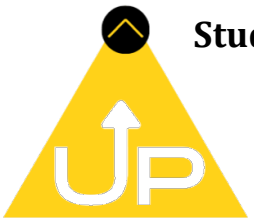
CrossWords Victory (John 19:28-30)

The sixth 'word' from the cross was not the whimper of a defeated man but the victory cry of the Son of God! Whilst Jesus was a willing victim he was also a triumphant victor! This study looks at the Old Testament sacrifice system to help us see how Christ's sacrifice is a once-and-for-all atonement for our sins.

Prayer: Lord, there is much I do not understand about why this was the best way to resolve the problem of sin. Help me to see a little more clearly how your big story holds together and makes a difference to me. Amen.

Setting the scene
When you hear the word 'victory' what kind of scenarios comes to mind? Share some thoughts around this.

What bible verses about Christ's victory come to mind for you? *Avoid a concordance.*



Studying the Word

"Almost every ancient religion knew that an offense against a higher-being demanded blood. Other religions used practices like child sacrifice, cutting themselves and other blood-related rituals to appease their gods. God, in establishing the religious observances with Israel, affirmed the reverence those other cultures showed but provided a specific means of atonement. Animals and their lives mattered to God and therefore represented a meaningful response to their offenses against God. "[1]

The Day of Atonement (Yom Kipper) was therefore an important day. As long as the Israelites performed this ritual, they could be assured that their sins were taken away and their standing before God was secure. We're going to briefly explore two passages relating to the Day of Atonement.

- **Read Leviticus 16:1-6, 11-14:** This section begins by alluding to a tragedy in the tabernacle when two priests, sons of Aaron, died because they were careless in the way they worshipped God (see Lev 9:22-10:3). Why did Aaron make atonement for himself before making atonement for the people?
- **Read v7-10, 15-22:** Why were there two different goat sacrifices? What did each represent?
- **Read 17:10-12:** What was the significance of blood in this culture?

Moving into the New Testament—the letter to the Hebrews offers us a helpful commentary on the Old Testament rituals. **Read Hebrews 9:11-28.**

- V11-14: Why was the sacrificial system insufficient to bring forgiveness for sins? In what ways is Jesus' sacrifice more superior to the former things? What did it achieve? *(see esp. 9:12-15, 26-28 and 10:10, 14-18)*
- V15-28: In what ways does the writer relate how a will works to how a covenant works?
- V23-28: Why is Jesus' sacrifice superior to those of the old covenant? See also 10:12-18.
- V26-28: How do these verses tell us Christ's work is ultimately fulfilled? What certainty do we find here?

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[1] *from Summit Church study on Leviticus (Mar 2020)*

Applying the Word

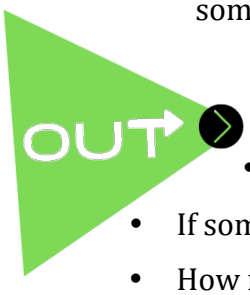
"He Himself bore our sins" in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; "for by His wounds you were healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

Thinking on Leviticus 16:

- What do these graphic passages teach us about God's holiness and the seriousness of human sin?
- How does a better understanding influence how you might pray?

Thinking on Hebrews 9:

- What difference does this hope we have in Christ mean to you now?
    - Does Jesus' sympathy for our weakness mean that he tolerates our sin? If so, why? If not, why?
- Imagine someone said to you: "We are resurrection people — we don't need to mourn the cross/celebrate Good Friday." How might you respond?
- In light of Christ's blood offering, how would you like to spend your time whilst awaiting his return? How is that different from where you're at right now? Spend some time praying about this.



- What does Christ's victory mean for you on your frontline?
- If someone asked you why God could not "just forgive" sins, what would you say?
- How might you help someone face eternity with hope and peace based on these passages?
- Why do you think culture (even church culture) shies away from talking about Jesus' sacrifice for humanity's sin?
- Why is it that many find it so hard to tell others this good news about Jesus? Pray for those you know who need to hear the gospel and for yourself to have confidence and wisdom in how and when to share it.

Finish your time by using the words of Galatians 5:1-2 to shape your prayers of thanks—for his work upon the cross, for the certainty of our forgiveness and for others to come to know Jesus.

Before we can begin to see the cross
as something done for us,
we have to see it as something done by us.

John Stott