows as the rest of the book tells us the story of four generations of the one family through which God promised to bring blessing to the world.

As Genesis winds down, we encounter Joseph, one of Abraham’s great grandsons, and see that God’s promises are not always easy for His people. But through Joseph’s difficulties, we encounter the vital concept of redemption. His life was one of setbacks, frustration, and disappointment. But all the while, we see that God was at work through Joseph’s adversity, not despite it. God brought about redemption for Joseph and his family: God is always bringing glory to Himself and good to His people through their hardships, even by overriding their sins.

Then as we move from Genesis to Exodus, we pass over nearly four hundred years to a time when God’s people are enslaved. The stage is set for an even greater display of God’s desire and ability to redeem His people. When they cry out to God for deliverance from their slavery in Egypt, He provides a rescuer in Moses to free His people and to provide for them.

God’s deliverance of Joseph and the nation of Israel were the early stages of a beautiful crescendo of God’s plan to redeem His people that culminated in Christ Jesus. In Him we have experienced redemption from the slavery of sin and death. As we study these sessions, let us pray that the Holy Spirit stirs our hearts anew so that we are captivated by the love, grace, and mercy of God made known to us in our redemption through Christ so we can share Him with others.
Matt Chandler (unit 4, sessions 4-6; unit 5, session 1) is a Lead Pastor at The Village Church, president of Acts 29, and author of several books, including *Take Heart: Christian Courage in the Age of Unbelief*. Matt and his wife, Lauren, have three children: Audrey, Reid and Norah.

Jennifer Grisham (unit 6, sessions 1-2) serves as managing editor and administrator at Doxology & Theology. She’s a graduate of Baylor University and is currently pursuing a masters degree at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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Pat Hood (unit 5, sessions 2-3) is the Senior Pastor at LifePoint Church in Tennessee. He and his wife, Amy, have five children. Pat is the author of *The Sending Church*, which challenges every church to send and every Christian to live sent.

Sung Jin Park (Christmas session) and his wife, Alice, have three kids. He is Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and earned a PhD from Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion.

David Roark (unit 4, sessions 4-6; unit 5, session 1) is the Communications and Resources Director at The Village Church and writes on faith and culture in notable publications. He and his wife, Taylor, have two daughters: Leigh and Lainey.

Robert Smith Jr. (unit 4, sessions 1-3), PhD, is the Charles T. Carter Baptist Chair of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School. He is the author of *Doctrine That Dances* and *The Oasis of God*. He is married to Wanda Taylor-Smith (PhD), and they have four adult children with one in heaven.