

Template 2 — Main Lesson, Activity and Discussion Questions
 Ages 5 to 11 | Read-Aloud Lesson | Scripture-Centered | Apologetics-Rich | Christ-Centered

SECTION 1 LESSON OVERVIEW

Week	20
Date	May 17, 2026
Lesson Title	God Is Holy: Drawing Near to God
Primary Scripture	Leviticus (overview) — Leviticus 1:1 to 4; 11:44 to 45; 16:1 to 2; 19:2
Bible Timeline	Last week we learned how God gave Moses instructions for the Tabernacle and how God's glory filled it when it was finished. This week God speaks from inside the Tabernacle and teaches His people how to live with a holy God.
Big Idea	God is perfectly holy, and He made a way for us to come close to Him.

BIG IDEA

God is perfectly holy, and He made a way for us to come close to Him.

SECTION 2 OPENING BIBLE FOUNDATION

Children, before we begin today I want to remind you of something important. The book you are holding open, or the words you are hearing right now, are not just any words. They are God's words. The Bible is made up of 66 books. More than 40 different people wrote those books, in different times and different places, sometimes hundreds of years apart from each other. And yet every single book tells the same story. One God. One rescue plan. One Savior. That does not happen by accident. God was the true Author, guiding every writer to say exactly what He wanted said.

Today we are opening a book called Leviticus. It comes right after Exodus in your Bible. And if you thought the Red Sea was dramatic, or the Tabernacle was amazing, wait until you hear what God does in Leviticus. Because in this book, God answers one of the biggest questions any person has ever asked: how can someone like me get close to a God like Him?

SECTION 3 MEMORY VERSE

Our memory verse this week comes straight from the heart of Leviticus. Listen to what God says to His people.

MEMORY VERSE**Leviticus 19:2***Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.*

Let's say it together right now. Ready? "Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy." We are going to come back to this verse several times today. Every time we say it, you are going to understand it a little more deeply.

SECTION 4 SETTING THE SCENE

Last week, Israel finished building the Tabernacle, a special tent where God would live in the middle of their camp. And when it was finished, God's glory filled it from top to bottom. God moved in. The people could not even walk inside because the presence of God was so powerful and so real.

This week we pick up right where we left off. God speaks from inside the Tabernacle. He is going to teach His people something they desperately need to know. Not just facts about rules and rituals. He is going to teach them who He is, who they are, and how they can actually live near a God who is completely and perfectly holy.

SECTION 5 MAIN LESSON NARRATIVE

Imagine you have just finished building the most important building in the whole world. Not a house. Not a school. Not a palace. Something far more important than any of those. You built it exactly the way the owner told you to. Every measurement was exactly right. Every piece of cloth was exactly the right color. Every golden piece of furniture was placed exactly where it was supposed to go. And then the owner moved in. That is exactly what happened at the end of the book of Exodus. The Tabernacle was built. And the glory of God filled it.

Now here comes the question. A huge question. One of the most important questions in the whole Bible. How do sinful people live close to a perfectly holy God?

Think about it like this. Have you ever been completely covered in mud? Mud everywhere? On your shoes, your clothes, your hands, maybe even your face? And then someone says, come on in, come sit on the brand new white couch! You stop. You know something is wrong. The mud is real. And it would ruin everything.

Now imagine that instead of mud, it is something much more serious. It is sin. And instead of a white couch, it is the presence of the God who made the universe, the God who has never once done anything wrong, the God who is perfectly and completely holy.

This is exactly the situation Israel found themselves in. God was close. Wonderfully, powerfully, amazingly close. He was camping with them in the desert. And they were people who sinned. People who made mistakes. People who lied and complained and worried and disobeyed. And now they needed to know: how do we live right next to a God like this without it going terribly wrong?

God did not leave them wondering. He gave them the book of Leviticus.

Right at the very beginning of Leviticus, God speaks from inside the Tabernacle. Not from a mountain far away. Not from a cloud at a great distance. From inside. This is important. God is not trying to stay away from His people. He is reaching toward them. He is the one calling them near. He is always the one who reaches first.

This is exactly what our memory verse is telling us. Let's say it together.

MEMORY VERSE

Leviticus 19:2

Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.

"Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy."

Now, what does holy mean? Holy is one of those important words we need to really understand. Holy means completely set apart. Completely different. Completely without any sin or wrongness at all. God is holy. That means He is not just a little bit better than us. He is not simply a bigger, stronger version of a person. He is in a completely different category from everything that has ever existed. He has never sinned. Not once. Not ever. He cannot sin. He is perfectly holy in every way.

And that matters enormously. Because when something completely holy and something full of sin are in the same place, something has to happen. A holy God and sinful people cannot simply shake hands and pretend everything is fine. Something has to deal with the sin. God is not being harsh when He says this. He is being honest about a real problem, and He is about to show His people the most loving thing He could possibly do. He is going to provide the answer Himself.

In Leviticus, God gives His people different kinds of offerings. Think of these as God-designed ways of coming near to Him. Some offerings were for worship, ways of saying God, you are great, you are wonderful, I love you, I trust you. Some offerings were for times when someone had sinned and needed to come to God and say I am sorry, and receive His forgiveness. There were grain offerings and peace offerings and sin offerings and guilt offerings.

Here is something very important that you need to understand. These offerings were not Israel's idea. God gave them. God designed the way for His people to come near. He did not stand at a distance and make them figure it out on their own. He said, here is the way. Come this way. I have made a path for you. That is who God is. He is always the one making the way.

Some of you might wonder, did God actually enjoy animal sacrifices? That is a good question and an honest one. God told Israel many times that what He really wanted was not just the ritual, not just the

ceremony, but their hearts. He wanted His people to love Him, trust Him, and turn to Him. The sacrifices were His teaching tools. Every offering was a lesson. Every sacrifice was a picture. A preview of something that was coming later. Something that would change absolutely everything.

In chapter 11, God gives His people guidelines about food and everyday life. Some of those rules seem strange to us today. But the reason behind them was not strange at all. God was saying: I am holy, and you are my people. I want you to be different from every other nation around you. Not because being different will save you. But because living differently shows the world that you belong to a different kind of God. A holy God. A God who is real and close and true.

And that is exactly what our memory verse is saying. Can you say it with me again?

MEMORY VERSE

Leviticus 19:2

Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.

"Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy."

Now we come to one of the most important days in the entire Israelite year. It was called the Day of Atonement. Atonement means making things right between two people when something has gone wrong. In this case, it means making things right between sinful people and a holy God.

Picture the Tabernacle in your mind. It has an outer courtyard. Then an inner room called the Holy Place. And then, at the very center, separated from everything else by a thick, heavy curtain, is a room called the Most Holy Place. The word most important. The word holy. In the most serious and most set-apart part of the whole Tabernacle.

Inside that room is the Ark of the Covenant, a golden box containing the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments. And above that box, God's presence dwelled in a special, powerful way. This was where God's glory rested among His people.

Now, can you imagine the weight of walking toward that curtain? No one could simply walk through it. Not any day of the year except one. And on that one special day, only one man in all of Israel was allowed to enter. That man was the High Priest.

On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest would wash himself carefully. He would put on special white garments. He would prepare a sacrifice. And then, carrying the blood of that sacrifice, he would pass through the curtain and enter the Most Holy Place. He went in as the representative of all the people. What he did there, he did on their behalf. The sins of the whole nation were on his shoulders as he walked into that room.

But there is more. On this day, the High Priest would bring two goats before God. One goat was sacrificed, and its blood was offered in the Most Holy Place. But the second goat, listen to this carefully, the second goat was called the scapegoat.

The High Priest would walk to the scapegoat and place both of his hands on its head. And while his hands were resting on that goat, he would confess every sin of Israel out loud. Every wrong thing the people had done. Every failure, every disobedience, every time they had turned away from God. All of it was confessed over the goat, as if the sins were being transferred from the people onto the animal.

And then the goat was led away from the camp. Far away. Out into the wilderness. Gone.

Can you imagine watching that? Can you imagine standing there in the camp and watching that goat disappear into the desert, and knowing that something had just happened? That the weight of something heavy had been placed on that animal and carried away? Israel understood that picture. They needed it every year because the sins kept coming back.

Some people wonder if Leviticus is really historical. Did the Day of Atonement actually happen? That is not a bad question at all. God does not ask us to ignore our questions. He welcomes them. Here is what we know: the Bible treats Leviticus as real history from beginning to end. The apostles in the New Testament wrote about it in detail, explaining exactly how it was fulfilled. Jesus himself quoted from Leviticus and treated it as authoritative Scripture. The book of Hebrews spends several chapters showing how every priest, every sacrifice, and every Day of Atonement was pointing forward to a real person and a real event. These things happened. And they happened for a reason.

Chapter 19 of Leviticus brings us to the heart of the whole book. God says over and over: I am the LORD your God. Be holy because I am holy. Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not treat the poor unfairly. Love your neighbor as yourself. And after every single command, God says the same thing: I am the LORD.

He is not saying be holy so that I will love you. He is saying I am already your God, I already love you, I have already rescued you from Egypt, I am already living in the Tabernacle right in the middle of your camp, now let your life show what is already true about who you belong to. That is a completely different kind of call. Not earn my love. Live in my love.

This is why our memory verse is so powerful. Let's say it one final time together, and let it land differently now that you understand it.

MEMORY VERSE

Leviticus 19:2

Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.

"Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy."

God is not saying try harder and maybe I will let you in. He is saying I am your God, I have already reached down to you, I have already made a way, now live like it.

And here is the part that makes the whole book of Leviticus absolutely come alive. Every sacrifice. Every offering. Every goat sent into the wilderness. Every High Priest walking through the curtain with blood in his hands. Every single piece of it was a picture. A preview. A preview of a day that God had planned before the world was even made.

A day when one person would be the sacrifice and the scapegoat and the High Priest all at the same time.

Hundreds of years after Leviticus was written, a man named Jesus walked into history. He was not just any man. He was the Son of God. He was holy in every way that every sacrifice in Leviticus was supposed to be, but never completely was. He lived without a single sin. And then He went to a cross.

On that cross, something happened that the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement was always pointing toward. All the sin of everyone who would ever trust in Jesus was placed on Him. Every failure. Every lie. Every disobedience. Every turning away from God. All of it was laid on Jesus, the way the High Priest once laid his hands on the head of a goat. And Jesus carried all of it. Into death. And left it there.

And then something else happened. Something that no one expected. On the day Jesus died, the thick curtain of the Temple, the one that separated ordinary people from the Most Holy Place, the one that only the High Priest could pass through once a year, that curtain tore. From the top to the bottom. Not from the bottom up, the way a person would tear it. From the top to the bottom, as if God Himself had opened it.

The way in was open. And it has been open ever since. Not because we are holy enough. But because Jesus is. Not because we can walk in on our own. But because Jesus walked in for us, and now He walks with us.

Leviticus was always pointing here. God is holy. We are not. God made a way. That way has a name. And His name is Jesus.

SECTION 6 WHY WE CAN TRUST GOD'S WORD

Leviticus was written more than 3,400 years ago and has been carefully preserved ever since. Jesus quoted from Leviticus and treated it as God's true Word. The New Testament writers, especially the author of Hebrews, explained in great detail how every sacrifice and every priestly act in Leviticus pointed forward to Jesus. The consistency across thousands of years and dozens of writers is not an accident. God was telling one story through all of them.

A Word for Honest Questions

If a child asks whether these laws and rituals really happened, tell them: yes. The Bible treats Leviticus as real history. Jesus did too. And the fulfillment of every part of it in Jesus is explained in the New Testament with great care. God does not ask us to ignore hard questions. He gives us His Word to answer them.

SECTION 7 WHAT THIS SHOWS US ABOUT JESUS

Leviticus is one of the most Christ-centered books in the Old Testament, even though Jesus is not mentioned by name. Every sacrifice pointed to His final sacrifice. Every priest foreshadowed His perfect priesthood. The scapegoat on the Day of Atonement pointed directly to Him carrying our sin away. The torn curtain on the day He died confirmed that everything Leviticus pointed toward had arrived.

Hebrews 9:12

He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by His own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

Jesus lived without sin. He was the unblemished offering Leviticus always required but no animal could truly be. He died on the cross as the final and complete sacrifice for sin. He rose from the dead, proving that death could not hold the one who had no sin of His own. Everyone who trusts in Jesus receives what every Day of Atonement promised but could not permanently deliver: complete forgiveness, full access to God, and a new life that will never end.

SECTION 8 GOD REVEALED AS TRINITY

God is one God in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father is not the Son. The Son is not the Spirit. The Spirit is not the Father. There is one God, always together, always distinct.

In Leviticus, God the Father speaks from the Tabernacle and provides the way for His people to draw near. Every detail He gives points forward to God the Son, Jesus, who would fulfill every offering and every priestly act perfectly. And the life God calls His people to in Leviticus 19, the holy life, is the same life God the Holy Spirit produces in believers today (1 Peter 1:15 to 16). The Trinity is not absent from Leviticus. The whole book is His plan.

SECTION 9 LIFE APPLICATION

Because Jesus has opened the way to God for us, we do not have to earn God's love. We already have it. But just like Israel was called to live differently because of what God had already done for them, we are called to live in a way that shows who we belong to.

In the Bible Account	In My Life This Week
God told Israel to be holy because He is holy.	I can ask God to help me make choices that show I belong to Him, even when it is hard.
The scapegoat carried Israel's sins away.	When I sin, I can confess it to God. Jesus has already carried it away. I do not have to carry the guilt.

God told Israel to love their neighbor as themselves.	I can treat my friends, my siblings, and even people I find difficult the way I would want to be treated.
God gave Israel a way to come near to Him.	Because of Jesus, I can talk to God anytime. No priest needed. The door is open.

SECTION 10 DEFENDING THE TRUTH

What a Friend Might Say	What You Can Say Back
"Why did God need blood to forgive sins? That sounds gross."	"Sin has a real cost. The Bible says something has to pay for it. God was showing His people that sin is serious. And then Jesus paid that cost once and for all so no one else ever has to."
"Why couldn't everyone just go talk to God directly?"	"Because God is perfectly holy and people are not. So God made a way through the priest, and then made an even better way through Jesus. Now everyone who trusts Jesus can come to God directly. That curtain is already open."
"How do we know Leviticus is real and not just made-up rules?"	"Jesus quoted from Leviticus and treated it as true. The New Testament explains every part of it in detail. God does not ask us to stop thinking. He gives us reasons to trust His Word."

SECTION 11 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

CORE QUESTIONS FOR ALL AGES

What does it mean that God is holy?

Suggested Answer: It means God is completely set apart, completely different, and completely without any sin. He is not just a stronger version of a person. He is in a completely different category from everything else that exists.

Why did God give Israel offerings and sacrifices?

Suggested Answer: Because sin is real and something has to deal with it. God gave the offerings as His way of providing a path for His sinful people to come near to Him. The offerings were His idea, not theirs.

What happened to the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement?

Suggested Answer: The High Priest placed his hands on the goat's head and confessed the sins of Israel over it. Then the goat was sent into the wilderness, carrying the sins away. It was a picture of guilt being removed.

What did God mean when He said "Be holy because I am holy"?

Suggested Answer: He was not saying earn my love by being perfect. He was saying you already belong to me and I already love you, so live in a way that shows it. Be different because of who your God is.

How does Leviticus point to Jesus?

Suggested Answer: Every sacrifice pointed to His final sacrifice. The scapegoat pointed to Him carrying our sin away. Every priest pointed to Him as our perfect High Priest. The torn curtain on the day He died showed that He had completed what Leviticus was always pointing toward.

OPTIONAL DEEPER QUESTIONS

Why was it so serious that only the High Priest could enter the Most Holy Place?

Suggested Answer: Because God is perfectly holy and sinful people cannot simply walk into His presence without a way being made. The seriousness of the restriction showed how real the gap between a holy God and sinful people is. Jesus permanently resolved that gap.

Why does it matter that God provided the way into His presence rather than making people figure it out?

Suggested Answer: Because it shows us that God is always the one who reaches toward us. We could not have invented a way to get to Him. He had to make the way. That is still true today. Jesus is God's provision, not ours.

What difference does it make in your life today that the curtain is open because of Jesus?

Suggested Answer: Accept honest personal responses. Guide toward: I can talk to God directly anytime. I do not need a priest. I do not need to earn my way in. The door is already open because Jesus opened it.

SECTION 12 HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

THE CURTAIN IS TORN

Purpose	Help children experience in a tangible way that Jesus opened the way to God and their guilt does not have to be carried anymore.
Supplies	One small strip of paper per child, pencils or pens
Time	5 to 8 minutes
Preparation	Pre-cut strips of paper, one per child, before class.

Step 1

Give each child a strip of paper. Ask them to write one word that represents something they feel sorry about or something that makes them feel far from God. It can be a sin, a fear, or a worry. They do not have to share it with anyone.

Step 2

Ask children to hold the paper strip in both hands. Say: In Israel, the High Priest would carry the weight of all the people's sins into the presence of God. That was heavy. But Jesus carried something even heavier. He carried every sin, every failure, every wrong thing, so that we would not have to.

Step 3

Say: When Jesus died on the cross, the thick curtain of the Temple tore from top to bottom. The way to God was open. The barrier was gone. Then ask each child to tear their paper in half.

Step 4

Say: You do not have to carry that anymore. If you trust in Jesus, it is already paid for. The curtain is already open. The way to God is already made.

Step 5

Close with the memory verse together: Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.

For Younger Children (Ages 5 to 7)

Let them draw a sad face or scribble on the paper instead of writing a word. The tearing still communicates the truth powerfully.

For Older Children (Ages 9 to 11)

Ask them to write one sentence about why it matters that Jesus opened the way to God. Have a few willing children share.

SECTION 13 OPTIONAL REVIEW GAME

SCAPEGOAT TAG

Purpose: Reinforce the concept of the scapegoat and the Day of Atonement in a memorable way.

Supplies: None

How to Play: Choose one child to be the scapegoat. Ask the class a review question. The child who answers correctly gets to "place" a sticky note or piece of tape on the scapegoat. After several rounds, the scapegoat leads the class to the door and pretends to walk away into the wilderness, while the class cheers. Then talk about how Jesus was our true scapegoat and how He actually carried our sin away.

Review Question	Answer
What book did we study today?	Leviticus
What does holy mean?	Completely set apart, without any sin
What was the name of the most important day in the Israelite year?	The Day of Atonement
What happened to the scapegoat?	The High Priest placed the sins of Israel on it and it was sent into the wilderness
What did Jesus do that was like the scapegoat?	He carried our sin away when He died on the cross
Say the memory verse.	Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.

SECTION 14 TEACHER CLOSING

Today you learned something that is true about God, and it is one of the most important things you will ever know. God is holy. Completely, perfectly holy. And that holiness is not a problem. It is part of what makes Him so wonderful. Because a God who is perfectly good, perfectly right, and perfectly holy is a God you can completely trust.

You also learned that God never leaves His people without a way to come near. He made a way for Israel in the wilderness. He provided the offerings, the priests, the Day of Atonement. And then He made the final way. The perfect way. Through Jesus.

If you have never trusted in Jesus, today is a good day to think about that. Not to be scared. But to know that the door is open. God made a way for you. Jesus is that way. If you have questions, talk to your teacher after class. They would love to tell you more.

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, You are holy. And we are so grateful that You did not stay far away. Thank You for making a way through Jesus. Thank You that the curtain is torn and the door is open. Help us to live this week in a way that shows the world who we belong to. In Jesus' name, amen.

SECTION 15 TAKEAWAY TRUTH

God is holy, and Jesus is the one who opened the door.

MAIN LESSON, ACTIVITY AND DISCUSSION COMPLETE

Wait for approval before creating Step 3: Parent Take-Home Sheet.