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Part 3: Happiness

THE STRUCTURE OF LEVITICUS

<u>Chapters</u>	<u>Key Themes</u>
1-7	Prescriptions for various sacrifices (how to make amends, be forgiven, and/or reinstated)
8-10	Ordination instructions for Israel's first priests
11-15	Clean vs. Unclean: various health codes, food laws, quarantine protocols
16	Day of Atonement (The Cornerstone of Leviticus)
17-20	Clean vs. Unclean, Part 2: holiness codes, sex laws, prescribed punishments for sin
21-22	Further instructions for Israel's priests
23-25	Prescriptions for festivals, sacrifices, and offerings unto the Lord
26-27	Final instructions

Check out the structure of Leviticus as outlined above, and remember (if you were around) what I said to *in Hebrew literature, structure matters*. Leviticus is clearly built upon a cornerstone called The Day of Atonement (or Yom Kippur). So let's learn what the Day of Atonement was all about, and why it still matters to Christians today.

What were the distinguishing characteristics of Egyptian religion while the Hebrew people lived there? How did Egyptian gods differ from the Hebrew God in Leviticus?

Leviticus 16:20-22

When Aaron has finished making atonement for the Most Holy Place, the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall bring forward the live goat. He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins—and put them on the goat's head. He shall send the goat away into the wilderness in the care of someone appointed for the task. The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a remote place; and the man shall release it in the wilderness.

What was the purpose of the Day of Atonement? Why did the people believe sins must be forgiven?

What's the significance of the two goats? Which one is "Azazel," and what does that word mean?



What are “communal sins”? Can you think of any examples today?

What happened when the High Priest (Aaron) laid his hands on the goat’s head? What’s radical or different about this idea?

What are some of the parallels between the Day of Atonement and the crucifixion of Jesus?

Hebrews 10:11-18

Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: “This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.”

Then he adds: “Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.” And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.

What’s the meaning of the word “sacrifice” and how did Jesus change the sacrificial system?

What sins are you carrying around?

What’s the difference between how God sees us and how we tend to see ourselves?