

COGWA Youth Instruction

Day of Atonement Lesson

Scripture Discussions

Note to Parents: Here is a list of scriptures to read and discuss with your children regarding the meaning of the Day of Atonement. As you discuss these concepts, be mindful of the maturity of your children and adjust the discussion based upon their level of personal development.

Day of Atonement Observance Commanded

Leviticus 23:26-32; 16:29-31; Numbers 29:7: The Day of Atonement is to be observed on the 10th day of the seventh month with a holy convocation.

- *Explain the difference between the calendar we use today and God's sacred calendar.*
- *Explain/define "atonement"—to set at one, to join as one, to form by uniting, to cover. This day symbolizes God and man becoming "at one."*
- *Explain/define "afflict your souls." It means to be afflicted, bowed down, humbled, chastened and is used in the Bible to describe fasting (Psalm 35:13; Isaiah 58:3).*
- *Explain that we are to fast from sunset to sunset.*
- *How is this holy day different from the other six?*
- *Whose feasts are these? (See Leviticus 23:1-2.)*
- *How long is forever?*

Fasting—What Is Its Purpose?

Esther 4:16: Fasting is going without food and drink.

- *Explain fasting.*
- *Discuss how God is pleased when we fast.*
- *Explain that God appreciates our efforts to please Him through fasting on the Day of Atonement.*

Leviticus 23:32: "Celebrate your sabbath."

- *What type of attitude do we have when we celebrate?*
- *Discuss the proper attitude for a fast—not complaining, not "watching the clock."*
- *Take the time to pray with your child on the Day of Atonement.*



Ezra 8:21-23: Ezra proclaimed a fast for the Jews returning to Jerusalem.

- *Emphasize that their purpose was to humble themselves and seek God's direction and protection.*
- *Explain that God honored their fast because they had a proper attitude.*

Isaiah 58:3-7: This is fasting that is unacceptable before the Eternal.

- *Explain/define "humility."*
- *Explain/define "reconciliation."*
- *Explain the need to seek God's blessing on our individual fasts.*

Matthew 4:1-11: Jesus Christ fasted 40 days and nights and resisted Satan's temptations.

- *Explain that the purpose of fasting is to humble oneself.*
- *Explain that fasting shows us how dependent we are on God for everything.*
- *Explain that when we are weak from fasting, we can recognize God's strength more clearly.*
- *Explain that fasting is not a "hunger strike" to force our will on God.*
- *Explain that fasting allows one to draw closer to God and know His will.*
- *Explain the importance of seeking God's strength to resist Satan just as Christ did.*
- *Read about others in the Scriptures who fasted before God in a right way.*

James 4:6-10: Submit to God; resist Satan.

- *Emphasize that we cannot resist Satan by ourselves; we must submit and draw near to God.*
- *One important way to draw close to God is through fasting.*

Who Is Satan? Why Does Satan Need to Be Restrained?

Isaiah 14:12-15: Satan wanted to be like the Most High.

- *Explain that Lucifer is a created spirit being, an angel.*
- *Explain Lucifer's destruction of the physical earth.*
- *Explain that Lucifer is Satan the devil.*

John 8:44: Satan introduced sin and rebellion into the world.

- *Contrast Satan, the author of sin, with Christ, the author of salvation.*

2 Corinthians 11:14: Satan makes himself seem like an angel of light.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4: Satan is the god of this world.

John 12:31; 14:30: Satan is the ruler of this present, evil world.

Ephesians 2:1-2: Satan is the prince of the power of the air.



Revelation 12:9: Satan has deceived the whole world.

1 Peter 5:8-9: Satan is our adversary and is like a roaring lion.

- *Explain how Satan has continually deceived mankind from the very beginning, starting with Adam and Eve.*
- *Help your child understand that Satan is constantly influencing mankind with wrong attitudes and ideas.*
- *Give examples of the wrong thoughts/ideas: “Nobody cares about me.” “Nobody likes me.” “I never get what I want.” “It’s not fair,” etc.*
- *Explain that mankind cannot be fully reconciled with God the Father until Satan’s influence is completely removed.*

Ephesians 6:11-18: We can use the “armor of God” to protect ourselves against Satan.

- *Work with your child to memorize the different pieces of armor. Discuss the unique protection each part of the body needs.*
- *Emphasize that, regardless of age, we are all in a spiritual battle, and God expects us to fight against Satan.*

What Will Happen to Satan?

Revelation 20:1-3: An angel with a key will cast Satan into a very deep pit—the abyss.

- *Remind your child that Satan is a created spirit being, therefore:*
 - *Satan cannot die; he is immortal.*
 - *God is far more powerful than Satan and capable of having him restrained and keeping him from having access to mankind and God’s family.*
- *Explain that a millennium is 1,000 years.*
- *Explain why we call this 1,000-year period “the Millennium.”*
- *Explain that the rest of the fallen angels—demons—will also be banished.*

Revelation 20:7-10: Satan will be loosed to deceive the nations.

- *Explain that Satan will be released for a short period of time at the end of the Millennium.*
- *Explain that Satan will try one last time to overthrow God the Father, but will fail.*
- *Explain that human beings alive at the time of Satan’s release will have had no exposure to his influence. It will be a time for those human beings to be tested.*
- *Explain that Satan will be removed forever after this short season.*

Symbolism of Ancient Israel’s Observance

Leviticus 16:1-28: The high priest presented two goats to God.

Verse 2: The high priest only entered into the Holy Place once a year.

- *Explain that the high priest was the ONLY individual allowed to enter into the Holy Place and ONLY on the Day of Atonement.*



- *Explain that God's presence was in the Holy Place.*

Verse 7: Two kid goats were presented before God.

Verse 8: Lots were cast—one for the Lord and one for Azazel (the Hebrew word translated “scapegoat”).

- *Explain that casting of lots is a solemn petition to God to decide a matter that can't be determined by people.*
- *Explain that “scapegoat” is an inaccurate translation. The Hebrew word for “scapegoat” is Azazel and is a proper name.*
- *Explain that Azazel means “be removed or separated,” signifying what Satan did when he turned against God.*
- *Explain that the “one for the LORD” represents Christ; the “one for Azazel” represents Satan.*

Verse 9: The Lord's lot was a sin offering.

- *Explain that this signifies Christ's death for our sins.*

Verse 10: The Azazel goat remained alive.

- *Explain the symbolism that Satan is a spirit being and cannot die.*

Verse 11: The high priest presented a sin offering for himself and his household.

Verses 12-13: He was to make a cloud of sweet incense.

- *Explain that incense represents prayers.*
- *Emphasize that the priest entered the Holy Place (representing the throne of God) in a cloud of “sweet incense,” symbolic of the pleasing, acceptable prayers offered to God (Psalm 141:2).*
- *Explain how our prayers should be “beaten fine” and possess “sweetness” instead of “bitterness.”*

Verse 14: He was to sprinkle the blood of the bullock on the mercy seat.

- *Explain that the high priest had to be purified to officiate.*

Verses 15-19: The goat that was to be the sin offering was killed.

- *Explain that the goat's blood symbolized the blood of Christ.*
- *Explain that Christ's death covers our part—our guilt—in every sin of which we repent.*

Verses 20-22: Sins were confessed upon the live goat.

- *Explain that the laying on of hands symbolizes “setting apart.”*
- *Explain that Satan must bear responsibility for his part in mankind's sins.*
- *Compare the symbolism of the goat being sent away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness with an angel casting Satan into the abyss in Revelation 20:1-3.*
- *Explain that the second goat being sent away signifies complete atonement—the full removal of the sins and their author from the presence of God and His people.*

Verses 23-28: Here are some final instructions about this ceremony.

- *Explain that the high priest and the “fit man” both had to wash themselves before entering back into Israel. This represented their need for cleansing after being in contact with Azazel—Satan.*

Stories to Illustrate Fasting

Nehemiah in Nehemiah 1:4-2:8: Fasting and drawing close to God led to the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

Esther in Esther 4:12-17: She trusted God with her life and saved her people.

The people of Nineveh in Jonah 3:1-10: Fasting was a key in saving themselves from destruction.

Memory Verse

Psalm 139:23-24: Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me, and know my anxieties;
And see if there is any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

